

UUCOD Board Meeting Summary, October 21, 2025

Attending:

Board Members attending in person: Julia Bell, Treasurer, Claudia Simmons, Secretary, Director at Large, John Ressler, Director at Large, Walter Gendel, Rev. Ian Riddell, Minister

Board Member Attending by Zoom: Rod Belshee, President, Julia Alberg-Burbank, 1st Vice President

Board Members Not Present: Frank Riela, 2nd Vice President

Others Present: Jane Zaun, Mel Wilkinson

Others Present by Zoom: Fran Hoag

- **Opening Reflection:** Words from Anastasia B. Rosh on choosing love as a guiding principle.
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Member Check-Ins

- **General Mood:** Many attendees felt scattered due to busy schedules but expressed gratitude and good spirits.
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Procedural Matters

- **Consent Agenda:** September Board Minutes were approved with a formal motion for clarity and adherence to process. Walter Gendell made the motion, seconded by Julia Bell.
 - **Explanation:** The consent agenda allows for approval of items decided before the meeting, such as email votes or prior minutes.
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Voices of the Congregation

AED Installation

- **Proposal:** Mel Wilkinson proposed purchasing an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for the premises, addressing concerns from an aging congregation.
- **Cost:** Estimated between \$1,500–\$2,000.
- **Training:** Device is user-friendly; additional training for multiple people (including CPR) discussed.
- **Maintenance:** Facilities committee to manage ongoing checks and supplies.

- **Decision:** Unanimous approval to proceed with purchase and implementation.

Alcohol Service Certification

- **Background:** State law requires a certified “responsible beverage server” to be present at events where alcohol is served.
 - **Current Status:** Only one certified person (Jane); need for at least one more.
 - **Process:** Certification involves a brief online class and test and is valid for three years.
 - **Action:** Volunteers sought to join Jane in obtaining certification; discussion to continue offline.
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Old and Unfinished Business

Book Discussion: Leadership and Process

- **Book:** Introduction and first chapter discussed (likely on leadership in spiritual communities).
- **Key Themes:**
 - *How* things are done matters more than *what* is done.
 - Leadership as an opportunity for self-discovery and transformation.
 - Balancing outcome focus with process and relational approaches.
 - Personal reflections on adapting from outcome-driven to process-oriented leadership.
- **Action:** Members encouraged to read chapter two for next month.

Designation of Attitude of Gratitude Note Recipients

- Walter Gendell will send out notes this month to:
 - Rob DuWors recommended a note go to Claudia Lerner for the bakery goods she provides every week.
 - Bill Masco for his work in procuring a new amp in the sanctuary
 - Rev. Ian will be sending emails to those who made Sunday’s hospitality service so phenomenal.
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New Gratitude Initiative

- **Current Practice:** Board sends thank-you notes to contributors.

- **New Ideas:**
 - Public “gratitude flip chart” in the lobby for members to write thank you notes to each other.
 - Paper stars or shapes as visible tokens of appreciation.
 - Option for anonymous or less public acknowledgments (e.g., gratitude box).
 - Plan to launch the initiative at the November 30th service focused on gratitude.
 - **Consensus:** Keep the system simple, visible, and not a substitute for direct personal thanks.
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Church Council

- **Feedback:** Recent meeting was productive, well-organized, and fostered supportive relationships between board and committees.
- **Action Item:** Board liaisons to maintain regular communication with committee chairs.

Social Change Now Class

- **Participation:** Good turnout, including new members.
- **Objective:** Equip leaders with a social change mindset; expand offerings in-person and on Zoom.
- **Goal:** Build shared vocabulary and approaches for organizational social change.

Strategic Goals Tracking

- **Approach:** Move towards a project management style of tracking progress on annual goals.
- **Liaison Role:** Board members to check in with committees about progress and needs, especially regarding micro-volunteerism.
- **Support Needs:** Committees encouraged to articulate what support or resources they require.

Lifespan and Social Change Programs

- **Lifespan:** Rev. Riddell plans to revitalize programming by gathering input from interested members.
 - **Meet the Moment:** Ongoing work to identify and partner with local organizations for social justice engagement.
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Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) Statement

- **Purpose:** Begin the process for the congregation to adopt a public social justice statement, modeled after UUA General Assembly practices.
 - **Process:** Board approved initiating congregational discussions, with wording to be adapted to local context before a vote.
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Financial and Operations Report

- **Financial Health:** Income and expenses higher than last year but within budget; savings from lower-than-expected parking lot costs.
 - **Honoraria:** Decision to standardize speaker honoraria at \$350 for fairness and simplicity.
 - **Men's Breakfast:** Successful event, well-attended, covered costs, and fostered community.
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Other Notable Items

- **Membership:** New member class well-attended; new members already active in committees.
 - **Worship Overflow:** Sanctuary can accommodate up to 158 people per fire code; ADA compliance concerns noted.
 - **Security:** Exploring training for active shooter situations.
 - **Reports:** All committee reports are available on shared drive.
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Closing

- **Appreciation:** Gratitude expressed for members' time, energy, and care.
 - **Adjournment:** Meeting ended on time with a closing reflection and thanks to all participants.
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Meeting Highlights

- **AED Purchase:** Approved for up to \$2,000, with training and maintenance assigned to facilities.
- **Alcohol Service Certification:** Jane Zaun completed certification; seeking at least one more certified server. Claudia Simmons will work with Jane.
- **Gratitude Flip Chart:** Launch planned for late November; paper stars offered as an option.

- **Men's Breakfast:** Raised \$160 in donations, covered costs, and improved process for future events.
- **Strategic Goal Tracking:** Board to check in monthly on committee progress and support needs.

Respectfully Submitted,



Claudia L. Simmons, Secretary

Date Approved: November 18, 2025.

Attachments

Monthly Reports

Report to the Board
October 21, 2025
President Rod Belshee

Meet the Moment

I mentioned last month that about nine of us are meeting to figure out how collectively to live our values and Meet the Moment (one of our Strategic Goals).

- We decided that our focus would be on finding ways for the congregation to act to reduce harm to immigrant populations in the Coachella Valley in the face of the current administration's actions and plans.
- The mechanism: Provide support to existing front line groups, following their lead, since personal relationships and trust within the community are a prerequisite.
- The scope: This is a congregation-wide effort. While it is definitely not a PR activity, we will conduct it in the name of UUCOD. *(Of course individuals can also engage in their own volunteer activities.)*

Collectively, we researched and/or contacted about a dozen local organizations. Many were ruled out as there wasn't a match (e.g. they needed professional skills, or they were heavily into bringing people to their religious beliefs, or they focused on a different geography). There are a couple of possibilities. Rev Ian and I will attend the Clergy Meeting of the Inland Congregations United for Change on October 23 to talk with potential partners.

Worship Service Overflow

I mentioned last month that I chartered a task team to look at options if we reach capacity. The group quickly decided to focus just on providing overflow in the community room during the single service, ruling out other options. We are looking at implications for affected teams, such as A/V and hospitality, if we need to set up overflow.

For Jewish Holy Days, DOS rearranged the chairs in the sanctuary and added folding chairs, resulting in 189 seats (138 green, 11 brown, 40 folding), plus more folding chairs in the foyer! While we typically place a maximum of 138 chairs in the sanctuary, this shows that we could fill up to the Fire Marshall limit of 158 (using 138 green, 16 brown and possibly 4 folding). We also estimate that we could handle 40 people in the community room, giving 198 total. That means there is lots of space for the foreseeable future, if we put a plan in place for rearranging seats and for overflow.

If overflow occurs frequently in season we may want to extend our A/V system. The current set up will require more operators and set up each week (streaming to a laptop, connected to the portable TV), and have a noticeable lag compared to the sound coming down the hall. We can eliminate all extra work and latency by installing the live system in the community room, which uses the existing ceiling speakers and a new permanently mounted direct-connected TV on the wall.

Garden Day

The planning for the Desert Horticultural Society Garden Day on November 22 continues. UUCOD Sacred Grounds is prominent in their promotional materials, including their web page [Garden Day for California's Desert Residents](#) . They also provided printed promotional materials that we started distributing on the welcome table.

Dave Emmerson is planning for spiffing up the grounds and training docents, including guest Master Gardeners.

Stewardship will also have a table to answer questions about UUCOD, such as who we are, rental opportunities, etc.

Security

We have one person stay in the lobby during the Sunday worship service, lock the doors about ten minutes after the service starts, and watch the parking lot. We do not have any defined procedures if there is a concern or an event. Patrick Tidman is looking for active shooter training that we can provide, similar to the training taken by several of us about seven years ago.

Church Council

Julia did a great job leading the Church Council on October 18. I leave her to report on the meeting, along with Claudia who took notes.

I had failed to include the updated Strategic Goals for this year in the agenda. I distributed them by email October 19.

I did ask what challenges the Committee Chairs face when organizing task teams. There were four mentioned.

- Few people click through to sign up for events on Breeze.
Committee chairs are encouraged to use whatever tools work for them, whether that be Breeze event management, paper signup sheets, or a combination.
- People report that they did not hear about XYZ.
That can be very frustrating for event coordinators who have placed multiple newsletter articles, read notices at the end of the service, etc. Julia offered that she finds it takes seven exposures and three different means to reach a majority of people.
- Committee Chairs do not know what congregants have relevant skills
We agreed to put a renewed emphasis on people completing the Skills & Interests in Breeze. We also will encourage Event Organizers to fill in that information for their volunteers.
- Breeze training for Event Organizers
Joni and Jane asked for Training on Breeze. Rod will set something up.

Breeze

The Breeze rollout achieved the goal of replacing Meminfo membership tracking and membership contributions. As a bonus we got an online Directory that most members have joined, and the ability for members to view their pledges and contributions.

Membership is calling those members and friends who have not yet opted into the directory before we cutoff a printed version for those who prefer it.

Breeze can also help manage volunteers. Membership is using Breeze to manage greeters and ushers, and send out reminders. Social Justice is learning how to use Breeze to register and communicate with attendees at the Pride Parade. Breeze can help on scheduling, sending out notices, RSVPs, and reminders. A nice benefit if we use Breeze to manage volunteers and attendees more widely is that we can have visibility of who is active and who may have fallen off without us noticing.

We rolled out Skills and Interests in Breeze this summer, however only nine people have filled in the information. At the Church Council, the Committee Chairs encouraged us to push for more engagement with Skills and Interests, as they see it as a great way to find volunteers. Another option is for volunteer leaders to fill in the relevant Skills and Interests for their volunteers.

A/V

When we added streaming and the large screens we kept in place the existing audio amplifiers and speakers. They are now 21 years old, and two of the three amplifiers have failed (we were able to rig a temporary solution for DOS holy days). We are replacing all three amplifiers, keeping the one functional older one as a backup.

We are also replacing the speaker in the kitchen so that Hospitality can hear the service.

DIB Ministry

DIBM had its first meeting of the year and is trying to determine the focus for the next year.

Leadership Development Committee

Bob Rancourt chairs this and reports that the committee has not met yet this church year.

Personnel Committee

The UUA and UUMA have issued an updated Unified Ministerial Agreement template. Rev Ian, Walter and I will review our current minister contract, potentially drafting minor edits to align with our Bylaws or changes in the Unified Ministerial Agreement.

To: UUCOD Board
From: Julia Alberg-Burbank, 1st VP
October 21, 2025

- I completed a video a micro-volunteerism, via Notebook LM, for Church Council
- I created a slide deck for use at the meeting
- I conducted Church Council on October 18
- Please do a Gratitude note for Jill Donovan for all her work on the New Members Pamphlet.

Denominational Affairs:

Board member forgot to ask for an update

Social Justice:

- 15 people attended the Prop 50 discussion
- Preparations are under way for Pride Parade
- Preparations are under way for Food Boxing and support of CVUSD Migrant Education

Notes from combine Stewardship and Membership Meeting:

Stewardship Membership Joint Quarterly Meeting

October 2, 2025

Notes

Attending: Membership: Barb Storms, Tracy Flynn,

Stewardship: Carol Lavoie, Fran Hoag, Jerry L'Hommedieu, Linda Savard, Jane Zaun,
Rev. Ian Riddell.

Chalice Lighting: Jane opened the meeting with a reading and Chalice Lighting.

Updates of Recent Committee Work:

Stewardship:

A, Information New Members Should Know: Jane shared the New Member pamphlet is ready to be given to New Members at the Orientation Classes this Fall. From our discussion at the September Stewardship Class, it will also be emailed to all members

who are in Breeze, our new database. That email will be sent on October 15th prior to the Fall Orientation class. There was a decision to give the pamphlet at the end of the first orientation meeting. Barb and Jane will be present at the second orientation meeting to review the pamphlet and answer questions.

B. Induction Celebration Plans for November 23 will include pizza, sodas and salad.

C. Staying Connected Zooms: Linda, Jerry, Fran, and Jane participated in the summer Staying Connected Zoom sessions for members and friends. Over the 3 months there were a total of 30 people in attendance including the 4 hosts. There were “repeaters” and “non-repeaters” in the sessions. There were people from Canada and Mexico as well as from the US states and local. Feedback from those who came was that it was a beneficial and appreciated opportunity for people to stay connected to our community. Stewardship has agreed to continue these next summer.

D. Yearly Event Planning: Plans for the Pledge Kickoff are a Soup Potluck on February 1, 2026. End of the pledge drive celebration on Sunday March 1st will most likely be Cheesecake since everyone seems to like them.

Membership:

A. Average attendance: Tracy shared the average attendance by Month (June-August): For the 3 summer months the average attendance was between 40-50 with 15 screens online. The largest number in attendance was the day Rev. Ian Returned from his Sabbatical.

B. New Member Classes: Fall Orientation classes are October 19 and November 2nd. Rev. Ian, Randy, and Le Grand will lead the first class on 10/19. Barb and Jane will be present at the second class on November 2 along with UUCOD Treasurer, Julie Bell.

C. Directory Contacts: Barb and Tracy have been contacting members and friends who have not indicated whether they wish to be in the directory. So far about 50% of the 81 people they contacted have responded. In some cases, they have found, for a variety of reasons, that members or friends are moving to inactive status. Those needing

assistance getting onto Breeze are being referred to Fran and the Breeze Champions.
The Current Membership (as of October 6) : 136

New Business:

1. Sanctuary Overflow Task Force recommendations: Rev. Ian shared the purpose of the task force in gathering ideas to manage the overflow of congregants during the height of the season. The Task Force has already agreed that preparing and using the Community Room is the best solution for now. We agreed that when there is to be a potluck or other community-wide gathering just after the service, we can set up tables and chairs in advance without disturbing those participating in the service.

2. Garden Day-November 22nd: We agreed to staff a table on the patio with information from the UUA and UUCOD for those people who express an interest in information about the Church.

3. Welcoming Families: Rev. Ian shared the need to revitalize the “cry room”. He has talked with the Facilities Chair, Mel Wilkinson, to help. Linda and Carol volunteered to assist in cleaning out the cry room.

Rev. Ian said he and the Worship Team have decided to have more “Time for All Ages” in the service.

Membership has coloring books and supplies for children to use during a Worship service, if needed. Stewardship has been discussing ways to add to what Membership is already doing. Carol explained her idea of using the blue bags “The Little Church That Could” to put supplies in. The bags could be hung by the nametags where children could retrieve them and replace them when the service is completed.

4. Church Pamphlets: Rev Ian agreed to order new pamphlets for the church and to revitalize the pamphlet center. Outreach funds will be used.

5. Rethinking membership classes: There was a general discussion of Ways to revitalize the classes including focusing more time on what it means to be a member of a religious community and on the church covenant. It was suggested to cut down on the amount of time spent on history and personal spiritual journey to focus more on group

building. Perhaps offer additional opportunities to learn about UU for those who have not been UU before. Rev Ian indicated that Spiritual Growth is considering additional ways to possibly offer more frequent opportunities to learn about the Unitarian Universalism.

5. Directory Thoughts: Print the Directory only for those who cannot print themselves and only if the person is in the Directory (25 copies). One suggestion was to print the Directory with email and phone only, while others prefer printing all of the contact information that congregants have not made private. Fran will create clear step by step directions for how individuals can print the directory.

Next Combined Membership and Stewardship Committee Meeting will be on Thursday January 15th 2026 at 2:00pm on Zoom.

There will also be a combined meeting on Thursday, April 2nd, 2026 at 2:00pm on Zoom.

MONTHLY REPORT FROM 2ND VICE PRESIDENT, FRANK RIELA

Writing from Guadalajara.

Nothing to report. Given the church council meeting last week I honestly can't imagine anyone having anything to report.

Besos y abrazos a todos,

Frank

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR FIRST QTR FY 2025-26

On the revenue side,

we are doing well despite plate collections being down by \$750 ytd compared with same time last year. Pledges are up by \$10,000 compared to last year as are Contributions of Record by almost \$500. Nearly half of the pledges for this year have been collected. Building rentals are almost equal with last year. YTD revenue is \$133,600 compared to \$107,200 last year and on track for this year's budget.

On the expense side,

the parking lot is a large expense of approx. \$14,000, though much less than the \$25,000 budgeted. Sewer/refuse increased by \$250 over last year. Honoraria are up by \$2350 and those costs are only going to increase further. Pianists were up by \$900 and UUA dues up by \$250. Share the Plate was up by \$450 and does not include Laundry Love paid 10/1 \$387.75. Admin salary reflects the 3% increase. Total YTD expenses are \$80,300 compared to \$59,700 last year. We are in line with the budgeted total amounts.

Net revenue increased to \$53,300 from \$47,500 last year.

Statement of Financial Position has only two changes from last month. \$14,000 for the parking lot repaving from account 2310 building maintenance and increases in our investments of \$3600 or 0.8% increase in one month.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Bell

10/7/2025

Board Member at Large Report October 2025

Hospitality

- All is going well with our Hospitality team and the following is a recap of a report prepared by Rob DuWors. I put *in italic and bold* those items that may need Board action.
 - The team was great in filling in for Rob while he was away for the summer.
 - Sue Caspari continues to keep us green making sure we have eco-friendly supplies and that we recycle and compost correctly.
 - Both Trish Ewoldsen (an ad hoc member) and Claudia Lerner bring baked goods almost every week for the after-service coffee hour. *A note of gratitude has already been sent to Trish – Rob would like one sent to Claudia.*
 - *Rob is asking if it would be possible for Hospitality to be mentioned on the credits slide at the end of the service – though understands if there is a reason why that shouldn't happen.*
 - *Rob would like to replace the green vinyl tablecloths – many are frayed, stained and worn out. Can he purchase new ones for the church?*
 - *One of the coffee pots needs to be replaced – get approval to do so.*
 - *One of the microwaves broke during the recent gathering. Jerry is trying to figure out how to either fix or replace it. If can't be fixed, approval to replace.*

Attitude of Gratitude

- In my absence John Ressler has been filling in for me – and it is much appreciated.

Worship Associate

- I will be Worship Associate on November 9th and December 21st.

UUCOD Men's Breakfast

- A team consisting of Rob DuWors, Patrick Tidmore, Frank Monzo and I created a new format for the UUCOD Men's Breakfasts.
- The breakfasts will be every second Saturday at 8:30 in the community room with a light breakfast served. Donations are appreciated but not required.
- Our first breakfast on October 11th was a smashing success with 24 members attending. Donations more than covered the cost of the breakfast.
- Everyone had a great time with lots of conversation and camaraderie.

Ministerial Agreement

- A memo from the UUA/UUMA Unified Agreement Team was sent to a number of individuals here at UUCOD. The Unified Agreement Team has decided for a number of reasons to create a Unified Ministerial Agreement instead of having individual agreements for the different categories of ministers.
- There are three notable amendments that have been made since they began this project having to do with their Comprehensive Health Insurance, Extended Medical Leave and new guidance under Work Week.
- A meeting is scheduled with Rod Belshee, Rev. Ian and me to review the amendments and the agreement in general. We will report back to the Board if there are any recommended changes.

**Submitted by:
Walter Gendell
Board Member at Large
October 13, 2025**

Liaison with Facilities and Furnishings Committee:

Attended the Committee's meeting preparatory to its Chairperson's participation in the General Council meeting on October 18, 2025.

As pointed out during the G. C. Meeting, there were few large issues or projects dealt with during the past half-year except for the re-surfacing and re-lining of the church's parking lot.

Liaison with Sacred Grounds Steering Committee:

Attended the Committee's meeting preparatory to its chairperson's participation in the General Council meeting on October 18, 2025.

As reported by Chairperson Emmerson, The Sacred Grounds Committee, and Initiative, is entering its busy season. In addition to laying out a new garden—the Desert Dry Wash Habitat Garden—the Committee will be hard-surfacing the dedicated pathway from Via Vail to the Milkweed Garden in order to provide improved access to people who need to park on Via Vail to attend UUCOD Worship Services and other events.

Another issue the Committee has been concerned with is the declining health of a number of the mature Palo Verde trees that grace our grounds. Several have major limbs that have died owing to insect invasions and, perhaps, nutritional deficiencies. As liaison to our Landscape Management service, Universal Green, Inc., I have conveyed our concerns. That matter is pending at this time.

Other Activities:

Since July I have been working with the Pride Parade Planning Team to prepare for UUCOD's participation in the Palm Springs Annual Pride Parade on November 9. My role in the effort has been to design a float and a centerpiece image for our contingent, which will include three other allied congregations: Desert Outreach Synagogue, Universalist Unitarian Church of Riverside, and Hemet-San Jacinto UU Fellowship. Estimated time spent on the project by all participants probably exceeds 200 hours at this point.

Respectfully submitted, 21 October 2025—John Ressler, Director-at-Large #2

Minister's Report to the UUCOD Board

October 21, 2025

The Rev. Ian W. Riddell

Summary Outline of the work I've been involved with for the past month. This is not an exhaustive list, but is meant to give you a general idea of what I've been up to as your minister.

A. Counseling and Pastoral Care

- I continue to meet with congregants in need of connection and conversation by phone and Zoom and in person.
- I am heartened, as always, by the ways I see you all take care of each other when people are in need. I am especially grateful for how you cared for each other during my sabbatical.
- The Care Team had its first meeting of the church year under the leadership of Joni Paddock. At the meeting we began planning to remind the congregation of the Care Team's presence and scope of work, we began to plan gathering community resource lists for congregants in need, and planning the learning that we will do as a team over the coming year. We emphasized that individual team members need to be clear about their boundaries and interests as we make decisions about offering care.
- I will be reaching out to a variety of congregants over the next weeks to plan Celebrations of Life for both Marian Ellson and Derek Moore.

B. Administration, Governance, and Staff

- I have resumed my regular meetings with our staff: Pam Bibo (Office Administrator) and Jim Tong (Choir Director).
- I am working with Jim to pay for his membership in the Association of UU Music Ministries, our denomination's professional music organization.
- I will be meeting with Rod (as Board President) and Walter (as our HR lead) to look at my Ministerial Agreement in relation to our bylaws and to the newest UUA's recommended Unified Ministerial Agreement template. I am not anticipating large changes, but there are some discrepancies between my MA and our bylaws that it would be good to rectify.

Membership and Committees

- I will begin again to meet regularly with several committees. I participate monthly with Worship, DIBM, Stewardship, CoM, the Board, and Chalice Circles (when they are meeting). I participate in alternate months with Membership and Social Justice.
- Our Men's Breakfasts kicked off the year in style! Twenty four men participated at UUCOD on a Saturday morning. Organizers Frank and Patrick and Jerry and Rod (and others!) provided food and others brought some to share. It was a wonderful event.
- I have attended the monthly crafting gathering since my return. This group is pondering ways to share the results of their crafting and perhaps raise some funds.
- I participated in Marty's health class which was the first on a series on spirituality and health.
- I participated in the first New Member information class offered by LeGrand of our Membership Committee. We had a large number of people there with diverse backgrounds and interests. I'm hopeful that many will choose to join our congregation. Woohoo!

- The DIBM Team had our first meeting and began to explore together what our work for the coming year is and how we might refocus.

C. Lifespan Faith-Development

- I began my first offering of a workshop focused on the UUA's Common Read for the year, Social Change Now. 13 people participated (including two new to the congregation) and enough others have expressed interest that I intend to offer the pair of workshops again, in person and on Zoom. I will be scheduling these this week.
- We currently only have one ongoing Chalice Circle. We have a need to develop new leadership and work to broaden our offerings to the congregation. I will be meeting with Steven Toporoff soon to begin planning.
- This is an area that needs some more focus from me and from others as well over the coming months. There are some general ideas, but no specific plans. I am meeting with an LA-area colleague to discuss ways our congregations might collaborate. I'd appreciate some thought/planning partners and will likely be reaching out to the broader congregation as well.

D. Worship

- I officiated the wedding of two men in Palm Springs this past weekend and am scheduled for two more this year: one in Joshua Tree in November and another in Las Vegas in February of 2026.
- Except for the first Sunday of January, we have service leaders planned through February 15.
- We have worship associates and piano players planned through December. I will begin planning for the first quarter of the new year soon. The choir is scheduled through the rest of the calendar year and Jim and I are making plans for the winter and the spring, including our annual Choir Sunday, likely in March 2026
- I led or participated in worship three times this past month.
 - September 21 — "The Spiritual Practice of Silence" with Mel Wilkinson.
 - October 5 — "Taking Account: A High Holy Days Reflection" with Bryna Blum.
 - October 12 — "Ingathering: Nurturing Waters" with Ginger Hemingway – this was our annual ingathering water communion service.
 - October 19 – "All Creatures Great and Small: Blessing the Animals" with Joni Paddock and Denise Janssen Eager.
- I am especially grateful to all of the people who arrived early and stayed late to move our worship out to the patio for the Animal Blessing service. Truly a team effort by really wonderful people.
- We welcomed Rabbi King to our pulpit on September 28.
- I am working with Rabbi King to plan a joint UUCOD/DOS Pride service in the afternoon of Pride Sunday. The service will be at 3pm and we're hoping for a big turn out from UUCOD and DOS and other areas UUs after the Pride parade – so I'll be working with the AV folks to set up overflow seating in the Community Room.
- The Worship Team is hoping to rethink the way that we pay our speakers. Until now, we have had a tiered system depending on whether the speaker was a lay person, local speaker, student minister, ordained UU minister, or clergy of another denomination. We are hoping to standardize to the same payment for all as a practice of fairness and equity. We'll be looking at our budget to ensure that we can do this within the funds available.
- The Sabbatical cost considerably less than the \$4000 budgeted, so we will need to decide how we manage that money going into the second half of the sabbatical in July of 2026.

- The Worship Overflow Task Force will meet again in early November to assess where we are as we move toward setting up the Community Room for overflow seating in the early months of the new calendar year (when our attendance numbers are highest).

F. Denominational Activities

- I regularly consult with local and regional colleagues on issues affecting our congregations.
- I have been meeting monthly as a mentor to a new minister as he works through his Preliminary Fellowship.
- I provided copy editing services to a colleague creating a book of prayers, poems, and blessings for the queer community which is being offered as a Kickstarter right now. It was a joy to use that old skill set in support of some beautiful and powerful work.
- I was unable to participate in this past weekend's No Kings rally/march due to continuing recovery from an infection.

G. Prophetic Outreach, Interfaith Activities, and Local Collaboration

- I will be meeting with some Palm Springs clergy at their regular lunch on Tuesday and having coffee with another local colleague later in the week.
- I have met twice now with our new Meeting the Moment steering team which Rod and I have called together. We spent part of this last month surveying and researching local organizations that provide front-line services to the immigrant and migrant communities in the valley. Rod and I have been invited to the Thursday meeting of the Inland Congregations United for Change.

H. Personal and Professional Growth

- I continue meeting monthly with a coach for ongoing support, learning, and accountability as I minister to the congregation in our diversity transition work. My coach is Rev. Julica Hermann de la Fuente
- I meet monthly with a small group of colleagues in our region in reflection, sharing, and collegial support and learning.
- I am grateful for the sick time that allowed me some space to recover from a painful illness last week. I am on the mend, though my energy is still a little limited.

My weekly schedule is as follows:

My day off is Monday. My writing/reading day, which I try to keep free of meetings, will be Fridays and I will work in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

Upcoming Travel Schedule:

- I will be away on vacation from Saturday, November 15, to Saturday, November 22.
- I will be away on vacation from Monday, December 29, to Sunday, January 4, visiting family in Canada.

in peace and deep love

