

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

April 2021

**Report on End 1.2.1** *We embrace diversity, see differences as opportunities for growth, and build relationships of friendship, mutual support and understanding.*

Executive Interpretation: I take this to mean that we willingly embrace diversity in all its forms; ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, financial, class, racial, national, generational, by ability, and political. Having a diverse congregation allows us to understand others who may share our broader values. This helps us create a community of lasting relationships that mutually support each other.

Report on this End: We aspire to this end in words and intention. However, we are far from realizing this end. We remain a largely white, older, middle class, educated, cis-gendered congregation. In order for us to realize this end we will need to reach out through action projects and provide opportunities to those who may not want to join us on a Sunday morning. It is not enough to say our doors are open, we need to open our doors in other settings. We are beginning to see change. Our efforts through the Racial Justice Council and the Gender Equity Team are bringing new and different people into our orbit. The measure of our success may not be in whether they become members or join us in worship. That measure is an example of what keeps us locked into the normative identity we have now. We will need to create opportunities to meet in places and times when others are able and willing to join us; at City Council Meetings, Social Justice events, and social events we put on. If we were able, for instance, to come out as a large group to support a change in the zoning in Westport, and then after our support gathered in front of town hall for a brief impromptu worship service we would be embracing diversity. Our recent breakout rooms discussing the Anti-Racism Resolution encountered three people who were strongly opposed. It was a testament to our willingness to embrace diversity that we listened respectfully to their dissent. We can and will make progress on this.

**Report on Limitation Policy 3.8** *Compensation & Benefits: With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, and contract workers, the Senior Minister shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity and shall not fail to strive for fair compensation. Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:*

- 3.8.1 Change his or her own compensation, benefits, or allocated professional expenses as established by the Board.
- 3.8.2 Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.
- 3.8.3 Establish current compensation and benefits that:
  - a. deviate materially from the geographic market for the skills employed, or
  - b. create contractual obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected and in all events subject to losses of revenue.

Report on this Limitation: We are in compliance. Our staff compensation is at or above a congregation for our size as per UUA Guidelines. The Guideline Link to the PDF here will help you understand where we are. We are a Geo 6 Compensation Region at approx. 120% of the American Cost of Living Median. We are a Mid-Size III congregation. The salary ranges provided refer to experience and education levels.

Here is the Link: [https://www.uua.org/files/pdf/s/salary\\_recs\\_20-21\\_geo6.pdf](https://www.uua.org/files/pdf/s/salary_recs_20-21_geo6.pdf)

I do not allocate my compensation other than what is done for the rest of the staff. I did, however, reduce my professional expense below my contractual percentage in order to help balance the budget. Further, in order to balance this year and next year's budget I am keeping retirement contributions to 5% although the UUA and my contract suggests 10%. Health insurance will see a 10% increase this year. All half time and over employees are eligible for insurance and pension as per our Personnel Manual. Not all of them take the full insurance because they are covered by either Social Security or a spouse's plan.

All employees with the exception of me are hired "at will" and can be dismissed or compensation reduced should that need arise. I am making some substantive changes to our staffing for next year which I will be happy to report on in Board Huddle (Executive Session).

The long-term fiscal health of our congregation is of utmost importance to me. Steve and I are working on some long-range budget projections to match our changing demographic. With the loss of some of our biggest and more elder members, we are anticipating a smaller overall budget in years to come. Hopefully, this will be coupled with a growth in young families. However, young families do not, generally, give at the level of our largest givers. Therefore, we must pivot to meet the needs of younger families while losing some of our larger and older base. My personal goal by next year is to have a balanced three-year budget. It will require new revenue streams and some cuts to existing staffing.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Dr. John Morehouse