

Report to the UUTC Board
Rev. Bob Renjilian
November 2022 (for Dec. 1 meeting)

This report follows the old format. I look forward to the goals-centered reporting style in the new year as the Board and I have completed the review of the survey.

PERSONAL:

- I enjoyed a few days vacation at the shore with my family at Thanksgiving. Thanks to LHHH members for being on-call for any pastoral calls.
- It is a joy singing with the Asheville Barbershop Chorus at various locations during the holidays, and with the Asheville Gay Men's Chorus at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Asheville, on Saturday, December 10th at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 11th at 4:00 p.m (holiday music from around the world, including Ukraine).

IN THE WIDER MOVEMENT:

I did not attend the UU Ministers' Fall Retreat at The Mountain. Between the extra meetings for survey review, and my time off at Thanksgiving, it did not seem to fit.

REFLECTION ON "NEXT NORMAL"

Choir has been back for a year now, and as of the end of November re-opened to members regardless of vaccination status (repealing an early pandemic rule).

ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION:

The Spiritual Explorer's sessions continue. Our team discussed new additions to the lineup this Winter, including a Wonderful Wednesday in January (speaker invited but not confirmed), another Pronouns workshop that I'll lead in December, and the UUA Common Read book discussion of *Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism* by Nancy Palmer Jones and Karin Lin. Sadly, as soon as the study guide became available in November, the book sold out and is out of print (UUA assures us it *may* be reprinted in time to buy in January).

I continue to send "Soul Matters" theme packets for home study.

I led the College Walk UU's in a discussion of the "UU World" magazine recent issue on climate justice and environmentalism.

PASTORAL CARE:

I've been in touch with folks by phone, offered assistance through the Minister's Discretionary Fund to two households, and coordinated a last-minute meal delivery to a family. I made a couple home visits and went out to lunch with congregants after church. I had drop-in visits, including from a homeless person.

I've received and sent pastoral updates via e-mail with the LHHH team

EXTRA: Christy and I enjoyed the return of Souper Sunday on the second Sunday of November!

MEMBERSHIP:

We've had three Sundays with attendees wishing to formalize their connection by becoming members. We dropped member classes in the pandemic, but have had individual orientations. A Board officer (usually Alice or Ian) participates with me in the Minister's Study after Sunday services.

WORSHIP:

I met with the Worship Team, and have individually met or communicated with the musicians. John Austin, Kevin and I continue plans for Holiday services (and the caroling on Dec. 10), and I also coordinated with Ginny Rush in the "Somber Holidays" vespers service planning for Dec. 4. I thank Janice Canon for moving forward with Solstice Service planning and rehearsals for Dec. 21. Vanessa Cowie has been instrumental in coordinating guest speakers, including the wonderful folk musicians Aidan Quinn and Christine Stay (aka Friction Farm), and organizing supplies (including new candles for Christmas Eve). We've included Advent candles on the altar in December, and will have a menorah when we get to Hanukkah.

I continue to try to draw out our sense of being a heart-centered community in the way I ask for candles of joy or sorrow - I know the current form is not the one that will last (especially if our attendance continues to rebound) but it is serving a purpose. Ushers are being asked to record what people have shared so we can edit and include in the weekly "Member-to-Member" care notice during the week.

I hosted the extra post-election-day prayer time, mid-day on Nov. 9, at UUTC.

I have worked to obtain permission to use a Christmas hymn this month that is not available through our licenses. Broadcasting on the internet and posting on YouTube requires extra work to be sure music copyrights are observed.

IN THE COMMUNITY:

I participated in the NAACP Religious Leaders Zoom meeting, and the in-person meeting at Bethel A Baptist Church.

I attended the Nov. 28 Post-election Bridge Building forum at the library - many from UUTC were there and the room felt full.

I went to St. Philips Episcopal to thank our volunteers for the Power Up dinner.

I spoke at the LGBTQ+ youth (and families) meeting in November, which was hosted by Kevin Lausch in conjunction with TC Strong.

COMING UP:

I will meet with the Evaluation Team again in early December to finalize Goals.

The "Somber Holidays" (a.k.a. "Blue Christmas" or "Grieving at the Holidays") service is prepared for 4:00pm on Sunday, Dec. 4.

I will participate in the Sandy Hook 10th Anniversary program hosted here at UUTC on Monday, December 12*

**Head's up: The dark Mid-December season is a time I honor the feelings of grief that arise within me. It is the recurring anniversary of significant deaths in my family, layered with remembrances of the violence in my home town (Newtown CT) ten years ago.*