

Report to the Board
of the First Unitarian Church of South Bend, Indiana
Rev. Chip Roush
08 June 2022

INFORMATION

We need to research a new alarm company- this one (Vermilion, took over TC Security) is virtually unresponsive. They don't even staff folks on Sunday mornings.

Our office printer is good, and it can be overheated. On May 14, it shut itself off several times (while printing annual reports and orders of service). It displayed an error message like "need to cool down" or something, and required maybe 30 seconds of downtime each time. It should be okay, if we build in some cool-down time for large print jobs.

Some interesting information on how to size a congregational staff:

<https://www.congregationalconsulting.org/we-need-to-talk-about-staff-size-differently/>

Information on the shortage of UU Parish Ministers, from the Rev. Mr. Keith Kron, Transitions Director at our UUA, sent 5/17/22:

“ We've just informed 20 congregations they did not find an interim minister this first round. Their likelihood of finding an interim minister in the second round is small... This is a byproduct of the pandemic and between fewer ministers in search and more ministers retiring or stepping away for a while we'll see if this is just this year or a trend. All helping professions are facing this. As are other denominations. We won't be taking extraordinary steps to fill positions like we did last year.”

An elaboration on the situation, from MidAmerica Regional Lead, the Rev. Mr. David Pyle:

“First, this dynamic is going to significantly occupy the UUA Congregational Life Staff over these next several years as we coach and companion these congregations who are unable to secure professional ministry. I just ask you keep an awareness of that if we are needing to prioritize a bit differently in the next few years than we have in the past.”

If you want to plan ahead, GA will probably be in Pittsburgh in 2023.

SCHEDULE

I am scheduled for vacation this weekend, Friday through Monday, June 10-13.

In July, I'll be on vacation (at SUUSI!) from Friday July 15 through Monday July 25.

I'm also slated for a short study leave, Friday through Sunday July 29-31.

I am not attending our UUA General Assembly in person this year, but I will be attending online, Wednesday through Sunday, June 22-26. I'll also attend Ministry Days virtually, Monday night June 20 and Tuesday June 21. I'll be available by phone or email, but I'll have limited availability for in-person meetings.

PERPETUAL CALENDAR

June

Newly elected Board members join standing Board for monthly meeting

Determine dates for monthly meetings

Quarterly update on Endowment disbursements

Get door codes for newly-elected Trustees

July

Determine dates for annual events (e.g. Service Auction in fall, congregational meeting in May; board retreat, all-church retreat) if possible

Add new officers to bank & UUCEF permissions; remove old officers

Appoint Assistant Treasurer, Personnel Liaison, chairs for annual Service Auction and Holiday Bazaar, committee liaisons

All Board members receive basic documents pursuant to their task

Consider and approve the Minister's request for identifying portion of salary that may be designated for housing (important for tax reporting requirement)

August

Inform Chairs and Congregation that committees are formed and chairs approved

Schedule pulpit hosts through June

Endowment Committee sends Board quarterly report

Annual Board Retreat: set goals for the year; renew the Covenant between Board and Minister

QUESTIONS/REQUESTS

none

Question(s) for next month:

Reminder from the Annual Meeting: we vowed to change our bylaws to have the proposed budget published to members 10+ days prior to the meeting.

ACTIVITIES

From Monday, April 25, through Sunday, May 29, 2022, there were five weeks; my contract calls for an average of at least twelve units per week, for a total of 60+ units (where a unit is defined as a morning, an afternoon, or an evening of work, in general). Over that May time period, I recorded 62 units, made up of 56 units of work and 6 units of vacation.

Sunday Services (21.5 units)

Planning & presenting worship services on Sunday (4);

Worship Arts Committee meeting (Zoom)

Worship Arts Committee Retreat (in-person)

Service Evolution Group (1)

conversations with potential extra-congregational lay preachers (3)
interfacing with Sound Techs and Zoom (Co-)Hosts
reviewing drafts of orders of service prior to printing
uploading sermons to YouTube, Facebook, and congregational website
Sermon Sounding Board (weekly; 4)

Pastoral Care & Counseling (6 units)

Care Committee meeting (1), phone calls & texts (4)
Home, hospital, *etc.*, visits (0)
Visits at church, restaurant, *etc.*, (2)
drive sick visitor to their sister's apartment (1)
weekly Thursday afternoon Zoom Gathering (4)
Grief Circle (2)
Eco Grief Circle (1)

Staff Supervision (5 units)

weekly meetings (5); ongoing training
ICON training

Associational Ties (5 units)

meet with Intern (1) & Mentees (2)
Attend Regional Assembly (1)
Attend Chicago Area Liberal Ministers (zoom, 1)
Attend UUMA Central Midwest Chapter business meeting (zoom, 1)
Converse with current GA Planning Committee member (1)
Co-Moderator of UUMA Facebook page (approx. daily)

Governance (4 units)

Board meeting (1), communications & follow-up tasks from Board
Meeting with BoT/CoM/Lisa Presley/et al to address congregational conflict (3)
Research & draft Ministerial Discretionary Fund policy
Chat with individuals or couples (1)

Public Religious Face of the Congregation (3.5 units)

Faith In St. Jo County meeting (2)
Faith In Indiana Clergy gathering (1)
Clinic Blessing planning session (1)
actual Clinic Blessing (1)
emails from local students / organizations

Communications (3 units)

submitting items for Chirp! each week
putting informational posts on church Facebook page & website
compiling Board Report
miscellaneous email, not included in other categories

Spiritual Development of Congregation (2 units)

participate in UU Wellspring (3)
conversations with congregant(s)

Children & Youth RE (2 units)

DREAM Team meeting (1)

Attend Galien River County Park trip (1)

Marketing / Publicity (1 unit)

posting upcoming services on Facebook, Twitter, our website

Membership (1 unit)

attend auction, welcome members/friends we've not seen since pandemic (1)
emails & call from members & friends

Social Justice (1 unit)

Peace & Social Justice committee meeting (1)
does not include FISJC work (see "Public Religious Face..." above)

Adult RE (1 unit)

Game Night (1)

Rites of Passage (0 units in March)

child dedications, marriages, memorial services
conversations, rounded down to zero units

PROGRESS ON GOALS (as set on December 2, 2021):

Establish weekly sermon feedback sessions

We held one "Service Evolution Group" in May, another will be tomorrow (June 9).

Re-connect and repair relationships with the folks Anne asked to write letters

This work is ongoing.

PROGRESS ON MINISTERIAL GOALS (as set on August 17 & 31, 2021):

Hire and supervise Coordinator of Religious Education

We are using the "DREAM Team" model

Help recruit volunteers/staff for multi-platform services

I've spoken to several members and friends.

Establish a clearly defined goal setting and evaluation structure for staff

Pat is taking on more responsibilities, as Peg focuses on the *Chirp!*, the website, and the calendar.

Lead at least two Adult RE classes

We did *Lincoln in the Bardo* last fall, and we've announced a group for *The Sum of Us*

Continue to serve as Mentor to seminarians

I meet monthly with each of my two Mentees, and biweekly with my Intern Minister

PASTORAL CARE

I made zero pastoral visits to a hospital/prison/court/care facility, and zero pastoral home visits, during May. I had two meetings at the church or in restaurants; and I made several pastoral phone calls.

We have a bit over twenty-six thousand dollars in the Ministerial Discretionary Fund (My report last month was incorrect—it was not five, but sixteen, thousand dollars then).

MEDITATION

I am deeply grateful to our Trustees this year. With the pandemic and the time and emotional energy spent on addressing the requests for special treatment by a subset of our congregation, it has been a difficult year. With the Committee on Ministry, you Trustees have listened patiently, worked to find equitable and sustainable responses, and undertook conflict engagement work (led by a consultant).

We cannot expect that *everyone* will appreciate our work—and sometimes the task seems more thankless than most. Please know that your work has been noticed, and greatly appreciated.

So may we be,
Chip