

**President's Report, September 15, 2019**  
**Lorie Craddock**

Twenty some years ago I joined this church. I remember coming to a Congregational Meeting and wondering what was going on. Who were these people talking to me from the podium? What's up with the index cards? "Quorum" sounded like a new restaurant and how about this "Robert" guy and why did he get to make all the rules.

Lots of time has passed since then. My husband and I have raised our three children in this church. I've lost count of the committees I've been on, the meals I've hosted and the task forces I've been tasked with. Some of you have seen me weave a few worships. Many of you know me as someone who can make a decent cup of coffee. I'm also pretty good at folding dinner napkins from a 20 year career as a flight attendant. That explains why I say "stand-by" a lot and point to things with two hands.

But what I want you all to know most about me is that I volunteered to be President of the Board. For better or worse, I'm happy to do this. I don't want to stand on the sidelines, pointing fingers and saying "someone should do something about this". Because here is what I have found to be a truth.....

.....when you point one finger out, you have three fingers pointing right back at you.

That is to say we should all look to ourselves first to "do something". Show up, stay informed, volunteer, pledge, and most importantly take time to talk to each other and build connections. We have work to do and this community needs to be in right relationship with each other. Start small. Talk about the little stuff--how about that weather, who cuts your hair and how did you get your name. Build new friendships, strengthen old ones and maybe start over with the relationships that have veered off course.

This past year makes me feel like we've had a big blowout family argument at the Thanksgiving dinner table and now we're all sitting around wondering what to do. And the big game is on soon and we have to clear the table and are we out of dish soap and someone needs to wrap up the leftovers and whose dog is this and why are the kids so quiet and how do you make this remote work and when can we have some pie? All the

things we need to think about. All the things we need to do. It's a little overwhelming. But we are a family and we are going to get through this. Because we all like pie.

These may be challenging times at TJMC---the future of the ministry, the budget, the mood of this congregation---all have question marks surrounding them. Over the next few weeks, months, years, we will examine those question marks and reinvent this church. We will figure out how to bridge our divides. We will name our history. We will forgive and we will be forgiven. We will learn from our mistakes and heal from our disagreements.

And we will move forward. All of us can and must rededicate ourselves to this community, this church, this family. We are going to grow. We are going to change. We are going to create a new vision for our future.

So let's get started.....

### **The Future of our Ministry**

Since July 1 of this year, TJMC has not had a full-time settled Minister. Our part-time Assistant Minister Alex McGee has been preaching one Sunday a month and she has been scheduling guest speakers, including our Director of Faith Development Leia Durland-Jones for the other Sundays. There is also a team of Worship Weavers in place to assist with the Sunday Worship. Alex has generously agreed to continue to schedule the Sunday speakers to the end of this fiscal year or July 2020.

Eventually we will call a settled minister but our next step is to hire an interim minister. There are four different types of interim ministers and their compensation packages for a church of our size in a city with similar demographics are all about the same, \$93K salary + 35% benefits or just over \$125,000/year.

#### ***Regular Interim Minister***

The role of an interim Minister is to help a congregation stabilize and make healthy adjustments between settled ministries, and to give individuals in the congregation time to process their feelings about the ministry which has just ended before looking for a new settled minister. Three Board members form an Interim Search Team. The online

search takes place from February to April and Interim Ministers are hired by the Board (not called by the congregation) in May for August 1 start dates. Interims typically stay with a congregation 2 years and are not eligible to be called as the congregation's settled minister.

### ***Contract Minister***

A contract minister is hired for a negotiated number of Sundays (32-36 Sundays a year would be considered full-time). They may do some pastoral care or social justice work. Online profiles for Contract Ministers are released by December 1 for an August start date. Salary and benefits are negotiated with the congregation but are typically in line with the UUA recommendations. Contract ministers are eligible to be called as a congregation's settled minister.

### ***Targeted Minister***

A targeted minister is typically a semi-retired minister serving a congregation for short term contracts (3-6 months) for specific duties (Sunday Worship, pastoral care, community outreach, etc..) Salary and benefits are negotiated with the congregation but typically in line with the UUA recommendations. Targeted ministers are unlikely to be interested in accepting a position as a full-time lead minister.

### ***Developmental Minister***

For congregations with significant challenges and targeted goals, the UUA Developmental Minister program helps congregations set goals, then matches them with a minister whose skills can help the congregation engage cultural change work to achieve those goals. The Minister is hired not called and typically stays 5-7 years. Developmental Ministers are seasoned Ministers with at least 10 years experience in congregational ministry. The recommended salary for a Developmental Minister for a church our size in a city with similar demographics is \$93K + 35% benefits. Developmental Ministers are not eligible to be called as the congregation's settled minister.

Of these four types of interim ministers, it is likely TJMC would hire the last type, a developmental minister to help us work through some of the challenges of the past few years. There is a timeline for hiring a developmental minister. In November 2019 we must indicate to the UUA that we would like to hire a DM. The search process would

take place between February and April 2020 and a DM is hired late in the spring with a start date in August 2020.

At this time, the Board has not indicated to the UUA that we are hiring a DM nor has any type of Ministerial Search Committee been formed or even discussed. The budget has been the Board's primary focus and once we have passed a budget and have a better picture of our finances , we will turn our attention to the interim process.

### **The Budget**

The budget is already one of the items on the agenda for this meeting. Treasurer Stan Walker and I will be presenting all sorts of facts and figures for your enjoyment. The Board has made available copies of both the line item budget and the pie charts of the program budget. Pick your favorite but don't get too attached to either one because over the Labor Day weekend, Stan and our pledge tracker Cathey Polley realized there were some discrepancies in the projected amount of pledge revenue for 2019-2020. Stan and I will be talking more about the discrepancy in a few minutes and what it means for our finances.

### **The Stewardship Committee and the Pledge Drive**

This fiscal year we anticipate holding a pledge drive in February/March 2020. The Board has made reinvigoration of the Stewardship Committee and the Pledge Drive a priority and we hope to link the two together so we can ask you for both your talents and treasure at the same time. Later this month, the Board will put out meeting dates and information about how to get involved but if you are looking for one way to make an enormous difference at TJMC, this is it: Please volunteer to work on the Stewardship Committee or the Pledge Drive.

### **The Leia Durland-Jones Ordination Task Force**

Our Director of Faith Development, Leia Durland-Jones wishes to be ordained by our congregation as a Unitarian Universalist Minister. A Task Force has been formed to study this possibility. The members of the task force are Karen Prairie, Pam McIntire, Elaine Chapman, Margaret Gorman, Elizabeth Breeden, Dawn Dirks, Laura Horn, Larry Moulis. Mary Rose Curtis is an honorary member. The Task Force will be reporting

directly to the Board and the reports will be made available to everyone in the monthly meeting minutes. In the meantime, if you'd like to learn more and be in conversation about Leia's ordination, I encourage you to email Laura Horn or Pam McIntire.

### **Glenn Short Sanctuary Capital Endowment Fund**

In a few minutes we will be honoring a long-time member of our beloved community, the late Glenn R. Short. Because of Glenn's generous financial gift it will be possible to accomplish some much-needed repairs, renovations and upgrades to the church building. There will be a committee overseeing the trust and the committee is made up of some of the folks who knew Glenn best and took care of him in his last years. You can learn more about Glenn Short and his amazing life by talking to the committee members

### **New Director of Administration and Finance, Sean Skally**

I am pleased to announce the Personnel Committee has completed a successful candidate search and we have hired a new DAF. Sean Skally will be starting work on September 16 and he will be introduced at the Board Meeting on September 28. I encourage you to introduce yourselves and welcome Sean to TJMC.

### **Sunday Staff Support**

On a more sober note regarding church staff, please keep in mind that while we are without a lead minister, Leia, Alex, Christina and Caroline are carrying far more than their normal workload. Leia and Alex are fitting more and more work into the same time frame; Caroline is now working as both the RE Assistant and the Office Assistant and Chris will be training our new DAF in addition to her regular responsibilities. When we see Leia, Alex, Christina or Caroline on Sunday, we must remember it is the busiest day in their schedules and they are rightly focused on doing the job at hand. I'm sorry to report that there have been a number of incidents lately where congregants have been overbearing, disruptive and demanding of the staff's time and attention. And not just on Sunday. Both in person and via email. So I am asking everyone to please be mindful of your behavior and interactions with Leia, Alex, Christina and Caroline. Consider directing your questions or comments to Board Members instead of the staff or please schedule a time outside of Sunday Worship to talk with a member of the staff. This transition time between ministries is stressful for both the congregation and the staff. We should be looking for ways to help each other and lighten the load on the people who

are most directly affected by the changes at church. More “how can I help” and less “can you do this for me” would be greatly appreciated.

### **Name change**

Also on our agenda today is David Mellor. David will present a plan for changing the name of TJMC. We will vote on whether or not to investigate the possibility of a name change using the procedures outlined in the Public Witness Process. I hope everyone will consider the name change with an open mind and in consideration to the future of our church.

### **Board Retreat**

Finally I want to tell you about the retreat the Board of Trustees had just at the beginning of September. We identified four areas of church life that we believe need the most attention:

1. Stewardship and the Pledge Drive
2. Increased Board--Congregation--Staff communication
3. Support the church staff during this time of ministerial transition
4. Articulate a vision of TJMC's future

I want to tell you about all the great ideas we brainstormed and put into words, I want to tell you about the enthusiasm this Board has to roll up our sleeves and get things done, but my time in this pulpit has already gone on for too long and I sense some eyes are glazing over.

So instead, I will encourage you to come to a Board meeting. Come at 6PM and have BYO dinner with us. Talk to us and tell us what you think. Raise your hand and get involved. Now is the time. Your church needs you. And not just to pay your pledge dollars to keep the roof sound and the lights on. We're here to do more. The lights have to stay on alright. The lights have to stay on so we can see the vision of the future of our church.

May it be so.