

President's Report 2009

This is my first annual report as president, and I must start by saying how proud I am of our congregation, and how humbled I am to serve as your president. It is an understatement to say that we are in the midst of change, and I am continually impressed at how we individually and collectively have come together, supported each other, stepped to the plate, picked up loose ends, and contributed to the work of transition. I am honored to work with a Council that is as dedicated, thoughtful, wise and committed as ours, and I am grateful to each and every Council member for the gifts of time, energy, and wisdom they have shared. I also extend my gratitude to everyone who has stepped forward to serve as a committee chair or on new committee, as well as all who have stepped in to help with RE, UShare, Sunday worship, or the many special activities associated with Anne and Wade's retirement. It has indeed been a rich, full and busy year in the life of the church.

Most of our attention for this first half of the year was focused on celebrating Anne and Wade's ministry and preparing for their retirement. The Transition Team did a wonderful job of orchestration a great number of events and different ways for us to express our joy and gratitude of their ministry. More behind the scenes, Council focused on the task of preparing for the interim year beginning with our January retreat where we identified both our collective worries and the potential opportunities of the interim year. In the spring months, there was an brief but intense period of time devoted to searching for and hiring our interim minister Myron Andes, followed by additional work in preparation of Anne and Wade's departure and Myron's arrival. Also in January, the Settled Minister Search Committee was seated and began the huge task of amassing information about our congregation and preparing a comprehensive and accurate description of our congregation in order to attract the best applicants for our next settled minister(s). We all owe a huge debt of gratitude to the members of this committee for the countless hours invested in this very important work.

In addition to the very special and atypical events of this year, we have continued the regular programs including our Social Action Shared Offerings, UShare, Chalice Circles, Adult and Bell Choirs, Exploring Christianity, and Circle Suppers, not to mention Sunday morning worship and RE. Our building continues to be well cared for as is evident by the fresh paint in the Social Room and RE space, and the fact that we now have wireless access throughout. We continue to welcome newcomers and visitors on Sunday mornings, and I am happy to find that many of these folks have become familiar and frequent faces as they become established in our church family.

Yes, we have done a lot this year, but challenges remain. During this year of transition we will be asked to pay special attention to certain tasks and reflect individually and collectively on who we are and where we are going as a congregation. At the same time we need to attend to the regular routines and events that are anticipated, fun, and comforting in their familiarity. Some of the committees that sponsor such events are in need of even more new members, and one in particular, the Social Events Committee, is temporarily in hiatus as we continue to seek a chair. Nevertheless, I am certain that we will not only face these challenges but learn, grow and deepen our connection to one another along the way.

Margaret Harloe

Budget and Finance Committee Annual Report 2009

October 11, 2009

Our Mission Statement:

To identify, define and support those financial needs which contribute to the greater vision and work of our church

To oversee the disbursement of funds to insure the mission of the church is fulfilled

To communicate to the church community the financial needs and concerns of our church

Our work this past year has included:

- Overseeing the implementation of the 2009 Budget
- Preparation of the 2010 Budget (in process).
- Overseeing the Inventory updates
- Maintaining the B&F Policy Manual
- Reviewing financial policies as requested by Church Council
- Reinvesting the CD of extra funds from the checking account.
- Overseeing Capital Reserve Fund expenses
- Promoting the Olympia Brown Society as a way to make Planned Gifts to the church - April speakers and workshops.

B&F members include:

Pat Glover, Dave Weissbard and Bob Gardner, and Rich Fennessey

Ex-officio members include: Tom Pynchon (Investment Chair), Myron Andes (Interim Minister), Dick Morrow (Treasurer)

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Glover

2009 Nominating Committee Report

In addition to working on the slate for 2010 church council, the nominating committee (Jan de Waters and Theresa Witmer) have meeting with a number of church members to discuss their interest in serving on church council in 2011 and beyond and the timing of when they are available to serve. Our goal is create a council candidate pool so that future nominating committees will have a resource at their disposal of members who are interested in serving on council. This will eliminate the need to start this process from scratch each year given the annual change in membership on the nominating committee.

Slate for 2010

President – Margaret Harloe
Vice President – Kim Bouchard
Treasurer- Dick Morrow
Secretary – Anne Richey
Trustee – Theresa Witmer (term expires Dec 2011)
Trustee – Carol Gable (term expires Dec 2011)
Trustee – Oscar Sarmiento (term expires Dec 2011)
Trustee – Walt Conley (term expires Dec 2010)
Nominating Committee Chair – Pete Beekman

The two remaining Trustees, Mark Berninghausen and Robin Collen, will be serving the second year of a two-year term in 2010 and do not need to be voted on.

Pete Beekman
Nominating Committee Chair

Religious Education Annual Report
2008-2009

Attendance:

Class: attendance:	Youth on Roster:	Average weekly
Nursery	14	3
Spirit Play	20	8
2nd and 3rd Grade	16	6
4th, 5th and 6th Grade	18	9
7th and 8th Grade	14	5
High School Youth Group	16	7

Curriculum:

All Our Relations

In the 2008-9 curriculum for 1st-8th graders, we started out the school year exploring the interdependent web of life using a hands-on nature education curriculum that emphasizes the scientific aspects of plants and animals and the ecosystems they call home and also helps us to experience the awe, mystery and wonder of our planet. As the weather turned cold and we turned inward, we introduced a 14-week curriculum, called Heart Talk. This UU curriculum is inspired by Marshall Rosenberg's work on non-violent or compassionate communication. The children and youth focused on honest communication, differentiating between judgments, opinions, facts and feelings in order to develop deep empathy for themselves and others. This unit focused on our relations with each other. In the spring, we went back to Nature Education, spent time outside and continued to explore the natural world and our relationship with it.

In our Spirit Play class, for our preK-1st graders, we continued with the Montessori based method of learning, and emphasized stories about Nature and Communication/Relationships to tie in with the curriculum of the older children.

Our High School Youth Group was active this year – they presented a Worship Service to the congregation; sponsored an Oxfam Hunger Banquet; planned and hosted a Youth Con here; as well as attended many district Youth Cons at other churches and had many lively discussions. They began plans to form a church Youth-Adult Committee.

Teaching/Classroom:

For the 2008-9 school year, there were 35 teachers and 32 teaching assistants, plus 7 youth group advisors who worked in the 6 classes. The Religious Education Committee was a strong committee of 10 members.

Etc:

After a year and a half, our two Assistant DREs are moving on to different job opportunities, so we are in a search now for an Assistant DRE for 5-10 hour/week.

Interim Minister's Report
UU Church of Canton, NY
October 18, 2009

Having begun my time at the UU Church of Canton more than half-way through the calendar year, I am only able to report on things from that time onward. In this Interim Minister's Annual Report for 2009 I will address actions and progress toward identified goal.

The goals of an interim ministry are different from those of a settled ministry. The first thing that is apparent is that there are a variety of goals, expectations and priorities for Canton's interim ministry, coming from different sources and occasions. I will list some of those in this report. Hopefully in coming days we will be able to identify, consolidate and/or prioritize this list.

During August and September I largely engaged in becoming familiar with the church: it's people, programs, governance structure, building and traditions. This has included discovering (by accident) a number of situations in which unspoken assumptions of the minister and his activities were held unawares. This is and will be a very large part of the interim transition at UUC Canton: coming to realize and know in our bones that there are different ways of doing things, that different ministers have different strengths, talents, interests and growing edges; and that whoever is called as the next settled minister(s) will do things differently than the past co-ministers. It also points up the importance of becoming aware of what the congregation does and expects, and communicating that clearly to the next called minister.

I will address some of the various statements of goals, expectations and priorities below:

II. 5 interim tasks (from Transitions Office Interim Ministry Program):

Research and experience have shown that for a congregation and a called minister to have a successful, long-term relationship it is extremely important for certain types of work to be undertaken during the interim period. Experienced, Accredited Interim Ministers with whom I have consulted over the past 4 years indicate that the fall is a time of familiarization with the interim tasks and relationship-building. Activities to fulfill the tasks mostly take place in the winter and spring (January-April). UUC is on track for this, or a little ahead of schedule. The Interim Minister, Transition Team, and Congregational Council and its officers are engaged in addressing these tasks, which are the work of the whole congregation.

1. *Claiming and honoring its past and engaging and acknowledging its griefs and conflicts,*

This task involves re-collecting the church's long- and short-term history for perspective, and to identify aspects of its ongoing systems and culture that should be preserved and enhanced or discarded and healed from. This particular task is of major importance to the accomplishment of a good transition to a long-term settled ministry, as well as to the long-term good of the church.

2. *Recognizing its unique identity and its strengths, needs, and challenges,*
These will be undertaken using Appreciative Inquiry and other methods as the year progresses, by the Transition Team, the Interim Minister, and others.

3. *Understanding the appropriate leadership roles of minister(s), church staff, and lay leaders and navigating the shifts in leadership that may accompany times of transition,*

Examining the roles of ministerial and lay leaders, and of staff members, is another one of the most important tasks for the congregation this interim year. It includes becoming aware of the variations in those roles that are healthy, and what characteristics are essential for a healthy, functioning congregation. Changes in leadership are common in interim transitions. Some of this is happening at UUCC, but not to a large degree, so far. Committees, for example, are seeking and finding new members and leaders in what seems to be a matter of course for them. This is quite healthy.

4. *Making appropriate use of District, UUA, and other outside resources.*

This is the third of what I see as the three most important interim tasks for UUCC this year. The church makes use of many services of the UUA and St. Lawrence District, and several members and leaders of the congregation are active in committees and other activities of the larger movement. This participation is not a prominent part of the face the church presents.

5. *Renewing its vision, strengthening its stewardship, preparing for new growth and new professional leadership, ready to embrace the future with anticipation and zest.*

Already zestful, the church is eager to embrace the future. Stewardship is strong, and is consciously moving in helpful ways; for example, a year-round committee rather than an ad hoc pledge campaign committee. Renewing of vision will be addressed as the year progresses.

Respectfully submitted,
Myron Andes