

Assessment of the UUCM Ministries

Conducted by the Committee on Ministry (COM) in spring of 2011

Gary Charles, chair, Cindy Busch, Barb Halsey, Fred Harms and Mary Opheim

First, the COM would like to commend and thank all those members and friends who have contributed their time and efforts to the important work of these ministries during the past year. Our Ministries contribute greatly to our shared ministry of “Nourishing Spirits, Nurturing Justice”. One of the primary jobs of the COM is to support and assess the work of our 8 Ministries. We have some general comments: It seems to us that the Ministries that are most successful are typically those who benefit from the direct and regular involvement of the church staff and the Minister. In general, we have found that virtually all of our Ministries are challenged, to some degree, to recruit additional volunteers and to implement leadership succession planning. During this past year, the COM has worked with the Ministries to help them deal with these challenges and to remind them of ‘best practices’ designed to help the Ministries succeed in their goals. We have also helped the Ministries cultivate their own spiritual growth in concert with the work of their ministry.

Worship Arts Ministry

Worship Arts Ministry (WAM): Services are well received. Planning for the many services is a complex process involving many people, from within and outside the congregation. The services, which WAM innovates, orchestrates, and implements each week provides perhaps the church's best operating model of how the Ministries may interact to perform more effectively together than they can individually. WAM is making progress in standardizing and documenting routine practices in order to facilitate bringing others into its ministry, to incorporate institutional memory, and to maintain operating effectiveness when personnel changes.

Membership Ministry

Membership ministry has lost 3 out of 4 members. Since early in the fall 2010, Janna Sundby, Facilitator, is trying to carry out the work of the ministry. Lack of members is the biggest obstacle in reaching goals. Janna is working on the following goals: keeping track of new members and following up with them; trying to fill the greeter roster; providing announcements about UU 101 classes; planning new member celebrations (11/14/10); updating the “how to be a greeter” training page.

Finance Ministry

Finance Ministry has 7 members who don't meet regularly. Mike Elliot feels that his job has been an obstacle in that he has not been able to attend Sunday services regularly. However, multiple goals are in process or have been achieved: an endowment fund is close to being implemented; identifying dedicated funds has been completed; Michael Gower, Treasurer, has oversight of the Building Fund; Stewardship has implemented 3 goals (have all members pledge, have the church give away 5% of its income, have people pledge at least 5% of their income) – the first 2 goals have been successful. The Treasurer continues to submit pertinent information to the congregation by means of the Expression.

Lifespan RE Ministry Assessment

The child/youth and adult sections of the Lifespan RE Ministry are functioning well. The children and youth have participated in several high quality intergenerational services this year. Also, they have been active in social justice projects, such as the “Standing on the Side of Love” march at the state capital. Adult RE has a wide offering of classes each term, including a study of Islam to bring a multi-faith community to our church. The ministry is strong in publicizing its activities. They meet regularly, publish minutes, and are supported by paid staff (Andrea).

Social Justice Ministry

Social Justice Ministry had good participation this year by many adults and youth in the monthly dinner program connected to IOCP and St. Edwards Episcopal church, an enjoyable partnership; April and May will conclude before summer break. A range of ages was also part of the rally at State Capitol; photos record the group in our yellow shirts. Current facilitation is promised through end of August and most members expect to continue on the team, however hope was expressed for help by the Nominating Committee in naming a new Facilitator.

Facilities Ministry

The Facilities Ministry is truly operating without a Facilitator right now, although it does have some dedicated members who coordinate completion of the necessary tasks. We have recently attached a staff person (Mary Paquette) to this ministry, who is currently acting as Facilities Facilitator. This should bridge succession gaps, assuming that our budget will support this effort. The goal is to change the image of the Facilities Facilitator from a person who needs to have construction and repair skills to a person who needs to know how to coordinate the efforts. Some of the major repairs/improvements this year include: ice dam strips installed on the eaves, ongoing roof repair, ongoing furnace repair, improved paper recycling protocol throughout building resulting in less paper clutter in each room, shelves installed in minister's office and in the room next to the stage, a new dishwasher was also installed.

Communications Ministry

Our role is to bring awareness to all of the things the church is involved in. We continue to look for ways to make this as efficient and effective as possible. Our goals and standards of performance are to positively reflect the UUCM brand, mission and UU principles in all communications. We manage the website, printed materials (including the recently published picture directory), and provide graphic design and marketing support for adult RE, concert series, parade, and various other events/needs of the church. We are making big improvements in growing the knowledge depth and availability of volunteers for our ministry. We've added web developer resources and facebook support to grow our online presence and keep things up to date. This enables us to respond much more quickly to requests and updates.

Community Ministry

Since this ministry has not had a facilitator for over a year, some social events have not occurred.

However, there have been regular circle suppers and other social events. Sue Kanter has organized the Sunday Coffee service which has generally been provided by members. In many cases, other Ministries have planned and provided their own food and social components for their various events.