

INTERIM MINISTRY REPORT

**Prepared by Rev. George K. Meier
August 19, 2007**

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to create sacred space together for discerning UCUC's direction. We did create a space for self-reflection, and we developed some core understandings for embracing the church's future. God has great things in store for UCUC, including the edges of mission and ministry which we walk with Jesus. UCUC has all it needs to be the radical message of Jesus.

This report should be read in conjunction with the "Interim Advisory Committee Report to the Church Council" dated August 19, 2007, The Long Range Staffing Committee's Report for the August 19, 2007 Council Meeting, the Leadership Team's memorandum entitled "Team Ministry at University Congregational United Church of Christ", and the Leadership Team's reflections on this report.

The Interim Ministry Report includes:

1. Reflections as to our Interim work together
 - a. Scope of the Interim Ministry Work;
 - b. The Context for Intentional Interim Ministry at UCUC;
 - c. The Specialized Role of the Interim Minister;
 - d. General Reflections on Our Work Together; and
 - e. Environmental Realities
2. Systems issues that affect UCUC's ability to move forward;
3. Church leadership;
4. The Leadership Team; and
5. Summary Recommendations

Scope of the Interim Ministry Work

The Interim Minister's position description defined the special work of this interim period as helping the UCUC community discern its path with the departure of Dave Shull.

The Context for Intentional Interim Ministry at UCUC

This is an unusual interim ministry. One of four clergy left. While a very real loss occurred, the congregation understood that ministry would continue much as it had in the past. There was no pervasive sense of congregational urgency. It's easier for churches to make critical changes when a sense of urgency exists. The interim time, however, has given the church an opportunity to do some self-reflection in a non crisis atmosphere.

There seemed to be, however, a general feeling it was time for the church to take stock and move forward. Taking stock also meant looking at how team ministry was working at UCUC. Some anxiety continues to exist as to whether the church has a sense of direction and whether it is being adequately led to discern and realize that future.

All four of the leadership team members have been in intense and committed times of discernment as they listen for God's call for this church and for their individual and collective ministries here.

When the Interim commenced, concern existed as to whether UCUC's music director would retire. The music director did recently retire in June 2007. The church's leadership has managed well the immediate anxiety surrounding the music director's retirement.

The Specialized Role of the Interim Minister and the Work of the Congregation

The Interim Minister, the Interim Team, and the Interim Advisory Committee ("IAC") help the congregation do the following:

1. Come to terms with the church's history;
2. Become clear about the church's identity;
3. Allow shifts in leadership to occur;
4. Rethink linkages to your denomination and the church at large; and
5. Make a commitment to new leadership and a new future.

Given the particular context of this Interim Ministry, steps 3 and 4 did not receive special attention. The 2006 leaders retreat was opened to a wide range of actual and potential leaders. Meetings with Boards and groups included actual and potential leaders.

The Intentional Interim Minister has a specialized role in offering insight into one or more areas that may hinder the church in realizing a new future.

General Reflections on and Implications of Our Work Together

Outstanding work has been accomplished in preparing, testing and sharing the Internal Identity Statement. It's complete and rings true with the congregation.

Aspects of the church's identity can change. To be successful, such changes must be intentional and incrementally leveraged. If a desired new direction does not take into account the church's identity, no new direction will succeed. It will be essential to test any vision or plan to implement a vision against the identity statement to determine what anxiety and loss might be created by pursuing a new vision. Expect change to give rise to active and passive resistance.

The congregation must own the vision with sufficient passion to continue its relevance and energy beyond the tenure of any particular Leadership Team member. While it is critical that the Leadership Team demonstrate passion for and leadership of the vision, the vision must have staying power beyond the team's tenure.

While systems issues, church leadership and the Leadership Team are addressed in later sections, our Interim work indicates:

1. UCUCC has an excellent history of working through traumatic and difficult congregational issues. UCUCC will be able to draw on this history in living through any loss that might be required in order to realize a new future.
2. Since Paul Fluke, clergy have been expected to operate in a collegial, supportive, and collaborative manner. Lay leaders have taken more ultimate responsibility and authority for guiding the church. Clergy have supported lay leaders in their efforts. Team ministry emerged out of the church's implicit if not explicit need for a different style of clergy leadership. But at the same time, there is often a lack of clarity about who makes decisions.
3. Given the situation faced by UCUCC in the 1990's, the church called exactly the clergy it needed. Stability, good order, good programs, good pastoral care and good worship were fostered.
4. The congregation and Leadership Team are encouraged to celebrate the gifts each has brought to managing and leading the church through the 1990s and the early 2000s.
5. The very being of clergy witnessed to the love and justice proclaimed by UCUCC. The self-esteem of the congregation rose by calling a gay couple to the church. The strength of clergy was in who they were and how well they supported the congregation. These were different strengths than the strengths brought by prior senior pastors.
6. UCUCC has done well to notice the challenges around worship, membership and the current stress being experienced by parents around children's education and intergenerational worship. Such clear-sightedness is critical and hopeful.
7. The church needs a membership strategy connected to and fed by its vision. Doing good is not enough. Rotary does good, and its membership is also declining. Progressive families and individuals must be convinced church is relevant to their lives. There are many people in the community who might be spiritually fed by UCUCC, but for whom church is problematic. The church should consider learning how to reach out to them -- evangelism in the most positive sense of that term. Church membership or worship attendance will not automatically follow from having a great mission.
8. The Internal Identity Statement is a treasure trove of information to help the church embrace a new future. Every church leader for the next five years should spend time to develop a working understanding of the Internal Identity Statement.
9. The Internal Identity Statement does not contain all the congregational realities that need to be considered in helping the church discern its future. Intentional

work should be continued regularly to stay in touch with congregational realities as understood by members, those on the fringe and those in our community.

10. The church highly values its intellectual identity. The Percept Study also indicates the importance of intellectual worship for many. Opportunities exist to meet the desire for intellectual content through adult education and programs like the Marcus Borg presentation. The church could engage speakers appearing at the University of Washington (bring them to the church). The church library could be more fully developed. Consider a book store and book signings. Sermons can be recorded and made available on the website. Technology and the internet could be much more highly developed to reach younger generations.
11. The impact of the current intergenerational worship design and education program is taking a heavier toll than anticipated on parents' ability to cope. Elementary education participation has declined by as much as 25%.
12. UCUC is blessed with a critical mass of children and families needed to sustain a healthy church. Children are valued and loved. Staff cares about children and how each person is developing. The entire staff cares about how parents are coping.
13. Some outsiders believe a key to UCUC's size and health is Seabeck. A number of liberal university area churches find little difference between themselves and UCUC, except Seabeck. It's a way to build relationships among members and friends in a large church. Retreats and small groups can serve a similar function.
14. The church is at a difficult size. It appears self conscious about its development, much like a young teen. Churches are often described by the number of people regularly in worship. See Appendix "F". See also Alice Mann, *The In-between Church: Navigating Size Transitions in Congregations* for a description of size differences. The number of UCUC pastors may lead members to think that everyone has his or her own personal pastor much like a pastoral size church of 150. On the other hand, church worship has moved up and down over the years from corporate (350) to program to almost corporate to mostly program. This in-between size is very difficult to move through. The church should consider evaluating the size it wants to be. That decision will affect the kind of leadership sought in the Leadership Team. It will also influence approaches to church governance.
15. Incorporate the size issue in the analysis as to where a vision might lead UCUC. Take advantage of resources that deal with the transition from one size to another.
16. Younger generations are more comfortable talking about the "heart". There is an unmet need for the spaces to be vulnerable and go deep.
17. Moving to one worship service that is more intergenerational and family oriented accomplished some worthy goals, but did not address the underlying reasons for worship decline. The benefits and drawbacks of the one worship experience

should be acknowledged and addressed. The underlying reasons for worship decline should be identified, as they may include significant factors beyond the style, design or frequency of worship.

18. Worship has not been directly addressed in the interim period. The number of services, types of services, structure of services and purpose of services should be addressed as an outgrowth of the vision process. Any change to worship must be carefully approached as it is the area most fraught with danger because of the losses that might be experienced.

Environmental Realities

It's as important to understand environmental realities as it is to know our congregational realities. Environmental realities include all those factors outside the control of the church that impact the church. Such realities, for example, include demographics, life style choices, community and world issues, infrastructure like roads and bridges, and differing public perceptions of religion and UCUC. Great leaders and churches anticipate changes in the surrounding environment and innovate to meet those changes before they happen. We are shaped by and shape our environment.

Some reflections on environmental realities:

1. Of our interim process work, this area remains the most under developed.
2. A small motivated task group should be organized to work with the Leadership Team and lay leadership to continue to assess environmental realities.
3. Any vision, any mission, or any membership strategy must be relevant to the surrounding environment.
4. Environmental realities challenge the church's well being and also offer incredible opportunities for responding to God's call.
5. It's important to look at ourselves and the progressive religious project (eg., Phoenix Declarations and its supporters) through the eyes of outsiders, especially outsiders who could become insiders.
6. A taste of resources to help assess environmental realities include:
 - a. The Percept Study 2007;
 - b. 2006-2016 KWF/IFTF Map of Future Forces Affecting Education (Appendix A)

- c. Excerpt from *Fire and Ice* by Michael Adams comparing United States and Canadian values and plotting the direction of those values (Appendix B).
 - d. An Article from the July-August 2007 Harvard Business Review entitled, “The Next 20 Years: How Customer and Workforce Attitudes Will Evolve” tracing generational issues across six generations of Americans. (Appendix C).
7. More local interviews and studies would be helpful. Information sources might include friends, colleagues, university and hospital workers, university students, seminary students, clergy, conference officers and staff, and church visitors. One consultant suggests that ministers should be spending time in public places just listening to public conversations. It is important to be intentional about staying in touch with the pulse of those living in surrounding communities.
 8. It’s easy to frame issues such as the style of music and worship around what we want, or our young families want, or the choir wants, or our teenagers want, or the ministers want. An important question, however, is the point of view of the stranger, our neighbor.

Determining how to live into a vision through the outreach or mission work of UCUC depends in part on having done the environmental homework. The research helps the church avoid the activity trap of trying to do so many things that burn out and frustration develop.

UCUC as an Organic System: Reflections and Implications

In the fall of 2006, thirty-one formal and informal church leaders completed the “Congregational Systems Inventory” published by the Alban Institute. A statistically valid sample for church leaders was achieved. The results of the systems analysis have important implications for what is necessary to lead UCUC into the future. The Inventory summary is part of Appendix J to the IAC Report dated August 19, 2007.

Think of a church as an eco system. For every eco system, there is an optimal balance that maintains the health of the overall system. The PH of water may need to be a certain level to promote food sources for animals. If too little or too much food is generated, the eco system might be threatened.

Every system is also subject to the impact of a changing environment that requires adaptation to maintain health in the face of such changes. Long term climate changes, for example, have been shown to affect the size, shape and use of a finch’s beak. Available food sources changed with the climate change and induced changes in the finch’s beaks over time to gather, open and consume food. If the finch had not had the ability to change in response to changes in the environment, it would have perished. A new equilibrium was needed to maintain a healthy relationship with its environment. The finch, however, was still a finch.

Churches need a host of strengths in the right balance to maintain optimal health. These qualities or strengths can be paired in polar opposites. The key is to value both ends of the continuum for each pair of strengths and strike the right balance for the well being of the church.

Thus, in the case of a church, managerial leadership is critical to the stability and orderly life of the congregation. The polar opposite is transformational leadership. Transformation at its worst is chaos. However, it's only when there is enough anxiety or chaos that transformation happens.

The beak of the finch responded to the chaos created by climate change. Just looking harder for the same food and gathering it more efficiently with the same beak (good management) would not have permitted the finch to survive. Metaphorically speaking, our beaks need to change, but it won't happen without the use of our minds, hearts and spirits. Unlike birds, we have to know our beaks need changing, and we have to intentionally change our beaks. Only we can achieve a new equilibrium that will promote long term church health.

Eco systems and churches often do not understand the need for transformation until some great loss or damage has been done to the system. A food source dries up with climate change. Few young families are moving into our neighborhoods. Systems tend to resist and under value the changes needed to stay healthy. Stability and homeostasis are the norm. When a system is destabilized (becomes anxious), there is an unconscious drive to restore the equilibrium.

However, the old, comfortable equilibrium may not serve the long term health of the church, even though it seems to restore stability. Sometimes leaders need to help restore a needed balance and sometimes leaders need to leverage or selectively destabilize the system to create the opportunity for a needed change so the church can adapt to the changing environment.

The results of the Congregational Systems Inventory show that in some areas the church is out of balance in ways that will impede UCUCC's ability to maintain a long term healthy church body. The areas needing adjustment are typically found in congregational churches. Adjustments to those areas that are out of balance are critical for implementing a vision.

At UCUCC the right tension between strategy and spontaneity has been lost. Another way of saying this is that the church is out of balance along the continuum between strategy and spontaneity. Spontaneity and discretion are prized, but strategy is not valued. Such an emphasis fits well for a church of intelligent independent minded people who cherish a congregational polity. Creating and implementing a vision, however, requires the qualities associated with strategy. Plans get shelved when strategy qualities are underdeveloped. Moreover, implementing a vision or strategy may be resisted by a community that is over zealous for independent action and spontaneity. The rebalancing process can be difficult. The learning is that vision and ministry mapping to achieve the

vision will require transformational leadership that appreciates the forces that will resist implementation.

Transformational lay and clergy leadership is essential to help the congregation develop and implement a vision that will lead to a healthy future in the face of a changing environment. Like many churches, UCUC is almost off the scale on the lay management side of leadership. Rebalancing lay leadership to become more transformational is the key to realizing a new direction. Such rebalancing can be accomplished without sacrificing good management. Both are vital, but the right balance needs to be restored.

Based on my observations of staff meetings and the work of clergy, the clergy are scored too high as transforming leaders. This scoring may reflect the impact of sermons and the courage of the ministers to be who they are in the world. As a group, UCUC clergy are more managerial than the score indicates. Each clergy person likely differs on the continuum. I am trying to generalize the score to the clergy part of the leadership team. Clergy are good program managers and good supporters for the work of the laity. They did implement change in worship and education.

By and large, clergy have not been asked explicitly to be transformational leaders. They have generally acceded to a supporting role. The clergy recognize the current need for collaborative transformational leadership. Lay and clergy leaders need to be on the same page as to the balance between managerial and transforming leadership.

A restoration of the right balance requires intentionality. This restoration of the right balance is supported by the way Church Council meetings have been divided into segments. It's supported by the effective use of a consent agenda. It can be further supported by restraint when it comes to rethinking in a council meeting the work of a board as to, for example, the financing and scope of roof repairs.

For the Leadership Team, the balance has been enhanced by regularly dividing Monday staff meetings into leadership and management segments and by being on retreat together. These habits are ways of leveraging needed rebalancing. These or similar habits should be practiced and celebrated so as to become anchored in the church's culture.

Often, church boards feel most connected to the church and have a high self-esteem when the clergy take an active part in Board work. Regular attendance and participation by clergy is indicative of a pastoral size church to program size church.

The church should consider changing the way clergy relate to boards, committees and task groups. Connectedness and board well being should flow from an understanding and passion for the vision of the church and the way the work of the board relates to the vision. Vision and worship provide the connective tissue, together with good internal church communication. Clergy should clear barriers to effective board work, equip and train board members, and keep an eye on the way environmental factors may affect the board. Clergy help the boards celebrate with the whole church.

The foregoing approach to clergy/board relationships is being tested with the Youth Board. If this experiment proves successful, other boards might be approached to try the new model. Members of the Youth Board can speak to their experiences and sense of empowerment. This process is called “leveraging” change.

Because the greatest implications of the Congregational Systems Inventory relate to leadership, issues concerning church leadership are further developed in the next section.

Church Leadership

In today’s church and world, transformational leadership is about leading change. Leading change is dangerous because change necessarily involves loss. An extreme example is the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin. He was willing to negotiate land for peace. The loss of land was too great for some, and he was killed. The lesson is to know the power of loss where the future outcome of some change is not certain and learn as well as possible the various ways to lead such change. It’s also about having a passion for the vision of God’s new day that makes the risk worthwhile. Such was the case for Rabin.

Lay and clergy need to learn and exercise the skills needed to lift up the changes needed, help the congregation negotiate any losses associated with the change and establish a coalition for a vision of God’s preferred future that is worth the risk. Consultants and conference staff have learned that if clergy and lay leaders are not in agreement on the transformation needed, clergy often are terminated (the less extreme ministerial analogy to being killed). See, Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading*. This is a helpful resource for dealing with loss. The steps for making change outlined by John Kotter in his book, *Leading Change*, also increase the chances of success.

1. The church is ready for a new approach to clergy leadership. Such leadership can be provided within the context of a team model.
2. Some may equate the need for new leadership as a need for a new clergy person. However, the preliminary questions are whether the current clergy are empowered by the lay leadership to be transformational leaders and whether they have the skills/ability and desire to step into that type of leadership role. These issues have not been finally resolved.
3. Leadership styles can be learned and should shift with the church’s needs.
4. Some of the concern about the performance of team ministry (often characterized as efficiency) relates to an unclear need for a new leadership style for a new future. Recommendations from the Leadership Team and Long Range Staffing address both effective management and effective leadership issues. These suggestions include David Anderson’s position description. Staffing issues will

be the subject of on going work and reflection by the Leadership Team, Church Council and Personnel.

5. On occasion, lay leaders have exerted control over the Leadership Team by providing “senior” management. Loss of clarity as to authority and expectations as well as frustration flow from well meaning attempts to manage the Leadership Team.
6. The current personnel form for evaluating ministry should be revised to reflect the goal of more transformational leadership. How and who does the leadership team evaluation needs to be reconsidered along with church governance.
7. The Leadership Team has not been clear as to its own self-definition and therefore has helped create ambiguity as to authority and responsibility. Lack of clarity and lack of self-understanding by or between clergy and lay leaders may lead to a break down in good working relationships.
8. The head of staff role emerged as a way to bridge the change from a senior ministerial model to a team model. It’s a managerial tool. Lack of clarity as to the nature and extent of this role has contributed to the ambiguity noted in “7.” above. Lack of clarity about the role of head of staff contributes to uneven execution of the work, as the head of staff attempts to negotiate the line between a more limited role and a role as de facto senior minister.
9. The Interim Minister and the Leadership Team have done work to evaluate the nature of and need for head of staff. This work included evaluating ways to relocate the functions covered by head of staff. See the Long Range Staffing Report and the document generated by the Leadership Team as to team ministry.
10. In times of stress, the head of staff role is more strongly reasserted. Crisis and stress are seen as signs of failure or bad management rather than as opportunities for some deeper reassessment. This tendency to fall back on Head of Staff for a fix or to bear some judgment as to team ministry reinforces a reactive style of leadership. To the extent there is a perception that the church desires perfection, the head of staff will always be at risk of failing. The focus will remain on management; there will be little time for transformational leadership. Rightly or wrongly, clergy may spend too much time looking over their shoulders for those who might find fault. Problems get blown out of proportion.
11. Sometimes lay and clergy say they are collaborating when in fact the approach by one of the parties is “persuasive” or “compelling” or “avoiding” or “accommodating”. Collaboration is one approach to conflict management. Collaboration is not possible if one or more parties opt out by their own approach to resolving differences. Clarity and self-reflection are important in assessing what is actually happening and what the right approach for a situation may be. Different situations may call for different approaches. For example, it may be important to compel someone to behave ethically, persuade as to the church’s

direction, or collaborate on the best means of implementing the vision. See *discover your conflict management style* by Speed B. Leas.

12. A commitment to be more transformational does not require crucial management to be lost. When management comes naturally, transformational leadership needs committed intentionality.
13. As the Church Council and the Leadership Team evaluate new approaches to clergy and lay leadership, the issues raised through the interim process as to authority and responsibility and church governance should be resolved. The nature and extent of authority and responsibility should be set out in writing to the degree possible. Organizations are often better at describing responsibility than the authority needed to carry out the described responsibilities. The church governance structure can be streamlined and be more clear as to authority and responsibility. Policy Based governance is a model increasingly being used by congregational type churches. The governance model implemented by First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon might serve as a discussion starting point.

Recommended resources for leading change include: John Kotter, *Leading Change*. A copy of an article he wrote entitled, “What Leaders Really Do” is included in Appendix “D” to this report. Other helpful resources for clergy and lay leaders include: Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser, *Managing the Congregation*, and Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*. See also, *The Equipping Pastor* written by R. Paul Stevens and Phil Collins. For size transitions, consider reading Alice Mann, *The In-Between Church: Navigating Size Transitions in Congregations*.

The Leadership Team

The November clergy retreat provided an opportunity for the pastors to look at their hopes for team ministry and ways team ministry has and has not met those hopes. They prepared and shared a report about that retreat with lay leadership. The report is included as Appendix “E” to this report. Different understandings of team ministry existed among team members, including the role of head of staff. Over the past seven months, the Leadership Team looked at the nature and purpose of team ministry, each person’s place on the team, gifts for team ministry, and each person’s call to ministry at UCUC. The Leadership Team is developing a document for discussion with lay leaders entitled, “Team Ministry at University Congregational United Church of Christ”. It should be forthcoming shortly.

1. Recognizing the need for better management systems to support the Leadership Team, staffing recommendations have been made regarding David Anderson’s position and duties and an administrative assistant to the Leadership Team to be located on the second floor. Recommendations are forthcoming to Church Council on the lay positions created during the interim time. It is recommended that those positions be continued.

2. The Leadership Team has taken time to understand the differences between management and leadership and what is required to meet the church's needs at this time. The leadership team's transformational leadership gifts vary among the team members. The readiness and passion to lead depends in part on the circumstances of each team member. Among the Leadership Team members are a basket of gifts that provide what is needed to lead the church at this time.
3. The Leadership Team spent considerable time considering the Internal Identity Statement and the work underlying that statement.
4. The Leadership Team evaluated how it works as a team. Team members explored what the song in the heart is for each and what it might be for the team. The song in the heart process was helpful for their work together and in crafting a draft recommended vision. The Leadership Team is planning efforts to help lead a fall visioning process.
5. The Leadership Team evaluated the way its members relate to boards and committees. A new approach was test driven with the Youth Board. Peter Ilgenfritz should be contacted to learn more about this experiment.
6. The team ministry document should give future ministry candidates a picture of team ministry at UCUC. The document will also help lay leaders evaluate team ministry and determine whether it should be continued, modified or replaced by the more traditional senior ministry model.
7. It's important for the Leadership Team to help lead a vision with the congregation. However, the vision should be passionately embraced by the congregation so that it is not staff dependent.
8. The Leadership Team agreed that at this time, no additional clergy person should be called to serve the church.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Celebrate the lay and clergy leadership provided over the past 15 years as what was needed for the church's well being. Proclaim recognition for a new day as to church leadership.
2. Develop a visioning strategy for the fall that enables the congregation to own and have passion for a vision, so that the vision will be sustained through any further changes in the Leadership Team. As part of this process, help members and friends imagine what the church and surrounding community will look like as a result of living the vision.
3. Test any vision or plan to implement that vision against the Internal Identity Statement. Expect change to produce active and passive resistance.

4. Intentional work should be continued to stay in touch with congregational realities as understood by members, those on the fringe, and those in the community. A small motivated task group should work with the Leadership Team to assess regularly environmental realities. For the next five years, it's suggested the Leadership Retreat reacquaint leaders with the Internal Identity Statement and its implications in relation to the church's vision.
5. Consider an open, flexible way of doing strategic planning. Church Consultant, Tom Bandy, refers to planning as ministry mapping. Think of mapping like setting the contours or sides to a sandbox. Within a strategically mapped sand box, let creative Godly play reign. Help members and friends catch excitement for being changed, gifted, called, equipped and sent.
6. There is a golden sandbox rule. Keep your sand play in the sandbox. Meaning, the contour or sandbox sides set the appropriate broad boundaries for the work and life of the church. Members and friends have plenty of room to respond to God's call, but stay connected by keeping their ministry and mission inside the boundaries shaped by the church's vision.
7. Develop a membership strategy and approaches to worship that are clearly connected to and fed by the vision.
8. The church is currently at a transitional size, between a mid and large sized congregation. This suggests that the size issue should be evaluated over time in relation to where a vision might lead UCUC.
9. Current and future lay leaders need to be supported in discovering, practicing and honing their transformation gifts so that they will find a better balance between managerial and transformational lay leadership.
10. Continue developing the lay and clergy practices undertaken to make space for the interim process and leadership issues. Anchor the practices in the church's culture.
11. Leverage the way boards and clergy relate so as to empower the boards and free clergy for more transformational leadership.
12. Eliminate the Head of Staff Clergy Role as it currently functions. Redistribute the functions as suggested by the Leadership Team. Make clear the authority and responsibility of the Leadership Team at the Council level. Evaluate and make suggestions at evaluation time, but resist, as an ordinary matter, "managing" the Leadership Team.
13. Establish and support an effective Pastor Parish Committee.
14. Charge the Church Council with the central, direct role in evaluating the Leadership Team. Include evaluation criteria consistent with the chosen

governance structure of the church, agreed upon authority and responsibility, and the leadership and management characteristics critical to the future of the church.

15. UCUCC should live into the team model for the next three years, as clarified and defined. In three years, the lay leadership and the Leadership Team should do an evaluation of team ministry. Lay leaders and the Leadership Team may also want to anticipate the impact of changes to the team on the church and on the nature of team ministry. A very small group (three people maximum) might be established to anticipate and work confidentially on transition issues. I see these as substantive Executive Committee and Leadership Team matters and not human resource or personnel policy issues. The First Unitarian Church in Portland has such a team in place.
16. When collaboration is expected, be clear that all parties to the issue are collaborating.
17. Both the Leadership Team and lay leadership should work to resolve issues of authority, responsibility and church governance. Consider the governance model implemented by First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon, its grievance procedure, and its method for evaluating the leadership team.

Finally, let lay and clergy saints of the past rest with Moses and Elijah in a booth at the top of the mountain in the presence of God. To all those who remain in the church, come down the mountain to be the radical message of Jesus that's needed today. Jesus is not on the mountain with Moses and Elijah. He is alive, casting out the demons of injustice and oppression in the valleys below. He beckons. Come and follow!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve such an inspiring church. Peace be with you.

Blessings,

George

Ps. It's all good!