

## **UUFCO March Board Report - Minister**

By Rev. Antonia Won, March 8, 2016

What a lot of water under the bridge since the last board meeting. Indeed, so much that it will take some time to get perspective on it. I have worked with many boards in many settings but none so pressured with circumstances as this one. Let me reiterate what I said to you at our meeting on February 26: I care deeply for and respect each of you. I love this congregation; have dedicated my life fully the past year to UUFCO's well being and future, and will continue to do so, with the Board's support.

Monday's presentation by Bob Barber has clarified the work we must do in the months ahead as a Board in articulating our respective roles. I will also be working with the Leadership Development Committee in ensuring that future board members are clear about how a board functions differently from a congregation's committees and teams, and what this means about how board members interact at the table.

Some of you will remember that one of my guiding principles for this ministry has been 'coherence'; I strive to serve UUFCO in ways that make sense of the changing landscape we are in. This past year has been a year of bold moves in response to a big opportunity. The congregation's capacity to absorb a high rate of change and uncertainty has been admirable. The role of leadership in building trust and creating public avenues of communication through the New Home Project and the visa process were key ingredients in keeping the congregation's spirit willing. In fact, everything has been going so well it will be easy to assume it will continue going well.

Our biggest risk at this time is overconfidence: that we have the congregation's trust; that they feel confident in what is going on and support it; that we understand what kind of communications people need or expect; that new people are fully integrated and will be increasingly committed to the congregation's future; that we don't need to worry about slowing down the rate of change; that we may be exempt from normal group development stages of 'forming, storming, norming, and performing'; that we are insulated from making mistakes by the fact that we've come so far so well.

As we both go into search in the months ahead, I will need the Board's committed support to my remaining ministry with the congregation, and guidance with respect to priorities. There are things that will not go according to plan. People who put extra effort in to help with the transition are ready to pull back:

people who have been mainstays of the Special Events team and the Sunday Volunteer Ad Hoc team. We have had no interest in our ministerial internship. Key committee leaders have felt the lack of a Program Council function. Staffing has just changed. Committees are going through transformations as they learn to function in a larger setting. The draft mission statement is being released. The programs have recently been launched. Experienced congregational lay leadership is stretched. The congregation is changing. We have only begun to build the relationships and understandings that will support the congregation's future ministries. A lot has been in formation. It is a vulnerable time.

Going into search is an ambitious undertaking at the best of times. UUFCO has a lot at stake right now. Nonetheless I have accepted your decision. I care deeply for and respect each of you. I love this congregation. I have dedicated my life fully the past year to UUFCO's well being and future and will continue to do so. But I cannot do this without the support of the Board, both current and future. Navigating this in our current circumstances will require a basis of trust; trust that will support good communication and problem solving, a positive atmosphere and a commitment to personal and congregational maturation. I will need the Board to ensure new board members are strong and committed to this current ministry, and that we all are prepared to take the necessary steps for fostering stability and integrity in the congregation.

The success of your search and your next ministry depends on it.

Reverently yours,  
Rev. K. Antonia Won