

August 3, 2020

The President's Message to the Congregation

To Our Members: It has been awhile since I checked in to see how everyone is faring during this extended shelter-in-place order. It seems no one is getting it exactly right; however, it is disappointing that we, as the most developed country in the world now lead the world in number of cases as well as deaths. Looks like we are in need of a change in direction. I hope you all mailed in your early voting ballots so that no one needs to be out on election day in the heat or among those not being as cautious as I believe we have been.

I thought I would bring you up to date on some of what has been going on in our Congregation since we last connected. We have had some changes in the governing body of our Congregation. Many of you know that Christine Baker resigned from the board in early March leaving the board with one less Trustee than required by our By-Laws. Chris 's presence on the Board is missed; however, she has agreed to be available when we need her. At the same time Mary Beth Chrest moved to New Mexico. Mary Beth was the Chair of our Nominating Committee and she will also be missed for her willingness to get involved and her commitment to our members. She even offered to return to assist with our Annual Auction.

These resignations left us with 2 openings: a member of the Nominating Committee and a Trustee for the Board. The Board, with advice from past nominating committee members, asked Maggie Mahan to fill the empty position on the Nominating Committee and she accepted. At their first meeting, Steve Calkins was selected to be the Committee Chair. Welcome to Maggie and thank you, Maggie and Steve, for your support of our congregation.

Steve immediately jumped into action responding to a request from the Board to find a replacement for the open position on the Board. The Committee received names of 5 talented members to consider for the position. From those names, the Committee selected David King to become our newest Trustee. David starts his term with the August Board Meeting, and we are excited to have him join us. **Welcome David** and thank you to the members of the Nominating Committee for your quick work. It certainly was more of a challenge due to our current circumstances; however, it proves we can still get things done even if we are social distance. Thank goodness for ZOOM.

Other happenings in the congregation, include an active Investment Committee led by Bob Walling. Bob and his committee have created their Committee Charter and are developing an investment policy for our congregation along with other tasks related to our financial well-being. Bob and his Committee will work closely with our Treasurer Margaret Leahy to make sure we have a stable financial base. Watch the September Newsletter for a lovely surprise thanks to the work and generosity of one of our members and Bob. Sorry no giveaways!

The Board also appointed a Task Force of Bill Chartrand, Reggie Johnson, Brooke Gaunt and myself to review, update and amend our By Laws. We have already finished

our first draft of the document and will be working with the full Board for their input and approval. Once we have a final copy, this document will go to the full membership of the Congregation for feedback, and approval. You will all have an opportunity to comment on our work before we vote on it. UUA recommends that this be done every 5 years and it has been 8 years for UUC and things have changed.

I have had a few questions from members about what is happening with our Name Change – if you remember the idea was presented at the annual meeting to change our name from Church to Congregation. In February the Board was actively looking at this recommendation and planning an approach in order to allow our members to voice their opinion on a name change. We actually had decided on a plan; unfortunately, the pandemic hit and among other issues, we were ordered to close down and to socially distance ourselves. This action stopped several things we were considering. I want to reassure the membership that this recommendation has not been erased from our work list. It has merely been put on the “Back Burner” until we are back together or if that does not happen, we will work to arrange an approach that will allow for open discussion and a fair vote by the full membership. You will be kept in the loop when things open up and we start to move forward to our new and better normal.

On the housekeeping side of our work: Lois Bartels, our Buildings and Grounds Chair, has continued to keep our physical space clean and safe for our return. Two large very messy trees on the street in front of the Church have been removed and the large Mesquite tree near the north entrance has been significantly reduced in size and trimmed appropriately. We have continued to tend to all of those required tasks that need doing and because we were beginning to lose lights in our social hall, we have changed out the fluorescent bulbs in the Social Hall and RE rooms replacing them with Led Bulbs giving us better and longer lasting lighting. We will continue to replace the fluorescent bulbs with Led bulbs throughout the building as they burn out.

I had not meant to make this so long; however, it has been a while since I communicated with you and I wanted to assure you all that we are working to keep our community connected, safe and ready to go when we can do so without concerns. You all know where to find me if you have burning issues or questions that need a response.

In the meantime, hold each other close in your hearts and stay home, stay safe and stay connected.

Yours in Faith, Friendship and Good Health

Sherry