

Report to the UUTC Board
Rev. Bob Renjilian
June 2022

PERSONAL:

- The Asheville Gay Men's Chorus concert is the same night as the Board: Thursday, June 23. Theme is "Madrigals in Montfort". This is our first concert open to the public since COVID started.
- I am pleased that Christy's organization approved 3 weeks per month in NC. This started this month.
- I sang the National Anthem four times at sporting events in Asheville this past month, three times with the Gay Men's Chorus, and once with the Barbershoppers.

IN THE COMMUNITY:

- I was at the protest at the courthouse against gun violence, along with many other UUTC folks.
- I attended the NAACP breakfast at Bethel A Baptist church with about two dozen other religious representatives. We've agreed to continue our meetings.
- I have approached Carter Hayward about being more active with NAACP, including the religious leader's group. Sadly, there is a time conflict with the meetings, but I have been assured I can be involved in other ways.
- My first experience of the AAUW book fair - and seeing other UUTC folks shopping or volunteering there!
- I attended the Juneteenth events in Brevard on June 19 after church, and got to chat with some UUTC folks as well as meet others at tables. I've introduced myself to the new director of Mary C. Jenkins Community Center, Tyree Griffen and asked him to reach out to us if he needs anything.
- Christy and I attended the Hendersonville Pride Picnic on June 18, and we saw other UUTC folks there of all ages. We were surprised the Hendersonville congregation did not set up a tent to promote Unitarian Universalism, so I asked the Episcopalians how hard it was for them to sign up, and the cost, and they said it was free and very easy to do. Next time let's see if we can help UUs in Hendersonville and team with them to show our Welcoming religion in this region.
- I continue to serve non-profit boards in the region, including as Vice President of the Asheville Gay Men's Chorus Board. I believe this is important for UU ministers to be rooted in community and lend leadership support where it fits our values and hopes for society.

REFLECTION ON "NEXT NORMAL"

Our Sunday morning testing of Choir continues. We did have one positive test before Sunday warmups, and the person got that confirmed at a clinic and recovered quickly from the mild breakthrough case. We tested again on Wednesday at John Austin's suggestion, since choir members may have been concerned. I have ordered enough

tests to continue Sunday tests in July even if I'm not here those Sundays. The rise in cases has led to a rise in price, but we're still getting the best value through COSTCO.

I announced that we'd stop using the contact tracing clip boards for Sunday mornings. Up to now I have treated this as a pastoral need - a warm outreach from me as minister to congregants who may have needed calm reassurance. As breakthrough cases are no longer a surprise, and as we've learned COVID-19 is not likely as dangerous (with vaccines and medicines, especially) it seems time to shift to electronic notifications via our other channels.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION:

Wonderful Wednesday drew over 60 people to the dinner, and about 30 more than that for the music/presentation. I'm grateful that Rev. Ernie Mills agreed to present at the kick-off on June 1, and had invited the Eclectics and friends to join him. Ann Rabb stepped forward to lead a team of volunteers to serve food. I was able to rotate to visit several different tables, to sample the conversation and get to know folks. This very much felt like the UUTC that was described to me way back in 2020, before shutdowns!

Future offerings for Wonderful Wednesday are in the works for July, August and the Fall. The July 13 offering will be a movie and discussion on baseball and spirituality. We are again limiting dinner reservations to 60 people, but the movie and discussion are open to all (including folks outside UUTC).

I continue to lead a monthly discussion with UUs at College Walk. I prepare a theme, but sometimes a discussion need arises from the group that needs to take priority.

PASTORAL CARE:

I've been in touch with folks and have been offering home or office visits. I've reached out by phone to a few folks LHHH mentioned to me, or that I hadn't heard from recently. I've also reached out to Rev. Ilene. I have asked LHHH to cover the toll-free pastoral care line while I am away the week of July 3.

WORSHIP:

The service is now at 10:00am during the Summer. We will evaluate as we go along, and have time to determine if it is still viable to do this in the Fall or if we find issues that need addressing. So far the response to the Father's Day Sunday launch of this new combined service time has been very positive. The energy in the room was wonderful, the music offered was great, and I could feel my own preaching improving

just because of this. Remember I've said the children's story book *Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel* helps explain something about me - just as Mike and Mary Ann work harder and faster and better when more people are watching, I also find increased energy as the room fills!

I have been working with worship team to review the best practices of our services, the flow and energy of the service, and even timing issues.

OTHER MEETINGS:

Many thanks to Gail Meyers and Bill for hosting the Board pot luck. That was a lovely evening of casual conversation and relaxed presence with one another. And good evidence of fine pot luck balance of foods!

Team meeting night was again only Adult Religious Exploration, as there was not a pressing agenda item for the Social Action Team (I talked briefly with Kathy as team lead, and we're arranging a further time to follow up).

I have been meeting weekly with staff online or individually in person. I have also talked by phone to coordinate staff issues, this month that focus was due to the quick resignation of our new bookkeeper.

I've met with LHHH, and behind the scenes was inviting the Men's group to be coming back to meet (hybrid) at UUTC (answer: not at this time, online-only is better meeting their needs).

I have met with Alice Wellborn and Bart Renner prior to this Board meeting.

WIDER UU MOVEMENT:

- I continue my work with the Unitarian Universalist Association Religious Education Credentialing Committee (on Zoom).
- This week I am busy as your registered ministerial delegate - as a virtual (off-site) UUA General Assembly participant, and for the UU Ministers Association annual meetings that led up to the start of the General Assembly. I encourage you to look online at the UUA website or Facebook page to see keynote presentations that are available to the public. Rev. Susan Frederick Grey is inspiring to hear, as are others!

COMING UP:

- I will be on vacation July 3-10 attending the International Barbershop Harmony Society convention and contest. LHHH will cover the pastoral care toll-free line.
- I will be officiating at a non-member wedding on July 2, 2022 (at their private location).
- Wonderful Wednesday will be July 13, dinner at 5:30 (reservations required for head count), "The Joy of Sox" baseball movie at 6:30, followed by discussion.