

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

November 2022

Report on our Priority End for the 2022-2023 church year: 1.2.4 “We become a financially sustainable, **engaged**, growing Congregation comprised of all generations.”

I will focus this report on what it means to be an **engaged** congregation and how we might measure that engagement.

### **Executive Interpretation:**

By engaged I mean that a large majority of the congregation is actively involved in the life of the congregation on at least a monthly basis. This can include such activities as attending worship, joining a choir, attending a small group, participating in one of our many social action causes, volunteering in any number of leadership activities, such as serving on a committee or team, working with our children and youth, or improving our community in some way. As a measure of this engagement I believe the congregant should attend services at least once monthly (in person or on line) and/or be active in one of the efforts named above. Engagement also means making a regular and identifiable financial contribution.

In addition to this, there is a deeper level of engagement which has to do with our spiritual identity as Unitarian Universalists. Those more deeply engaged are those who work towards a greater spiritual depth for themselves and those they work with.

I like to imagine engagement as a series of concentric circles, with occasional worshippers on the outside and deeper involvement with congregational life as we move towards the center. At the very center are those in critical leadership roles such as the Board of Trustees. I believe that because UUism is a covenantal community, it's not enough to simply call oneself a UU. A engaged UU participates in and gives to the congregation on a regular basis.

### **Metrics:**

We can measure engagement in several ways.

1. Financial Support; is the congregant making an identifiable financial contribution.
2. Attending worship; it might be necessary to ask the ushers to take attendance on a regular basis so we can identify distinct congregants who are attending. Simply taking attendance numbers and comparing it to our reported membership is not sufficient. Different people come on different Sundays, i.e. while our Sunday attendance hovers around 125, more than a third of that number are not there on consecutive Sundays meaning our worship attendance on a monthly basis is higher than it seems.
3. Participation in groups. We can count who is coming to which groups and how many groups are actually meeting. Not all group attendees come to worship.
4. Participation in congregational activities. We can take attendance at special events.

5. Participation in volunteer opportunities. It is simple to name our leaders.
6. Participation in outside causes. We can take attendance at outside activities.

Even with all these measures, we will miss some who participate in our congregational life. I propose tracking these lists over the next three months and coming up with a distinct roster of engaged individuals using these metrics. Then in the late spring we can look at another three month period.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse