

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration
6900 Stenton Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19150

Fall 2017 TPUC Meeting, Annual Report of a Member Congregation
submitted by Fern Culhane, Restoration's Trustee

Number of services held in past year: 53 Sunday Services and 52 Thursday night vigils, and 2 Ordination Services for Rev. Jo Green and Rev. Maria Uitti McCabe, held jointly with Cherry Hill, NJ and Wilmington, DE UU Churches respectively.

Number of pledging units: 90

Number of members: 90

Average pledge per unit: approx. \$2,000

Annual Budget for current year: \$179,800

Ministerial situation: currently without a minister, in a search for a consulting 1/2 time minister

Number of children in RE programming, registered: 5

Content of children's RE programming: using a variety of resources based on "Chalice Children" tailored for the available children's ages.

What brings visitors in the door: our presence in the neighborhood with the Thursday night outdoor portion of our vigils, our musical offerings on Sunday, the Folk Factory, which is a social justice oriented coffee house, our twice yearly flea markets in the fall and spring, and the Book Sales on the Fourth of July and Labor Day Holiday weekends

How funds from PUC received during past year have been/are being utilized: predominantly supporting our Sunday services through funding the caregivers for the nursery

Highlights (3-5) of congregational life since last meeting:

1) Restoration's adoption of the 8th Principle for ourselves which reads:

We affirm and promote the following 8th Principle: Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community that by our actions accountably dismantles racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

2) Our work to improve the RE content and offerings at Restoration: We contracted with and will be finishing up our work with a RE consultant, Sarah Arens, who serves as an RE Director for two UU churches in New Jersey. She interviewed numerous folks from the congregation, wrote a report that made some suggestions and recommendations for a path forward to support and strengthen our programming for youth and children and helped us get started on our search

for a 1/4 time RE coordinator. She will conclude her consultation work with us by leading a workshop for the congregation later this fall.

3) Our coping skills and resourcefulness as we met the challenges of illness and transitions within the church: Our beloved Music Director, Jane Hulting, was out for a full year, and has returned to us in a half time capacity, as we continue to welcome and incorporate musicians both from inside the church and from our neighborhood. Our Worship Associates have expanded their roles and increased their numbers (welcoming back WA's from previous years) to create and conduct thoughtful and inspirational Sunday Services since Jo and Maria moved on to their new spiritual communities.

4) Our Social Justice work with UUPLAN, POWER, and now importantly we are studying and considering whether and how to accept a membership request from a neighborhood man, Terry Williams, who has been imprisoned in Pennsylvania on Death Row for many years. He was to be executed in 2015 and would have been the first execution in PA for many years, but Gov. Wolf put a stay on all executions when he was inaugurated that stopped the process. Terry learned of Unitarian Universalism and has studied it deeply over the years. He sought a connection through an attorney and has become a pen pal with one of our members, Bruce Pollack-Johnson. This connection is expanding the lives of all of us as we return to a former Restoration commitment to Pennsylvania's incarcerated citizens. Now deceased members, Chuck and Helen Oerkvitz led us for many years in work to support the prisoners of Graterford Prison and others. After consultation with the Justice Council and the Board of Trustees, Bruce and others led a powerful worship service in September where Terry was introduced to the congregation. Bruce's presentation is available on our church's web page. Next we will use a portion of our October Congregational meeting for further discussion and proposals for how we might proceed.

Challenges being faced currently:

Adjusting to a longer period of transitions and uncertainty, while continuing to expand the numbers of folks within our congregation who are actively involved, caring for and supporting each other as we strive to build our beloved community, and sustaining the heritage of our church as we look forward to our 200th anniversary in 2020.