

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

May 2021

**Report on End 1.2.4** *We become a sustainable, engaged, growing Congregation comprised of all generations.*

Despite our deficit I am pleased that we did as well this church year as we did. We managed to maintain a strong cash position. Our pledge drive for the coming year, while short of its goal (which was ambitious at \$600,000) will come in well above \$500,000 giving us confidence in our budget for income going forward. I have not had as much success as I had hoped with the "Thrive Challenge" (this is giving a gift over and above the pledge made). We are just under \$9000 so far. I think this ask is too close to the pledge drive. I propose we do another ask in the fall around the "Thrive Challenge" and perhaps target it for Family Faith Formation.

Obviously, as we have discussed, we are a different congregation than we once were; smaller in number but much more engaged. Part of my leadership strategy has been, and will continue to be, to empower other leaders. Our future should not be about the minister, but about our mission in the world. Our smaller size has created a 'structural deficit'. We simply cannot afford the level of staffing we are supporting. As you know, I am hoping to pivot us to relying more on volunteer direction and support.

This End depends on bringing in young families. We are positioning ourselves to do just that. Beth is leading a deeper congregational engagement. We are searching for a new position dedicated to young families. Starting in the fall we will strengthen multigenerational worship and offer more family friendly events. I hope to report us in a better position this time next year.

**Report on Limitations Policy 3.2** *Treatment of Congregants, Friends and Visitors: With respect to interactions with Congregants, friends and visitors of the Congregation the Senior Minister shall not allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, disrespectful, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.*

I last reported on this limitation in January 2019. Nothing as notably changed in our operations as regards this limitation. We continue to be largely in compliance with this policy. I will report on this under three headings:

a. Confidentiality. Pastoral concerns are handled by a closed group of ordained and lay ministers. Larger issues such as hospitalizations, the need for visits or other pastoral concerns are discussed with the ordained clergy who then, at the Senior Minister's discretion, assign either ordained or trained pastoral care chaplains to the congregant in need. Pastoral Care

Chaplains are all trained in issues concerned with confidentiality. Since my last report we have expanded our training of pastoral care chaplains to include dealing with grief, how to spot and report on domestic violence and caring for those who are facing addiction issues. These issues can be complex and the chaplains do reach out to the ordained clergy when necessary. All pastoral care givers keep sensitive information revealed in pastoral care to themselves unless they are mandated to report abuse, in which case, they contact the Senior Minister to handle that report. Financial discretion is maintained as to the congregant's pledge and gift information and only shared on a "need to know" basis with members of financial committees and appropriate staff.

b. Safety. We maintain a "Safe Congregations Team" who reports to the Senior Minister as needed in handling issues of sexual misconduct. In recent years the team has expanded their mandate to educate the congregation about other concerns that may threaten safety including, domestic violence, addiction and trauma. That team reports on the number of incidents (but not their content) and its overall policy as part of the Annual Reporting Process. Since my last report we have had no incidents of safety violations to report. As to fire, hazard and disruption concerns, the staff does have a "Safety Protocol" which outlines what to do in case of a fire, medical or intruder incident. Incident report forms are filed by the responsible staff person and kept on hand should they be needed by insurance or other parties. Once we are beyond the pandemic we hope to resume our annual safety training for ushers, staff and worship associates normally held each Spring.

c. Grievances. As of now our process for handling congregant grievances towards the staff is for the aggrieved to contact the Senior Minister directly with their complaint and an attempt will be made to rectify the situation. If the grievance is with the Senior Minister then the Committee of Ministries has an established protocol for handling those grievances. The COM also acts as a sounding board for the congregation on those grievances which do not involve a particular individual. Our Covenant of Right Relations calls on all congregants to act in such a way that befits being a member of a caring community. In extreme cases of a grievance of congregants towards one another the "Disruptive Behavior Policy" may be invoked.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Dr. John Morehouse