



Minister's Message

The ART of Interim Ministry



I thought as my final column, I would share my final report to the board along with a closing paragraph or so.

First, and perhaps most importantly, thank you for your hard work, time, effort, and financial support and dedication to the church and working cooperatively with me as Interim Minister. It has been a pleasure and an honor working with this and last year's board. I am also especially gratified with the 18 new members since I started in Feb. of 2012. You also increased pledging this year, though still not what is needed for a healthy, growing church. We had a staff turnover and had to replace three positions, two of which I helped with, along with a hard working Personnel Committee-Church administrator, Bookkeeper, and DRE.

Staff- So first I believe that the board should look at how employees are treated and supported. I started a monthly staff meeting, but with the music director having a busy schedule, and the turnover, we weren't really able to build up staff relationships. There need to be further work to help employees feel valued, appreciated, and knowledgeable about how the church works, and who is in charge of what. I think the board has been doing micro-managing instead of encouraging responsible independent thinking and doing. I would

suggest an Annual Review- of bylaws, past year board actions, and board evaluations on how it is doing, and what might be improved. Staff is already evaluated; perhaps it might benefit the congregation to do all church and leadership evaluations.

Communications- The church needs a webmaster; the church website is now the #1 connection for younger people to find out about the church, and for current members to know what is going on, and who is in charge of what. I began the custom of having the administrator put out a weekly email announcement of "Looking Ahead;" as a vehicle for better dissemination of information, combined with the order of service and the newsletter. I still heard a lot of folks saying that they didn't know about something going on. The newsletter is woefully short and not geared toward committee news, for instance. How do you know what committees are doing or not doing?

Who's in Charge of what? I had suggested using the book-Churchworks: A Well Body Book for Congregations, by Ann Odin Heller, as a planning guide for looking at how the church was working. I bought and distributed some copies, and recommend using it, buying copies for all. It goes through the organization and helps with deciding what needs to be done. It also has templates for actually accomplishing changes and updates.

A Manual of Operations, including job descriptions and committee responsibilities, bylaws, and dates of church's annual events. (When is the Flower Communion usually celebrated? Auction? Other traditional events? It is hard for a newcomer, whether it be minister, staff, or new members to find out about much that is "tradition," and much that is taken for granted that "everyone knows."

Leadership I would recommend that the board look at its process and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate, rather than by just voting. We all know about the squeaky wheels, so it's important to find out what the quiet wheels think.

Activities-/ Committees- How does a new member get to know long time members? What does the church do to foster community outside of the worship service? Most of the committees listed in the directory have not met, or if they have, I'm unaware of it. Since I have done the Adult RE courses since I've been here, the chair has disappeared. Take stock of each committee and find out whether they are being effective. Without publicized monthly meetings, it's hard to tell what's going on. The definition of a committee is a group of at least 3 people who meet regularly as needed.

Expand Leadership- Too few dedicated people are doing most of the leadership and committee chairing. The district have sponsored many varied workshops as well as webinars to help churches develop leadership, but there has been little to none participation from members. Find a way to "ease out" leaders who are no longer able to fill the roles they once did because of age or infirmity by finding people who would partner with them. Often retired people still need to feel needed and valuable.

In a church which has as many elderly members, it is crucial to have some kind of

"estate planning" or other process to give people the opportunity to give generously to the church through their wills/estates, etc. Remember as well, that if all bequests go into an endowment fund, there still won't be enough to fund the current budget. I have suggested something like a "Centennial Fund" that might be more available to be used right now for growth and health. (To hire a Membership Coordinator, like before, or expanding RE, etc.) There continues to be a culture of scarcity which also has a tendency to discourage people from giving, because they may fear that the church can't "handle the money." People who have given millions to their colleges or to hospitals have been asked why they don't give to their churches, and overwhelmingly they say it's because they don't think the church knows how to handle and get the most out of money.

I feel a completely different climate in church that when I started; I have been very impressed by people's openness and willingness to develop a relationship with the minister. As I said in my sermon last Sunday, this church has had 16 ministers in the last 17 years, counting interims. No matter what the reason, that's still a lot of grief to fork with, and a lot of distrust over even developing relationship with the minister. I have found wonderful, loving people here who want the church and minister to succeed; many of them are in the current church leadership. Yet attendance is still below what "it used to be." Why?

Worship- I'd suggest a worship survey as part of the way to find out about attendance. I think the music and choir are not living up to their potential; I think Curtis's arrangements are too complicated for the small choir of predominately women's voices, or more rehearsal time is needed. There is much music out there which doesn't need or shouldn't be re-arranged. I'm coming

from a church where I found the Music director and choir too traditional and unwilling to try more contemporary music to where they are doing all sorts of creative contemporary music, but making it too difficult, or using too much "Barbershop" harmonies, which don't always result in inspirational, worshipful music. Perhaps a happy medium needs to be found.

I also find that the Worship Associates program needs some fine-tuning. There are such wide variables concerning the reading/speaking skills, that I have been hesitant to use some readings. I have also felt that the WA is responsible for too much of the service. I feel that the minister should give the opening words, for instance. I feel that I was just getting used to the ways, and regret that I haven't had a meeting with them to discuss these issues, but scheduling always seemed to be a problem. A lot will depend on how the new minister wants to do worship.

I think that the beloved community of this church has started to heal and that there is a new warm and loving feeling on Sunday morning which had been lost. Conflicts are always complicated when one tries to find out who is at fault, for instance, because it is in the religious relationship we ALL have where problems arise. Where strong personalities and opinions may drown out other people's ideas and feelings. There needs to be a loving balance between being task or people oriented, and tolerance of different opinions encouraged. I have found many folks who are willing to be open to the possibility of change, and have worked with the search committee to become the Transition Committee on Ministry and developing a Behavior Covenant.

There is still much work to be done in Social Justice, especially in reaching out to the community.

But again, I want to express my deep gratitude for the work this church leadership has done, and know there's lots more left to be done. Since this is my last board meeting to you, I can think of a long list of "things I wish I had accomplished," but I leave feeling that together we have successfully weathered the storm of past conflicts and helped heal some of the grief. I leave feeling satisfied that my 16 month interim ministry has helped both you and myself. I feel that the congregation welcomed me with open hearts and minds, and that we have traveled the spiritual journey toward beloved community and religious meaning in a loving spirit. I hope that I have been able to 'comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable,' as they say about ministry.

I leave with a loving heart and wonderful memories of a great church community, full of potential, waiting for the next spark of the new minister to ignite growth-numerically, spiritually, and especially behaviorally! If you could give me any gift, it would be to love and support your new minister, and to keep him here for a long time!

Much love, Amen, Peace, Shalom, Assalaamu Alaikum, Abrazos a todos (Hugs all around) Namaste, (A Hindu greeting of the divinity within me greeting the divinity within you) Blessed Be, Vaya Con Su Dios!

PS I realized that I have left our Pastoral Care concerns, especially with many members becoming more informed and unable to attend or be active any more. The church needs a way to keep in touch with folks beyond the minister. I did find that having daytime Adult RE courses trended to bring more folks than evening ones. It's one of those areas in hindsight; I wish I had worked on helping to develop.

I have felt blessed to be able to serve you these last 16 months; I have no illusions that everything is fine now, but I feel like together we have helped the healing and created a more positive atmosphere. You and your new minister still have plenty of challenges, but I think there is a great potential here. I have fallen in love with this congregation and hate to leave you, but I have to confess that I also love my wife back in Ohio! I hope that you love your new minister as much as I have felt loved. Blessings to you all.

And now may the peace which passes all understanding and the love that makes everything worthwhile be with us all now and for a long, long, time.

Much love,
Art

**Sunday Services - 10:30 am
(Unless other wise noted)**

July 7- Sihks

July 14- I Pod Sunday

July 21- UUSC

July 28- Richard Rios Songs of the Barrio

Religious Education News

Dear Church Members:

Please let me know if you can assist with **teaching** in the months of August and September (when I expect unusual numbers of children in the cottage) or thereafter. I will be providing lesson plans or guidelines depending on your preferences or you can just assist a lead teacher. Likely subjects will be UU principles and history.

If you are a teacher, parent, or supporter of Religious Education (RE) that is **not on the e-mail list** for the RE community of our church

please contact me, Lisa Jones
lisajonesphd@gmail.com.

At the annual meeting the congregation voted to add money to the budget to extend DRE hours and the RE council agreed to play a major role in fundraising. **Please support our efforts and let us know you will help with fundraising dinners and other events.** Please see Tory Sonstroem (tory.sonstroem@gmail.com) to get more directly involved.

Adele O'Neill is our RE Chair. Great thanks to her and Tory for their leadership in recent months. The RE Council will sponsor a **committee meeting open to all church members**, especially parents, teachers, and those curious about teaching in late August or early September.

Parents: Soon you'll see a request (via e-mail) for information about what Sunday school programming you would like to see for your children. Please respond to the e-mail and follow the directions for registering your child.

Best,
Lisa Jones, Acting Director of Religious Education
547-1020 (home number)
Office Hours: Thurs. 1-2



Social Justice News

Social Justice Collection Sunday, July 21st 2013

This month's social justice collection is in support of UUSC. Keep an eye out for an announcement in our weekly "A Look Ahead" emails very soon!

Do you know of an organization that would be a good candidate to receive one of our social justice collections? If so, please contact Board President Ben Cervantes or board member Lauri McKindley. We meet periodically to decide who will be the recipients of our social justice collections, and we welcome your ideas!

Thank you to everyone for your generous contributions!

Social Justice Collection

Our June Social Justice Collection raised **\$143.00** in support of **The Emergency Food Bank**. Thank you to everyone for your generous contributions!

Congregational News & Updates

Welcome to our new members

Rebecca Brocchini

I moved to Stockton from L.A. in 1968, with my father's lay-off due to the cancellation of the Space Program. I'm a graduate of Tokay High School and attended Delta Community College, taking classes in Art/Liberal Studies.

I worked for a number of years as Administrative Lead/Safety Coordinator for a naval contractor in oil spill response for the Pacific rim region, sending workers from the facility at Rough and Ready Island to points across the globe where a petroleum-based spill had occurred. After the BRAC closures

of many military sites, this facility was relocated to a new facility at Port Hueneme Naval Station and that is where I lived for two years, until returning to Stockton to be with family.

I have two beautiful children. Jason, 32, is married and gave me two wonderful grandchildren, Lucas, 6 yrs. and Lilly, 2 yrs. My daughter, Sara, 22, graduated with a degree in Business Administration and has decided to join the congregation with me. My husband has two grown children as well; Jason who lives in southern Calif. and Samantha, who is married to a firefighter and lives in Oakdale. She and her husband have given us two more grandchildren; Hannah, 4 yrs. and Olivia, 4 mo. We have two cats, Gary and Flash, and a border collie named Nora Desmond, who all started their lives as strays.

I love to cook, paint, sew, garden, DIY, write and travel. Enthusiastic about anything vintage, I am always on the lookout for retro clothing, housewares, décor, etc. Items that exceed storage/display space are offered up on E-Bay and that helps fund my thrift store excursions, as well as passing on some time capsule gems to other enthusiasts.

Sara and I have been attending the church for two months or so, after passing by thousands of times through the years and finally deciding to "check it out together". I have always leaned toward liberal social ideals. Raised by a devout Episcopalian mother and an equally devout Agnostic father, I was exposed to a variety of religious beliefs, but after years in traditional environments, chose to move away toward a more "spiritual" belief. I raised my daughter to be a free thinker so she could develop her own sense of self and core beliefs. It has been a great blessing to find ourselves here, together.

Kimberly Gordon

I am a native of Stockton, started going to Alaska for a summer job when I was sixteen and have traveled there every summer for twenty years.

I love art, photography, traveling, baseball and hockey, along with volunteer activities. I started volunteering my time at age twelve. For two years, I worked with mentally handicapped adults. I've also worked with the S.J. Aids Foundation, with Hospice of S.J., took a very active part with Stockton's PFLAG and also RAW. Back in the early 90's, I helped with Stockton's Gay Youth Alliance.

I once drove to Austin, TX, with the idea of moving there, but came back!

I enjoy the First U.U. Church. People have been very accepting of me, are generally gay-friendly, always have a smile on their face, and are welcoming with open arms!!!

My mother is my hero.

Sara Johnson

I was born in Stockton and have lived in the Stockton/Manteca area all my life, except for the two-year time period in Port Hueneme necessitated by my mom's job there.

I graduated from Heald College in 2012 with a degree in Business Administration and worked as an intern for a local insurance company, setting up outreach booths at health fairs, assisting in office support and setting appointments. I also volunteer with the Western Farm Workers.

I am currently on a journey of recovery and am living a sober life, which is what ultimately brought me to this U. U. Church a little over two months ago. I am on a

spiritual journey and enjoying life once again. This congregation has brought me a lot of happiness and is a place where I have developed friendships, as well as a feeling of acceptance amongst everyone and feel I can be who I truly am without judgment. That is a beautiful thing. I plan to go back to college in the next few years and would like to pursue a career in teaching or counseling.

I have a large marble tabby cat named Gary. I enjoy watching movies, drawing, painting, writing, hiking, bike riding, playing board games and, like my mom, anything vintage.

Welcoming Rev. Robert Klein

These are happy times. We are preparing for the arrival of Rev. Robert Klein, our new settled minister. Even as we are saddened to see Rev. Art Severance wind down his days with us, (He will be leaving to serve as a Developmental Minister in Amherst, New York, the last part of June.) we are happily preparing for the arrival of Rev. Klein. Rev Klein says his goodbyes to the folks at the UU Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, at the end of June and will be moving to Stockton during the month of July. His first Sunday with us will be August 4.

We want to make his transition as seamless as possible. A transition committee is planning for his arrival. We will be letting you know as activities are planned so that everyone can take part.

Look for a photo and a short biography of Rev. Klein on the bulletin board in Jackson Hall in the coming weeks.



Office Closed

July 4th and will reopen
Friday July 5th at 8:30 am.

Men's Group Meetings

July 3rd & 17th

Meet the first and third Wednesdays 7 PM-~9 PM. We welcome all regardless of gender. Discussion usually centers around politics, family, work, entertainment, sports, life in general and the like. It's just casual, relaxed conversation among friends. Location varies; call Al Babylon at 209-956-6838 if you'd like to try us out.

Food Bank Donations Needed



Please bring your donation to Church any Sunday. The barrel will be next to the piano in the fireside Room.

Collecting Bottles and Cans



The Church is collecting aluminum cans and plastic bottles (water, soda, & juice ONLY – no other plastics) for recycling. Two barrels for your donations are in Jackson

Hall. Please drain all liquids before placing in receptacles. Every Monday the cans and bottles will be taken to a recycling center. For more information, contact Judy Andrews at (209) 476-9828.

Help Save Mart donate to our Church!

This may seem a little strange, that a grocery store could donate to a church. But here is how it works.

If you shop at Save Mart and show the "Save Mart Share Card" at the time of purchase, then 3% of the purchase amount will be donated to the church. This is like free money. Sara Milnes has Share Cards and will be happy to give you one.

Book Group Meeting



The Book Club meets this month on June 26th at 7:00 p.m. in Jackson Hall. *The Crucible* (a play) by Arthur Miller.

Facilitated by Anne Struck.

New members or "drop-ins" are always welcome. If interested in joining us contact Herman Washington at 209-957-8433 or lhwash@comcast.net

Thanks,

Herman

BOOK CLUB READING SELECTIONS for APRIL - AUGUST 2013

AUGUST: *Truth and Beauty* by Ann Patchett. Facilitated by Sigrid Eilers.

New members or "drop-ins" are always welcome. If you are interested in joining us contact Herman Washington at 957-8433 or lhwash@comcast.net

Emerson Coffee House Collective

We will not be hosting the Emerson Coffee House in July or August but will resume in September.

Will There Be Coffee For the Coffee Hour?

Yes, there will always be coffee for the coffee hour. But it seems that the cost is more than the donations that wind up in the donation cups.

Please help enliven our coffee hour with your donation as you enjoy that wonderful coffee and the desserts after church services each Sunday.

Coffee prices are going up and we hope the donations do as well.

Play Reading Group Forms: Men Needed

A new play reading group, an offshoot of the UU book group, has met for its first play reading. The group organized by Anne Struck of the book group read Oscar Wild's hilarious "The Importance of Being Earnest" on May 13. . Our 2nd outing will be on Monday night, July 8 at 7 PM at the home of Pat Davis. Our next play will be Noel Coward's, "Blithe Spirit" written in 1941 as Britain was fighting WWII. It's a comedy about ghosts, mediums and those who would believe and disbelieve in them. The group so far is all female, but this play requires a male lead and another smaller male role.

Gentlemen, if you would like to participate in this fun event, please call Pat Davis and volunteer. There is no acting involved, make up or memorizing. We simply read the play in the roles we have been assigned. It's a lively evening with snacks and friendship.

For those who enjoy drama, this is your group. We have agreed to meet every other month rather than monthly to avoid conflicts and overburdening ourselves. The male lead in the English movie was played by Rex Harrison, so if you fancy yourself as a Rex Harrison type, the part of Charles is perfect for you.

Grant Research and Writer Needed!

There are grants out there that can be used by our church to support programs that will benefit our church and our community.

Is this your niche in life? Would you like to research grants, and if there are some that we might use, draft the grant application?

If so, we need your help! Please contact Dwane Milnes and he will help point you in the right direction

Kitchen Cleaning

Each month an Alliance member or church friend assumes the responsibility of checking the kitchen every week for soiled towels and sticky counter tops.

It is everyone's responsibility to see that the kitchen is left clean and tidy after each event. This includes not leaving dirty dishes on the counter tops.

A thorough clean up was done three weeks ago and paid for by The Alliance. However, both the refrigerator and the stove took extra time.

Please be aware that these two pieces of equipment are used over and over and should be left clean and food items marked for future use.

DAWN house, *Directions for Abused Women in Need*, a program of the Women's Center, appreciates the motel toiletries and other purchases (toothbrushes and paste, deodorant, etc.) church members have been donating for several years.

These items are sometimes packaged in small Zip lock bags and include, soap, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, all helpful to a woman arriving without her own toiletries. Extras are included for DAWN house distribution.

Alliance member, Lois Hulsey, has been sorting, bagging and delivering your gifts for the past few years.

The Alliance thanks you with a small reminder. We do not use any item that has been opened or partially used. So please new and unopened items only.

The Alliance

Other UU Events & News Beyond the Congregation

With great pleasure the Pacific Central District Board of Directors announces that Joshua Searle-White has accepted the position of Pacific Central District Executive. Josh will be attending the Pacific Western Regional Assembly later this month, General Assembly in Louisville, KY, and will assume his position in the PCD on July 1, 2013.

You may recognize Josh's name through his popular workshops at General Assembly The UUMA convocation or UUMA chapter retreats. He is also the author Magic Wanda's Travel Emporium: Tales of Love, Hate, and Things in Between, published by Skinner House. Josh is a master storyteller with deep experience helping individuals and Congregations work with their own narratives to create greater health and vitality.

He has deep roots and many years of experience in Unitarian Universalist congregations, where he has taught and served in a variety of leadership positions; and he has created and delivered well-received presentations around the country, as well as at the district and national levels.

Josh holds a Ph.D. in psychology and is currently Associate Professor of Psychology and Department Chair at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania.

He is leaving this tenured position to serve Unitarian Universalism in the Pacific Central District. He tells us he was not looking for another job - only for an opportunity to align his work with his passion for our shared faith. We welcome his talents and enthusiasm.

The Board wishes to thank the Search Committee for their good work and excellent result. They have served Unitarian

Universalism in the PCD through an important transition.

Susan Lankford

Acting President

Stockton Area Events & News

Free Admission Day at The Haggin Museum

The Haggin Museum Free Admission Day
Come enjoy FREE admission to the Haggin every 1st Saturday of the month.

All visitors are admitted free of charge from 12:00-5:00 p.m.

Go to www.hagginmuseum.org or contact museum staff at (209) 940-6300 or info@hagginmuseum.org for more info.

Concerts in the Park - Summer 2013

Wednesday, June 5, - Wednesday, August 21

Time: 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Location: Victory Park

Spend an evening in the park with your favorite person, a picnic supper, and some great music as the Concert in the Park series continues for its 61st year! The 12-concert series typically attracts in excess of 12,000 people!

Concerts are free - Lawn chairs and picnics welcome!

Schedule:

- **July 10:** Dixie Ink
- **July 17:** Tropical Nights
- **July 24:** Swingaires -- Genre: Big Band, Swing era
- **July 31:** [Summit](#) -- Genre: Rock cover band
- **Aug. 7:** [Valley Concert Band](#) -- Genre: Big Band, 30-piece band
- **Aug. 14:** Nick Isaak Band
- **Aug. 21:** [Waterloo](#) -- Genre: Northern California's premier Abba tribute band

Regular Church Activities – Come Join Us!

Regular Groups & Meetings	Monthly Meeting Date(s)	Date(s)	Contact for More Information
<p>Book Group <i>All are invited to read & discuss books selected by the group.</i></p>	<p>4th Wednesday 7:00 PM</p>	<p>June 24th</p>	<p>Herman Washington (209) 957-8433 or bookgroup@stocktonuu.org</p>
<p>Men's Group <i>All are invited who wish to participate in our conversational sessions.</i></p>	<p>1st & 3rd Wednesday 7:00 PM</p>	<p>June 5th & 11th</p>	<p>Al Babylon, 956-6838 or mensgroup@stocktonuu.org</p>
<p>Youth Group <i>Formerly called YRUU, our youth group offers opportunities for social get-togethers and service projects.</i></p>	<p>Special Events as Scheduled</p>	<p>Dates will vary. Please check the church website for more information.</p>	<p>religious_ed@stocktonuu.org</p>

Purpose

(Article III, By-Laws of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton)

We, the members of this congregation, shall foster Unitarian Universalist principles. We encourage each individual to determine his or her own creed and standard of theological belief. Toward those purposes, we are committed to creating a loving religious community through worship, study, service and fellowship while honoring diversity and respecting the inherent worth and dignity of each individual. We shall strive to render enlightened service to the various communities of which we are a part. We respect the interdependent web of all living things.

Interim Minister

Rev. Robert Klein466-7743
E-Mail.....minister@stocktonuu.org

Director of Religious Education

Lisa Jones.....466-7743
E-Mail..... religious_ed@stocktonuu.org

Music Director

Curtis Mannah.....466-7743
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Administrator

Nichole Ybarra.....466-7743
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Board of Trustees' President

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How to Contact Us

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Office Hours.....Mon. – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Thurs. 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

First Unitarian Universalist Church
2737 Pacific Avenue
Stockton CA 95204

Return Service Requested

Time Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly