

**Report to the Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Church, Surprise, AZ**  
**Rev. Samuel Schaal, Transition Minister**  
**Sept. 11, 2022**

**Transitional Matters**

- Attached is an updated Annual Program Fund report showing other important data for the congregation from 1983 to 2023. Last year I gave you this, so this just adds the recent year. Note the long-term trends.
- I'm registered for an online one-day conference "Predicting and Shaping Your Church's Future" Oct. 5 featuring UU minister and consultant Dan Hotchkiss. (See below.) Lay leaders are also invited. The fee is \$75. If any are interested, see <https://cciwdisciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/AIM-Conference-Registration-Flyer-2022.pdf>

**Worship**

- On today's agenda I'm requested the Board to consider revising Covid policy to allow congregational singing in worship.
- Per Sherry's request, I'm working on a class for Worship Associates on making worship more fully experiential, and how to present effectively. This will also be a good tool to recruit more Worship Associates which we need.
- Thanks to Amy St. Peter and Sharon Beard for coordinating such a good lineup of summer speakers during my vacation and study leave.
- Thanks to Amy for preaching Sept. 25 on covenant, highlighting the Ministerial Search Committee's covenant, which is a nice way to both model the work of covenant and note the ongoing search process behind the scenes.
- It was requested in the Board's brainstorming in the July meeting that we not have worship Oct. 16 so that more could attend the Pride parade (that's on Sunday this year instead of Saturday). I think that the congregation always needs to have a service on Sunday as we are engaged in providing public worship for anyone who seeks it. I'll be out of the pulpit that day as I'll be in the parade.
- Today's Water Communion ceremony is yet another ritual common to many of our congregations that I'm introducing to bring a more emotive context into worship.

**Programs**

- Met with Lois Bartels and Liz Thomas on starting an ongoing Covenant Group program. I am preaching Sept. 18 on "Intimacy and Ultimacy" which is an organizing principle of covenant groups and will mention that we're engaged on introducing the concept shortly.
- I'll facilitate the Seven Stages of Money Maturity Saturday Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We have ten registrants, smaller than I'd hoped, but we'll carry forth. This is a summary workshop of the larger two-day workshop facilitated by the Kinder Institute of Life Planning, where I am a Registered Life Planner<sup>®</sup> and authorized to present this shorter experience. It's a fun time as we explore emotions around money to connect money and spirit. If any Board members are interested, it's not too late to register.

**Membership**

- As I announced in worship recently, Caryl Mroczek joined the congregation on August 28. She visited in July, having been going to West Valley UU that is closing. She had entered hospice care at home a few days before she joined. She died Sept. 1. Her memorial is scheduled here Oct. 10 at 10 a.m. with reception to follow, then committal at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona with military honors.

- The fall session of The New UU is scheduled at 9 – 10:15 a.m. on Sundays Oct. 23, 30 and Nov. 6. New Member recognition is scheduled in worship Sunday Nov. 13.

### Personnel

- The UUA is rethinking their approach to recommendations on salary and personnel process, with an eye toward equity and transparency. The big change is a new structure of compensation with:
  - Six job levels (rather than the current 26 job titles):
    1. Lead or Solo Minister/Executive
    2. Second Minister/Secondary Executive
    3. Director
    4. Manager
    5. Specialist
    6. Support

This greatly simplifies the types of positions. Each of our staff positions would fall under the Director category, it seems.
  - Four church size profiles based on both membership and budget, and including some overlap (rather than the current six sizes based on membership only, with no overlap)

Here's more information where you'll find a link to the actual video (40 minutes) that gives a good big-picture view: <https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/rethinking-uua-salary-recommendations>

  - As we move toward budgeting for FY 2023, the UUA will still have the current job levels and compensation recommendations, so congregations can evolve toward the newer methodology.
  - UUA announced that rates for Guardian benefit plans (dental, life, long-term disability) will remain unchanged for 2023. Health plan rates are not yet known but will likely increase.
- Our staff is beginning monthly meetings with me on the first Thursday of each month at 11 a.m. for all four of us for better coordination and communication. We will have more/less meetings as needed going forward. The first meeting was very productive. I meet with Lisa and Paul regularly outside of that to plan worship and programs.

### General—

- I will be home in Dallas and out of the office from Wednesday, Sept. 21, returning to the office Tuesday, Sept. 27.
- Lisa and I will attend the Arizona UU Professionals Cluster meeting in Tucson Tuesday Sept. 17.
- I will attend the online seminar “Predicting and Shaping Your Church’s Future” with UU consultant Dan Hotchkiss all day Wednesday Oct. 5. Sponsored by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Illinois and Wisconsin.
- I will attend the Fall Convocation at Perkins School of Theology (SMU) in Dallas Nov. 14-15. The theme is “Food and Faith: Exploring the intersection of faith and culture.” Speakers are Aarti Sequerira, Food Network producer and personality, Norman Zirzba, theology professor at Duke University, and Jin-Ya Huang, social justice innovator. I’ll be on vacation the rest of that week and part of next, returning Friday Nov. 25.

### Staff Reports

#### *Lisa Lawrence, Director of Family Ministry*

- I have changed the name of my staff members to RE Assistants to reflect that they work in all age classrooms, not just preschool. Two assistants have been hired. I now have two teams of two to alternate each week.
- Stewardship Committee serves a Welcome Back Breakfast to new and returning families on Sept. 11.

- Working to organize an Ice Cream Social Fundraiser Sept. 18 at Stewardship's request. Tickets are \$5. Recruiting more RE families to help.
- Zoomed with the director of South Mountain Storytelling Institute to facilitate a storytelling workshop here at the church to give staff and volunteers skills in using stories in worship and classroom. A workshop with four, four-hour sessions would be \$85 per person for up to twenty people. Attenders will help with Time for All Ages as needed.
- I reached out to three local faith organizations toward building an interfaith youth group but got no response.
- Working with the education director of Temple Beth Shalom to present "Hanukkah & Christmas as an Interfaith Celebration" workshop. It will be open to both congregations and held at UUC Surprise on Sunday, Dec. 4 at 3-5 p.m.
- This year's curriculum for our single, all-ages classroom is "Navigating the UU Universe." It's a combination of the Tapestry of Faith program "Love Will Guide Us" with a space/universe theme. The lessons apply wisdom from our sources and principles to help answer life's big questions. Older children will continue to participate in areas which interest them. We have youth participating in choir, the classroom and sound board (my Sunday Morning Shadows program).

*Paul Yoder, Director of Music*

- Over the summer we welcomed Anastasiia Rud who recently escaped Ukraine as accompanist for four Sundays during some vacation time I took. We said goodbye to her Sept. 4 as she goes to the London School of Music. Thanks to Maggi Mahan for playing one Sunday.
- Have sought an accompanist for several months and found Linda King who begins with us two Sundays a month beginning Sept. 25. Linda is an experienced musician in many musical styles who has performed internationally. She is a member of the Bahá'í faith, so has a multi-religious point of view which, though different than UU, is similar in values.
- Choir begins rehearsals each Sunday at 9 a.m. beginning Sept. 25. They will start singing in October.
- Working with Lisa to provide choir support for Dec. 11 holiday play, "Who Will Hold the Baby?" The choir may do another special music service in December.
- Going through music files and seeking new music to order.
- We are working toward having a choir party, funded by a kind donation from Marilyn Schulze in appreciation of singing at her son's memorial service.
- Helping participate in the Coffee House Oct. 29 coordinated by Lynn Melby.

*Judy Gilmore, Congregational Administrator*

*(I failed to check in with Judy, so am writing this from memory. I've likely left out stuff.—Sam)*

- Several building issues: getting bids on repair of broken window following attack on campus, researched possibilities of where to place recycling bin following multiple dumpings around the two bins, learning how to use our security camera system to view tape, coordinating several building rental requests.
- Worked over the summer as point person for OSVs, usual administrative details, etc.
- Still going through and documenting files.
- Still working with Sharon Beard on key project to identify and organize keys.
- Membership in AUUA (Association of UU Administrators) continues to be valuable since I have access to other administrators in church on their practices.

In Our Living Tradition,

*Sam*