

## Sharing our Board Goals for 2017-2018

**By Julie Laut, Chair, Board of Trustees**

The work of your 2017-2018 Board of Trustees (BOT) began last June, immediately after the congregation elected the new board members and voted unanimously to call Florence Caplow as our new settled minister. Now, I write to share the goals we have set for the remainder of the 2017-2018 board year. What an exciting time this has been!

To prepare for the year, we met for a half-day board retreat where we learned about each other, examined our spiritual reasons for serving, and began orienting new board members. During our bi-monthly meetings, we took up agenda items from committees and started the process of goal setting for the year with a focus on leadership development. All the while, we knew things would shift with Florence's arrival in August. With barely contained anticipation, we continued our work and looked forward to the date when our new minister would join us.

Since Florence started her ministry on August 15, the board has continued to grow as a team and work together to identify the most important issues facing our congregation in the short and long term. Vice Chair Jenny Hunt, along with Florence and fellow board member Randy Locke, has met with lay leaders from every committee to assess our leadership and organizational needs. And we all learned a great deal from the congregation and each other during our weekend spent with UUA MidAmerica representative Lisa Presley in October as she guided us through exercises designed to strengthen our "start-up" with our new minister.

All of this collaborative work, along with a re-reading of our congregational documents, has led the board to set the following goals for the 2017-2018 church year:

1. Become a more inclusive, compassionate, diverse, and justice-oriented congregation.
2. Support and grow a vibrant Religious Education Program for children and adults.
3. Create a congregational culture that fosters involvement, participation, and leadership.

These goals encompass work already in progress, but we hope they also will guide new initiatives emerging from the congregation, lay leadership, staff, and minister.

UUCUC is already working toward the first goal in numerous ways. Here are just a few examples of the many steps the BOT is taking to help UUCUC **become more inclusive, compassionate, diverse, and justice-oriented**:

With Board approval, Jim Hannum is leading the effort to renew our [Welcoming Congregation status](#), a process that will identify areas where our congregation has room to grow into new levels of welcome. This may include programming on transgender issues, bisexual and queer issues, race/ethnicity and sexuality, and other intersections of identity and experience.

The Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the minister and the membership coordinator, is investigating the current bylaw that links financial requirements to voting membership. We want to ensure that our policies welcome all community members, without regard to socio-economic standing.

The Accessibility Task Force created in the 2016-2017 board year, led by Bill Childers and board member Wendy Graves, continues to guide an accessibility assessment of our building and our processes. Large print programs are now available at the entrance to the sanctuary before every service. Estimates are being gathered to bring the ramp into the sanctuary into ADA compliance. And our staff and Property Committee are taking steps toward establishing a fragrance free building policy. A full accessibility assessment and further recommendations will be presented to the board this spring.

And, at the December 2017 business meeting the BOT voted to create a Socially Responsible Investments (SRI) Task Force to explore UUCUC's current investments, research best SRI practices, educate the BOT and congregation about these issues, and make recommendations regarding how to ensure UUCUC's investments are socially responsible in the future. The board discussion indicated the hope that this task force will aim for the education piece to take place over the course of the spring and that we will receive recommendations by early April regarding possible changes to policies or bylaws.

We are all excited to continue working on behalf of UUCUC as it grows into a more vibrant, social-justice oriented, and radically inclusive community. Future articles will continue to highlight how your BOT is working toward our three goals.

We welcome all of your comments, questions, and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at [jlaut@hushmail.com](mailto:jlaut@hushmail.com) or 513-544-2682. Or, even better, come say "hello" during coffee hour after service on any given Sunday.