

Ministry Update Report July 2023

The following is an update regarding items within the Ministry Areas and Communications.

This is informational in nature.

A. Upcoming Activities and Dates

July - Aug	9am worship	Sue preaching July 2, 9, 23, Aug 27, Sept 3; Noah July 16
July 16	9 am worship	Communion
July 4 - 11		Pastor on Vacation
Aug 6	9am	Backpack blessing
Aug 13 - 16		Virtual Worship Design Studio Retreat
Aug 25 – Sept 4		Pastor on Vacation
Sept 10	10am	Homecoming and Communion
Sept 15	10am	Interment service Dee Freeburn, Paxton Ma (mother of online attendee)
Sept ??		Beliefs conclusion and Vision Kickoff
Sept 24	10am	Juniper Webster Baptism
Oct 7	10am	Pet Blessing
tbd		Team's and Ministry meeting

B. Ministry Update

1. Worship

Creative Worship

We have subscribed to Worship Design Studio by Marcia McFee. This brings a number of planning resources for worship series, etc. (which are accessible by all members of Creative Worship). The annual subscription also gives online access to a Worship Design Retreat taking place in Indianapolis Aug 13 – Aug 16. I will be attending the retreat and have invited other members of the Creative Worship Planning Team and Deacons to participate as much as they are able.

Opening for the Music Director Search is posted on Indeed and our website.

2. Care

We received four responses to the Care Ministry survey.

Communication, confidentiality, and identification of needs are the chief concerns.

And better understanding on assessing needs while on a visit and establishing healthy limits on what a visit might entail were areas for desired training.

Next steps. Developing better communications to make it easier for congregants and people in the community to identify needs.

3. Learning/Spirituality

Children and Family Ministry.

- VBS launched this evening partnership with East Woodstock. July 12, 26, and Aug 9 will be at First, July 18, Aug 9, and 23 will be at East.
- Beyond VBS, Mitra has
 - Four other priorities, connecting and developing relationship with FCCW families and children
 - Planning the lessons and activities for the fall
 - Recruiting volunteers.
 - Developing a plan to connect with and attract families in the community.

Youth.

- I am researching confirmation resources and possible programs to offer in the fall

Other activities on hiatus during the summer.

- Bible Study and Finding Meaning in the Message to resume in September
- Exploring studies and conversations for the fall and winter that I will facilitate and that will have an appeal to broader community.
 - The UCC Stewardship Campaign includes a five week small group conversation about stewardship and giving, as well as children's resources
 - I purchased the Leader's and Participant guides for the Exploring the Bible Study at the SNEUCC conference. the study came highly recommended and is published by the Massachusetts Bible Society, which is now part of the SNEUCC conference.
 - We will advertise this in the fall, the first part is "What is the Bible"

Labyrinth.

- I have had a follow up conversation with Leslie and have asked the deacons who else might be passionate about the labyrinth.
- Leslie and Eva will be gone in late July and early August.

4. Faith In Action

I've asked the Faith In Action core team to meet sometime in the next few weeks to finalize the Core Groups and talk about how we educate the congregation about the monies we have to support other groups and organizations.

As a reminder, groups we plan include:

- Environment
- DEI, includes ONA/LGBTQ and "hospitality"
- Hunger/Poverty
- Racial Inequality

We are working on the names for the groups and identifying congregants who will be part of the initial conversations/lists.

5. Communications

Phones and voice Mail.

I have access to our Spectrum account, which has voicemail. Although I have established pins for the various numbers (there are three) I am unable to get access to the voice mail through the internal phone system. I have been able to access the voicemails through a browser to listen to and delete them (there were around 30). The goal is to get access and use the Spectrum voicemail instead of the answering machine, because we can access the voicemails remotely and forward calls (if we choose) when no one is in the office. The question is who might be most knowledgeable about our internal phone system?

Walls and Displays.

Given the number of people who move through our building because of scouts, the day care, fund raisers, community meal etc. we have an opportunity to let the walls speak about our values, activities, good work, and ministries.

As an example, I took these pictures on recent visit to the Oxford MA UCC for the GROW regional gathering:



The Oxford church is willing to host a visit by members of our congregation who might be curious about how they let their walls speak. I have already discussed this with Lisa.

What do we need to do to engage the conversation regarding what is on our walls and what they intentionally and unintentionally communicate? This includes the Narthex, the space between the sanctuary and Harrison Hall, Harrison Hall and the Dining Hall.

A secondary conversation which intersects both worship and communications that I would like to get on the radar is “how we can bring projection capabilities into the sanctuary?”

6. Stewardship

Although not part of the Ministry Areas, there is significant overlap and coordination of the Stewardship Campaign, communications, and the ministries.



To help our planning this year, we purchased for a modest some, \$50, the UCC’s 2023 Stewardship Campaign resources. The program resources have been uploaded to the Stewardship Drive.

Resources include a theme, graphics, bulletin inserts, commitment cards (multiple versions and formats), worship resources connected to the themes, an adult small groups study, and resources for children based on the 5 part worship series.