

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

INFORMATION

Please see my Sabbatical plan, in the Appendix below

Our UUA “Fair Share” contribution (which is no longer called that) has decreased. Whereas our (also anachronistically named) “Denominational Dues” budget line is currently \$10116, our UUA 2024 *Anticipated Ask* for FY2024 will be \$8894.

Form NP-20 was filed on time. After this one, new legislation says we will only need to file it every 5 years according to the letter we received.

Remember: our Office Manager, Pat Davis, will take vacation days on Monday December 12th and 19th. I am grateful to Florence for agreeing to cover those days. December 26th and January 2nd are both holidays, so the church office will be closed. Like many previous years, the office will be closed on the week between Christmas and New Year’s.

If you want to plan ahead, GA will be in Pittsburgh, PA, June 21-25, 2023. Let’s get a group to attend!

SCHEDULE

In December, I will take vacation from Christmas through New Years Day (both Sundays). Due to the holidays being observed on Monday (12/26/22 and 1/2/23), I will officially take Sunday 12/25, and Tuesday through Sunday (12/27 – 12/31).

I will be on Sabbatical during January. I will take emergency calls from Ken Chambers, Mary Hagen or Lois Holm—and I will be checking text messages and voicemails periodically, if somebody really needs me. Otherwise, I’ll be back at work on Wednesday, February 1, 2023.

PERPETUAL CALENDAR

December

President initiates annual membership certification process

Quarterly update on Endowment disbursements

Order 1099 Forms from the IRS through www.IRS.gov/orderforms The online forms cannot be used for Copy A which needs to go to the IRS. December 31

January

Board certifies membership for report to UUA. This is due by Jan. 31

Send IRS Form 1099-MISC to all non-corporate church payees who have received \$600.00 or more in the previous year and send Copy A of the form to the IRS.

Confirm filing and mailing of W-2 (Fed & employees), Fed W-3, Form WH-3 and Indiana Form WH-1 by the Church's payroll processor. Get copies for the church files. deadline: January 31

Mid-Year mini-Retreat

February

Calls for Endowment grants

Nominating committee begins forming slate for May elections

March

Quarterly update on Endowment disbursements

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH

Please consider appointing Emily Flanery our church Librarian, and giving her a code for the door.

ACTIVITIES

From Monday, October 31, through Sunday, November 27, 2022, there were four weeks; my contract calls for an average of at least twelve units per week, for a total of 48+ units (where a unit is defined as a morning, an afternoon, or an evening of work, in general). Subtracting 2 units for the Thanksgiving holiday, 2 units for a day of vacation (on my birthday), and 14 units for study leave (including 8 units for Ohio River Study Group), that leaves a contractual minimum of 30+ units of work. Over that November time period, I recorded 32 units:

Sunday Services (12 units)

Planning & presenting worship services on Sunday (2)
Worship Arts Committee meeting (1)
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; 2)

Pastoral Care & Counseling (4 units)

Phone calls & texts (3)
Home, hospital, etc., visits (1)
Visits at church, restaurant, etc. (1)
Grief Circle (1)
Care Committee meeting (1)
Buy gift cards from Marathon or Martin's or both (1)
weekly Thursday afternoon Zoom Gathering (2)

Membership (3.5 units)

Office Hours (6)
D&D auction event (2)
emails & call from members & friends

Spiritual Development of Congregation (3.5 units)

70th Anniversary Celebration planning committee (2)
Wellspring small group (2)

conversations with congregant(s)

Communications (2.5 units)

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

Staff Supervision (2 units)

weekly meetings (4); ongoing training

Governance (1.5 units)

Board meeting (1), communications & follow-up tasks from Board
phone conversation with Lisa Presley (1)

Associational Ties (1 units)

meet with Mentees (2)
pastoral RPG
Ohio River Study Group // four days, taken as study leave so NOT included in tally of units here
Co-Moderator of UUMA Facebook page (approx. daily)

Marketing / Publicity (1 unit)

posting upcoming services on Facebook, Twitter, our website
attend Art Opening of Susan Elfin's watercolors (1)
note: the 70th Anniversary Celebration could also go here, but I've included it in Spiritual Development, above

Adult RE (0.5 units)

planning future book groups
ad hoc conversations

Public Religious Face of the Congregation (0.5 units)

theological conversations with folks who ask for gift cards (2)
chat with Brain Lair bookstore employees (1)
emails from local students / organizations

Social Justice (0 units)

a few conversations, rounded down to 0 units

Children & Youth RE (0 units)

ad hoc conversations, rounded down to zero units

Rites of Passage (0 units)

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

PROGRESS ON GOALS (as set on October 12, 2021):

Take a class in communication / conflict / ambiguity / attuned listening this church year.

I have applied for a group facilitation class, from the Good Grief Network.

I'm also looking for other potential courses, and I welcome your suggestions!

Offer at least one Book Group that explores the above skills and/or tools.

I bought *Transforming Conflict: The Blessings of Congregational Turmoil*. and *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*, which feels like it's at least adjacent to the topic.

I welcome other suggestions for book group discussions or sermons.

Preach at least three times about these skills/tools.

The services on 11/20 and 12/4 touched on some of these topics.

Explore incorporating skills/tools practice in the majority of the services I lead.

I've tried live feedback during the service, and that seems to produce more anxiety than appreciation. Maybe continuing it will normalize it, and produce better results. Maybe another approach would be better.

I'll dive into this during my Sabbatical in January. Again, I welcome suggestions.

Co-lead (with Board and/or Committee on Ministry members) a "Fireside Chat" / Q&A session to demonstrate transparency and accountability, approximately quarterly.

Our next Town Hall is slated for Sunday afternoon, December 18.

We had a "test" version of a Town Hall on October 16—which included a live example of, and lesson about, conflict engagement.

PASTORAL CARE

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

Now that I'm in the actual office more frequently, people have begun showing up to ask for gas cards, grocery cards, bus passes, and assistance with larger needs (mortgage, utility bills). We're essentially back to the level of activity from pre-pandemic.

We have approximately twenty-one thousand dollars in the Ministerial Discretionary Fund.

MEDITATION

From the inimitable Eleanor Roosevelt: "Courage is more exhilarating than fear and in the long run it is easier. We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down."

So may we be,

Chip

APPENDIX – Sabbatical Plan for January 1-31, 2023

I will use this month of Sabbatical for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth.

I will explore how to incorporate best practices for communication and conflict engagement in the regular liturgy of services which I present (with an eye to sharing/teaching these practices to other ministers and congregations). Ideally, this will be both didactic and embodied (perhaps a set of rituals?) This exploration will include conversations with other clergy (from UU and other traditions), and consulting with professionals in related practices.

I will deepen my existing meditation practice, by resuming the second practice period each day.

I will pursue other forms of professional and religious growth by conversing with trusted colleagues. My goal is to have at least two in-person deep conversations, and extensive phone/Zoom calls with at least five other colleagues.