

**Senior Staff Report to the Board of Trustees
Of Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church**
January 11, 2018

Dear Trustees-

I hope these first few weeks of 2018 have been bright for you and yours. In the beginning of this new year, I am encouraged by the continuous high energy and community care that is alive among us in the congregation!

In this report:

- **Executive Director's Report** – Sara Deshler
- **Assistant Minister's Report** – Rev. Katie Romano Griffin
- **Director of Lifespan Religious Education's Report** – Tim Atkins
- **Senior Minister's Report** – Rev. Abhi Janamanchi

Executive Director's Report:

Staffing Update: Well, we were at full staff for a fleeting moment. Roger Santodomingo gave his notice, he will be going to Seminary. His last day with us will be January 15. Sara Davidson, our Director of Communications, has agreed to take on the membership duties. She will be reporting to Rev. Katie, The responsibility for scheduling the building will be moved elsewhere, we will determine whether it can be added to another staff member's duties or whether we will need to hire someone from the outside.

FY 2018 Stewardship Update: As of today we have 449 pledges from 691 people for a total of \$911,272. This is an increase from last month. The average pledge is \$2,030, last year at this time we had 30 more pledges in but for \$18,944 less pledged, with a lower average pledge, \$1,863.

Account Statements: We will be sending out year-end contribution statements next week.

End of the Year Request: We received \$22,360 for end of year contributions to the operating budget. Of these amounts \$7,000 may be changed, \$2,000 as a pledge for a new member and \$5,000 may end up a contribution to the capital campaign.

Capital Campaign: we have been setting up bank accounts for the Capital Campaign and have received more than \$200,000.

Membership: We certified our membership last February 1 at **708** members. We are now at **753** members. We had 10 new members join, Michele Alexander, Ellen Berg, Nathan Hultman, Fernanda Bianchi, Joel Greenbaum, Karen Kuehl, Patrick LaCroix, Kelly Mott LaCroix, Romel Lira, Melanie Stickle. One member, Dick Shrager,

died. We are working on the membership scrub process in readiness to certify our membership at the end of the month.

Security Planning Team: We will be holding a Church wide Fire Drill on February 25 after each service. There will be training for ushers, receptionists, RE administrators and teachers on January 27 and 28. We are requesting threat assessments from the police and the fire department in order to determine what changes to the physical plant are needed.

The Operational and Financial Procedures Handbook is being organized to be put on the website. The Financial Policy Committee is also reviewing the policies that fall under their responsibilities and have made suggested changes.

Chart of Accounts change: We have been working on adapting the budget and other reports to the new chart of accounts structure, an ongoing process. The bottom line remains the same, just what goes where in the budget has been reworked. We now can get more detail from our reports, but we have to design each one anew. There were several accounts that were lumped together on the balance sheet as part of the transfer to the new chart of accounts, we are working with the Accounting firm that made the changes to resolve how they should be handled.

January 10, 2018 Data					
Members					
Certified 2/1/17	708				
1/10/2018	753				
Pledges:	1/10/2018	1/10/2017			
Pledge target	\$925,000	\$936,000			
Pledged	\$911,272	\$889,889			
received	\$670,634	\$626,644			
% recd ytd	73.6%	70.4%			
Pledges	443	469			
mean	\$2,030	\$1,886			
Total Income:	1/10/18	1/10/2017			

Budgeted	\$1,243,300	\$1,156,000			
Received	\$929835	\$786191			
% recd	74,8%	68%			
	Total pledge	Plate and gifts	F/R Programs	Rentals	Program fees
Budgeted	\$925,000	\$92,000	\$50,000	\$103,000	\$63,300
Received	\$670948	\$55404	\$49,100	\$57,234	
% received	72.5%	60.2%	98.2%	55.6%	
% of income budget	74.4%	7.4%	4.0%	8.3%	

Respectfully submitted, Sara Deshler

Assistant Minister's Report:

Pastoral Care:

December was a busy month for the Pastoral Care team. Pastoral Visitors and Senior Staff sent cards to members who we thought would appreciate some extra support this holiday season. We also distributed all of the remaining emergency grocery cards (\$50 each) to members and friends who needed extra support this season. The prevalence of the #MeToo campaign and increasingly tense political environment has triggered an increase in the pastoral care load as well.

I am continuing to provide reassurance, making off-site visits in addition to the many one-to-one meetings that I am having with congregants in need of pastoral care. In addition to many in-office visits, I met for the first time at Leisure World with the Pastoral Visitors. We had 14 Leisure World residents in attendance. The pastoral Visitors and I are rotating visits monthly to Leisure World, Riderwood, and Asbury. These group sessions are proving to be a wonderful way to do group connect members to Cedar Lane and also to connect Cedar Laners to each other. It is a joy and a gift to be able to do this work of moving with people through all phases and stages of their life.

The Ministry Team has been emphasizing the availability of Pastoral Visitors before and after services through the month. I am continuing to hold monthly skill-building sessions with pastoral visitors. This month we worked on utilizing the CISM-Trauma model of pastoral care. The Pastoral Visitor team will also play an important supportive role in our upcoming January 21, "#MeToo" service, which will feature survivor reflections from key members and shine a light on sexual assault and harassment as systemic expressions of Euro-white, colonial, heteropatriarchal society. This will be a very healing and informative service.

Norman Allen, Intern Minister, will co-facilitate a “Parents Weathering the Storm” group for parents who are raising children who have mental illness, which will launch in January. Norman will be working with our DLRE to reach out to parents to market this group.

The Aging Support Group has decided to decrease its meetings to once a month. The Pastoral Visitors Team has decided to reframe how the Support Groups for Care Givers and for people with Long-Term Chronic Illness are managed. We are re-exploring how to roll out future support groups and are continuing to have deep conversations with Sara Davidson on marketing them effectively.

Pastoral Visitors are currently not required to have background checks, which is not in alignment with best practices. Our Safe Congregations policy does not address this issue but it should. Anyone who works with vulnerable populations needs to be background checked. I have made this recommendation to our Executive Director and Senior Staff is currently in the discussion phase on our Safe Congregations policy changes that need to be made/recommended.

Rites of passage and special services:

I had the pleasure of participating in the Winter Spirit Experience and also led the “Laying on of Hands” portion of Rev. Diana K. Davies’ Ordination in Baltimore.

Spiritual Development:

I led the “Theology, Spirituality and the Environment” group again this month. “Soul Matters” Meditations are continuing. I created the January Meditation and will also be creating the February one. The members who are using the meditations are reporting that they find them incredibly valuable.

Soul Matters packets were distributed on schedule to all ministry team leaders with the invitation to use the Chalice Lightings, Readings and Questions from the packet at all meetings that occur at Cedar Lane. We are continuing to inform Ministry Team Leaders that this level of engagement with the themes will help us all to become more aligned in our search for truth and meaning. This practice will also help provide a similar spiritual framework for meetings that sometimes might lack one. The new website will soon have a special page where all members will be able to locate each month’s packet. Our hope is that all Cedar Laners will begin to engage at some level with the themes at worship, at meetings and throughout the week.

Worship:

Rev. Abhi and I collaborated with the rest of the Worship Team on this month’s services. Tim Atkins and I teamed up as leads on two services: December 17 and December 31st. I was also the lead on the 6pm Christmas Eve Service. I assisted Rev. Abhi with the 10 am Christmas Eve service.

Membership:

As of December 31, we have had 80 new members! 9 joined in the month of December. Two new groups have been created: The Jewish Unitarian Universalist Affinity Group and the Cedar Lane Singles Group. Both of these groups will provide

opportunities for members and friends to engage with other members and friends who share a similar identity, interest or affinity. We have the hallmarks of a program with great potential.

Roger Santodomingo, Membership Coordinator, resigned in the month of December. His last day will be January 15th, 2018. Roger will begin attending Meadville Lombard Theological School on January 5, 2018 and will officially begin pursuing his M.Div. degree in the summer of 2018. His resignation was well received by the congregation and he is being supported in this transition to seminary by many members as well as staff. Senior Staff is in conversation on our next steps for optimizing the potential of the membership program in light of this opportunity. Our Membership Coordinator had been keeping a second database because he did not have administrative access to ACS to create reports. He had also been utilizing a "Google" group and "evite" to set up events and communicate to both the Membership Ministry Team and New Members. Sara Davidson and I have devised a system that will eliminate this extra work, while leveraging current systems that are not only more optimal for work flow reasons, but also more secure. The Volunteer Fair remains on hold. Carolyn Morrissey, our Volunteer Coordinator, will play an important role in the fair and she has continued to help the in the administrative office. When her role in the office wanes, we will reschedule the fair. We are also awaiting her return so that we can revive CedarLinked.

Social Justice:

This month I attended the DACA/TPS Rally in DC with Rev. Abhi and a group of Cedar Laners.

This month I attended the Interfaith Worship at the NRA with Rev. Abhi and some Cedar Laners.

I met with the volunteer coordinator for the Montgomery Housing Project for networking and support.

Professional Development:

I met with 2 of my professional advisors as well as my mentor and Spiritual Director this month and met with a smaller group of ministers of color as well. I am also meeting regularly with Rev. Abhi and with my Transition Team. I attended a holiday party for the DMV area UU ministers.

Completed work:

Read, *It Didn't Start With You: How Inherited Family Trauma Shapes the Cycle and How to Stop It*, by Mark Wolynn

Read, *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards*, by Chait, Ryan and Taylor

Read, *Saying "No" to Say "Yes" Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence*, by Olsen & Devor

Watched a video on improving customer service in organizations by organizational coach, Tony Bodoh.

Completed the Mental Health First Aid Recertification.

Study Leave Report

My November Study Leave was interrupted. I returned to the office on my first two days of study leave and worked from home for much of the rest my time. I will recoup the missed study leave days. My next study leave will begin January 22nd and end January 29th, with me returning on the 30th.

Work in process:

- Renewing my AED/CPR/First Aid Certifications
- I am continuing my work with other Latinx colleagues on a bilingual service for GA in 2018.
- I have joined a team of consultants who will be producing a website and curriculum to nurture and guide Spanish Speaking UUs across the globe.
- Continuing to work on the Multicultural Congregation Workshop, which I will co-lead with Adrian Graham and Rev. Megan Foley.

DLRE's Report:

Howdy Board! Here is your January 2018 DLRE Report.

Childcare – Earlier this month, we finished up the main thing left outstanding in our attempts to bring up the childcare system into denominational best practices – formalizing childcare procedures. With that accomplished and passed by senior staff, I'm declaring this fire extinguished for now and it's back to just needing routine management rather than special focus. As such, unless new problems arise, this will be the last time I directly address childcare in my Board Report.

Teacher Trust – I believe that this is also a case that was on fire dramatically at the beginning of the year and has since been largely (but not totally) extinguished. I believe that we've made great strides in building trust between the DRE and the Teaching Teams from our weekly teacher emails to teacher huddles. Even though this is still a systemic issue, it's not actively on fire as it was earlier in the program year. Keeping with the fire metaphor, the embers are still there because of the broader systemic issues, but it's no longer actively on fire. Instead of focusing solely on building up Teacher Trust, now that a baseline of trust has been built that will grow over time, this task needs to move towards being a broader Teacher/Volunteer Support. In this vein, we are looking at scheduling a mid year teacher meeting/continual training session.

Youth Program – Tiffany continues to get acclimated to Cedar Lane as your youth coordinator, and has scheduled a Middle School Movie Night for the 19th, and a High School Lock In on the 27th. I'm hoping that these will kick off a series of monthly social events to build up our youth groups.

Adult RE – Our January Forum with Sen, Van Hollen was well attended from both Cedar Laners and visitors – there were around 300 folks there in total. We are close to launching Soul Matters Sharing Circles. We are waiting to hear back from a couple of facilitators on what time, and then we will begin registration. We will only have 4-5 groups this cycle, as not many people volunteered to facilitate groups. By this time next month, the groups should all have been launched. Adult RE is going to get more of my focus over the coming couple of months – we need to pull together the Adult RE Working Group underneath the Lifespan RE Ministry team. If you have suggestions on who would be good to serve on revitalizing an adult religious education program, please let me know!

Governance – I continue to assist Senior Staff in clarifying governance, from writing the operational definitions to helping draft procedures, to the more general senior staff duties including brainstorming about our staffing and what our staffing structure should look like ideally.

Worship – In December I co-led our Dec. 17th Multigenerational Service and our Dec. 31st New Years Eve Sunday Morning Service, and also assisted with our Christmas Eve set of services. I continue to talk up the hope that we move towards having more Time for All Ages and fewer Children’s Chapels during the month – we’re looking at making some of these changes in the upcoming church year.

Family Ministry – My hope is to work in more of a focus on family ministry and family programming into our Lifespan RE Program – a large part of this work is what I call “Parent Support” - helping parents parent according to their values. This process has begun with the launch of our Weekly Parent Email. Each email includes a column from me connecting the monthly Soul Matters Theme to parenting, suggestions on activities to do as a family connected with our Chapel theme for the week, announcements targeted to families, and more. We just sent out our second of these and we’re already getting very happy feedback from our parents about these emails.

And a final note: with some of the initial fires I arrived to having been extinguished (yay!) you will see this Board Report begin to transform into being organized around what I feel are the major responsibilities of a modern Director of Lifespan RE: Teacher/Volunteer Support, Family Ministry, Lifespan Worship, and Lifespan Religious Education Programming.

With Loving Faith,
Tim Atkins

Senior Minister’s Report:

Worship

In this reporting period, we had special services to celebrate Christmas Eve. All three evening services were well-attended this year with the 4 pm service drawing the largest crowd. Each service was different and appealed to a particular age group (4 p.m. – young children & their families, 6 p.m. – middle school children & above, 10 p.m. – youth and adults). It was wonderful to see many new faces and members at these services. I designed the 10 p.m. service which followed the Lessons & Carols format and included, readings, and a homily on the meaning of Christmas.

Worship attendance and collection plate information for the month of December are noted below:

Date	Celebrant	Worship Attendance	Collection & Share The Plate
Dec. 3	Abhi	295 (123 + 172)	\$805.00 (Interfaith Works - \$805.00)
Dec. 10	Abhi	264(104 + 160)	\$679.50
Dec. 17	Tim & Katie	301 (180 + 121)	\$716.50 (\$UUSC-676.50)
Dec. 24, 10 AM, 4, 6, & 10 PM	Norman, Katie, Tim, & Abhi	952(53+377+283+239)	\$3068.91(\$462.63 – Ministers Discretionary Fund)
Dec. 31, 10 AM	Tim & Katie	99	\$360.00

The Spirit Experience – The Dec. Spirit Experience focused on “December Holidays & Holy Days.” The DC Labor Chorus created a beautiful, inspiring, and moving tapestry of music that nurtured mind, body, and spirit.

Public Witness – I joined Rev. Katie and 30 Cedar Laners at the DACA/TPS rally on Dec. 5. On Dec. 14th, I spoke at the interfaith witness outside the NRA headquarters on the fifth anniversary of the Sandy Hook massacre to demonstrate the need to counteract the power of the NRA and the gun lobby. We had over 400 people, including 200 clergy, show up from all over the country. Social media was alive with voices speaking on behalf of those who no longer can. It was a moving day, bringing wise words, care for each other, and messages of hope and resolve.

Social Justice – Katie and I continue to work with the social justice ministry team on capacity building both at the team level and the four focus areas. This will continue to be a viewpoint that we will work from this year.

Pastoral Care

Since the last report, I made one hospital visit, three home visits and provided pastoral support to five members and families in person and by phone.

Staff

I continue to meet regularly with individual senior staff members to provide support and direction.

Internship Supervision: I am continuing to support and supervise our half-time intern minister, Norman Allen, as he engages in ministry and learning at Cedar Lane and at Davies Memorial as their student minister this year. We have twice monthly reflection, and are currently working to schedule the mid-year site visit from Wesley Seminary and to be mindful of topics and experiences to cover this year.

Davies-Cedar Lane Partnership is going well. Norman led a cross-church service on January 7 with Cedar Lane members Suzanne Pineau and Harry Olson joining him to share their reflections on the Border Witness Trip. This was the follow-up to Davies members sharing reflections at Cedar Lane on November 26.

Norman reports that there was high turn-out at a Christmas Eve morning service in which he used an adapted version of his 4 pm service at Cedar Lane. Lead roles were played by teens with “special guest appearances” by their moms and full participation from the whole congregation. Feedback included multiple comments about experiencing Christmas fully while within a UU context.

Norman shared that attendance seems to have plateaued at approximately 60 per Sunday (roughly twice what it was) with new visitors attending and returning. The first UU 101 of the year was attended by nine folks and resulted in three new members, including the mother of a family of four. Attendance is growing at a monthly Soul Matters drop-in discussion group facilitated by Norman, with 10 to 12 members showing up and the recent addition of younger folks.

Also, Norman’s office hours are drawing more people and have allowed him to offer significant pastoral care on a range of personal issues, including complications of aging and inclusion of people with special needs.

Senior Minister’s Log:

- Prepared and presented worship on Dec. 3, 10, 24 (10 AM & 10 PM); Participated in worship on Dec. 17, 24 (4 & 6 PM);
- Created worship themes and topics for the winter session – Jan. – March 2018;
- Planned and led Spirit Experience on Dec. 16; planned Interfaith service for MLK weekend;
- Shared a reflection at the NRA Witness Service (Dec. 14);
- Presented a session on growth, change, and adaptive leadership at the Board Retreat (Jan. 6)
- Met with the Rev. Mark Morrison Reed by phone to develop the agenda for Seminary for a Day;
- Made three capital campaign visits to members of the Steering Team;
- Submitted worship information for Jan. newsletter and Enews;
- Met with – Katie Romano Griffin (weekly), Tim Atkins (weekly), Sara Deshler (weekly), Henry Sgrecci (2x), Mel Kalagian (3x), Jim Anderson & Gail Riley

- (2x), Ariel Mora & Alison Moses(Mosaic Makers), Norman Allen (2x), Carolyn Morrissey , to discuss congregational programs and issues;
- Meetings – Executive Committee, Board, Senior Staff (3x), Staff Worship Team (weekly), Capital Campaign Steering Team (3x), Social Justice, Committee on Ministry;
 - Attended the IRB meeting at NIH & MC Interfaith Council Meetings;
 - Took study leave (Dec. 27-Dec. 29) – read *We Were Eight Years in Power* by Ta-Nehisi Coates, *In a Single Garment of Destiny* by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and re-read *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* by Ron Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow;
 - Kept regular office hours and attended to email correspondence and phone calls;

Respectfully Submitted by,
Abhi Janamanchi