

## Senior Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

December 2020

### Report on Ends Priority 1.3.3

*BEYOND: We live out our commitment to promoting social justice causes, especially racial justice and gender equity.*

We have made significant progress on this end even in the several months since I first offered my executive interpretation. In the area of racial justice, we have established a Racial Justice Council whose charter is to “promote racial justice across the entire congregation”. Since calling our first meeting we have 18 members who are working on teams for education, police accountability, hunger and homelessness, and a congregational resolution supporting racial justice. Each of these action teams is at various points of organization. In addition, other groups within our congregation are doing a great deal of work on racial justice. Our TUCWomen’s Group is a strong leader in this work. They have sponsored films concerning Black Lives Matter, a book discussion group and they are planning a full roll out of a speaker series in 2021 featuring speakers on a variety of issues related to racial justice. These events will be open to the general public and will be in partnership with other congregations in Westport. Several dozen of us have been attending an anti-racism training through Temple Israel led by Rabbi Michael Friedman. I will be repeating this in the Spring for our people. We are also involved with an anti-racism effort through the Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches which will include our congregation in the Spring. 110 of our members have provided just over 9000 lunches to the homeless under the John Street Bridge. Finally we have completed training for one member and our intern minister to begin administrating the IDI to our congregation in 2021. All and all I estimated 135 of our members are involved in this work in some form.

In our work towards Gender Equity, we presented a powerful service this fall on transgender identity and we plan on presenting a service on women’s right in January. We have established a strong connection with the Triangle Center in Norwalk committed to LGBTQ+ rights. Unfortunately we have had to cancel our OWL classes because of the pandemic. OWL is a very effective program for teaching women’s rights and transgender equity.

**Limitation Report on 3.4**     *Financial Planning / Budgeting: Financial planning for any fiscal year or remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board’s Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy.*

*3.4.1 Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not allow budgeting that:*

*a. Fails to communicate a reasonably accurate projection of revenues and expenses, balance sheet changes along with disclosure of planning assumptions.*

*b. Plans the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are reasonably projected to be available in that period.*

As the Treasurer reports indicate there has been no substantive deviation in our expenditures and income from budgeted amounts. The one exception is the PPP Loan which we are currently carrying as a liability. Once Fairfield Bank informs us that the time is right to apply for the forgiveness we will do so. We fully expect that loan to be forgiven and that liability will become an asset/income.

One minor deviation in the future will be staff expense for running our live stream worship services. We raised over \$10,000 in our special fundraiser to enhance our digital worship experience. Around \$7000 was used to buy equipment and the balance will offset any future equipment purchases and training for the staff to run the system. That training is largely complete. The extra staff time to run the equipment for services will be absorbed in savings on other budget lines.

We will begin our Stewardship Planning for our pledge drive soon. The drive is normally done in March. I will know more after that as to what our future budget will look like. I am well aware that we used significant reserves and a gift from the Endowment to balance this year's budget. We will not have those resources for FY2022.

Respectively Submitted, Rev. Dr. John Morehouse