

August 2017 Assistant Minister Board Report

I have been settling in at Cedar Lane. Everyone has been incredibly warm and welcoming. I particularly appreciate how much support Rev. Abhi, Rev. Archene and the Search Committee have provided throughout the move. I originally arrived mid-July and met with Rev. Abhi to plan for a smooth entry. Rev. Abhi and I prioritized my areas of focus for the next year:

- 1) Pastoral Care and Worship (wrapped into this are Spiritual Development Guidance/Programming for the congregation and Leadership Development)
- 2) Membership
- 3) Social Justice

I have started to participate in worship and I began following a few Pastoral Care cases in mid-July, which was good preparation as there were a few urgent pastoral issues upon my official start date. I have already begun scheduling and performing home visits and memorial services. I created an online calendar that has been published to the congregation to facilitate ease of scheduling pastoral visits and one to one appointments.

Along with meeting pastoral needs, I have also met individually with all staff members and reached out to lay leaders for individual sessions. These meetings were very productive and instructive. As an outgrowth of these conversations, I agreed to write some of the ministry-related content for our new website, which will include a prayer request form.

I co-facilitated the first Pastoral Visitors meeting with Betsy Binckes and we rolled out a new training program that will help the PVs deepen their spirituality while providing a high level of pastoral care. The PVs will initially serve as a Prayer Team that will work with me on handling online prayer requests, too. I plan to give a congregation-wide workshop on trans-denominational prayer (inclusive prayer) and will invite additional members to join the Prayer Team after that session. We hope the Prayer Team will become a link in the leadership development chain for PVs.

I have had several meetings with Roger regarding Membership. We decided to cancel the UU 101 for August, but will resume in September. Volunteer Fair planning is well underway. Roger and Carolyn Morrissey, in her hat as "Volunteer Coordinator" are working together on this project. We are planning a New Member Welcome next month as well.

Another one of my goals for next month is to begin a meditation video series that will coincide with the theme of the month. Each month a member of the ministry team will create a meditation that is linked to the Soul Matters monthly theme. The video will be posted on our Youtube channel and shared in the weekly email blasts. This is just one prong of a larger plan to encourage and support daily spiritual practice as we all endeavor to explore the eternal.

In terms of professional development, I reached out to the Executive Director of Ministry at All Souls UU in Tulsa, for a mentoring call. Tulsa is a thriving, growing, very successful large congregation and the ED of Ministry has grown her position with the congregation. I am very grateful that a busy colleague is willing to take time to speak with me. Rev. Abhi also plans to connect me with another Assistant Minister from a large congregation for development purposes, and I am continuing to connect with other Assistant Ministers both in the area and through online communications.

This month I read the book, *How to Thrive in an Associate Staff Ministry*, and I began a podcast series for growing congregations called, "Est. Church" through Sam Rainer Consulting.

It has been a productive few weeks and I look forward to the work ahead!