

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County**  
**Ministry Evaluation**  
**May, 2023**

The following evaluation was done by members of church committees and staff with Rev Denis as a group process.

**Counseling and Pastoral Care** Consider availability, responsiveness, warmth, empathy, knowledge of family systems, skill level in pastoral care, confidentiality, hospital visitation, etc.

- Rev Denis notes that this area has always been a priority for him , although he wishes there was more time . The need for this right now is enormous...it's an impossible task to be as thorough as we'd like ideally.
- Lee would like to have more intentional one to one conversations with parents next year. She's been wonderful with pastoral care.
- Joys and concerns are an important part of pastoral care and lead to supportive actions for the church community
- Helping hands is evolving, and reflecting the challenges of growing from a family style congregation to a program one. A suggestion made that helping hands might have a weekly column in the UUCSC newsletter.

### **1. Practical Arts**

Consider administration, organizational development in and out of congregation, management of staff and volunteers, attention to detail, support and leadership development, recognition and appreciation of others, delegation of responsibility and authority, follow through and completion of tasks, time management, attention to finances, fund raising, funding ministry, public relations and publicity skills, ability to work with boards and committees, clarity of roles, attention to long range plan, tech expertise

- Worship assistants and the autonomy of the worship committee are good examples of leadership development and clarity of roles/ ownership of the congregation
- Ministers monthly reports are always on time and are detailed.
- Lots to learn with technology and simulcasted services... and the congregation is stepping up and exercises grace.
- Mutually fostering a sense of grace, hospitality and being in this together, which allows us all to be present and to roll with the flow. Things like Community Dinners help nurture that environment.
- Offerings (the weekly "asks") are loosening up the culture around money silence.
- Rev Denis and Lee created the worship committee spreadsheet to keep track of every detail and participant of worship. The committee has been willing to adopt and learn, and are now a model for how to use google drive across the congregation.
- Rev Denis is excellent at delegating and bringing new folks into active participation in worship services

- Elizabeth Donovan has been the right person at the right time, working with Rev D to pull everyone together joyfully and gracefully.. Nancy Richman is going to be the right person to think about a long range plan for the congregation, hopefully holding on to that loosely so that we can be responsive.

## **2. Organizational Ministry**

Consider integration of new members, creating a welcoming environment, encouraging a sense of community, encouraging growth, supporting a broad variety of programs, involvement of others in planning and conducting programs, nurturing leadership, professional presentation of self, working with different age groups, etc.

- Rev Denis has been very available to congregation through one to one meet ups, Beverages and Banter, and on line with folks who needed to stay away due to vulnerability to Covid.
- Membership Committee has worked very hard reviving its outreach. The recent new membership ceremony was excellent
- Rev Denis greeting folks out front before service has been very welcoming
- Owl has been an instrument of radical welcoming, especially of queer folks/families
- BLM Rainbow flag and other symbols of safety and welcoming
- Lee has been so present to the “rest” of the congregation: community dinners, worship, special events, always a welcoming presence.
- .Great rapport among staff that permeates worship and every program
- Music worship is going well. Mike has integrated new aspects such as dance into worship services. Post Covid Singers are becoming part of the congregation= less separation of ministries.
- Sara is doing a wonderful job. Her strengths are attention to detail, and willingness to always help: she’s always focused and performs her roles effectively.
- Overall consensus is that we are a very welcoming congregation with many members stepping up to make this happen

## **3. Personal and Professional Growth**

Consider performance under stress, ability to hear and respond to criticism and feedback, skillfully giving criticism and feedback, conveying energy and enthusiasm, giving and receiving praise, sense of humor, managing conflict, modeling a healthy balance of professional and personal life, engaging in a rewarding spiritual practice.

- All of the professional staff do a great job with this and hold one another accountable.
- A Big concern is the burnout of volunteers, need to share roles for treasury responsibilities
- Committees may need restructuring and consolidation
- The Right Relations committee has not been called on this year, a good sign but it should be reviewed and membership kept up to date.

- Elizabeth and other lay leaders have been excellent at using dinners, social events, and time after service to heal wounds and address conflicts.
- It was noted that Rev Denis uses humor well to diffuse challenges, he is also able to offer constructive feedback without causing discomfort.
- Rev Denis, Lee, and Mike support each other, and work well together.

#### **4. Teaching (All Ages)**

Consider program development and coordination, seminar design and facilitation, teacher training, supporting teachers in planning and conducting classes, providing program resources and support for parents, teachers and colleagues, intergenerational activities, programs for children, youth and adults, volunteer recruitment, articulation of liberal religious education approach and philosophy, knowledge of resources and curriculum etc.

- Lee is working well with the difficult task of providing RE with lack of continuity of children, and outdated curricula that does not take in the reality of current congregation life.
- There are not enough volunteers for RE
- A new program Sidekicks hopes to create and nurture intergenerational community reaching out to youngest and oldest members of the congregation.
- Lee has used Soul Matters effectively to promote continuity across congregation, as well as making good use of the newsletter to communicate RE events.
- Kids here feel that they are welcomed here and valued and appreciated as well as an important part of our congregation.

#### **5. Worship**

Consider preparedness, coherence, intellectual challenge, spirituality, creativity, inspirational message, effective use of humor, effective use of ritual and liturgical arts, music, prayer and meditation, readings/stories, rites of passage, pulpit presence, voice, etc.

- There is Diversity and balance in the services.
- Children are involved when it makes sense, rather than trying to force it on one particular Sunday each month
- Worship committee is super committed to content, quality and inclusivity. There's a sense of a greater mission and spiritual presence.
- Lee has taken responsibility for leading a few services a year, which helps the worship committee and builds interconnection between families and "the rest" of the congregation= unity and inclusion
- Generosity of the committee in including the presence of worship assistants
- Global commitment to going deeper together spiritually...living out our mission.
- Sermons are rich and have depth
- Rev Denis and Lee do a good job of balancing the needs of adults and children in presenting aspects of worship
- worship committee is working well, addressing the needs of the congregation. Participation on the committee is a spiritually enriching experience.

- Consider citing sources of some worship content for further exploration by congregants

**6. Denominational Affairs** Consider involvement in denominational and district events, UUMA/LREDA chapter meetings, interfaith activities, encouragement of member involvement at the district and continental levels, informing congregation of UUA denominational concerns and issues, etc.

- •Chalica and the state of the UUA and our principles have allowed a lot of conversation about denominational affairs, which has led to a great interest in GA and other events.
- Rev Denis is involved in the leadership of the UUMA chapter
- Our connection to the Westminster congregation has grown especially due to the efforts of the RE program

### **7. Prophetic Outreach**

Consider involvement in witnessing and advocating for community/social justice issues, encouraging congregational involvement in community/social justice issues, leading the congregation in addressing issues specifically related to oppression, privilege and de-centering whiteness.

- Everyone keeps showing up and making an impactful presence. Participation of Rev Denis and congregation members in local and state justice movements is evident.
- Easier to live out and articulate the mission since we've come up with the summation: welcoming, loving, growing spiritual, seeking justice
- Cathy Solomon is doing an amazing job
- Newsletter helps so much in communicating opportunities for engagement
- There's a sense of doing all of this together. There's so much to do it will never be enough, and at the same time, everything we do is enough. No shame, only commitment and enthusiasm.