A Publication of First Unitarian Universalist Church, Rochester, Minnesota

# UU Revue

Spring 2016


## Little Church on the Prairie

## History of our Building

## Pat Calvert Author

## Reverend Peter Morales UUA President

## Caring Congregation

*Photo by Ron Chrisope*

**First Unitarian Universalist Church**
1727 Walden Lane SW
Rochester, Minnesota 55902
507-282-5209
uurochmn.org

## Communications Committee

Paulette DeMers *(chair)*
Kathy Brutinel
Anna Lovrien
Shelly Maciujec
Sue Wheeler
Jody Tharp *(Office Administrator)*

## Writers

Kathy Brutinel
Jennifer Harveland
Robin Taylor
Phil Wheeler
Sue Wheeler

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Interim Minister

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Ryan Shriver
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Office Administrator

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Records Administrator &
Co-Director of Music

Joe Mish
Co-Director of Music

Molly Dennis
Childcare Coordinator

Tom Rud
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# Inside this Issue



***In our next Issue:*** *Hawthorne Helps, Hands-On UU Social Justice Project located in District 535's Hawthorne Education Center*


## UU Revue

The *UU Revue* is produced quarterly by the First Unitarian Universalist Communications Committee.

Articles in *UU Revue* focus on the positive work done by First UU members and friends, demonstrating our congregation's commitment to the Seven Principles.

Much of the volunteering by our members is behind the scenes and, unless you are closely involved with these efforts, you may not be aware of the time and dedication, the challenges, or the joy experienced by those involved – not to mention the impact on those who benefit from their work.

By telling the stories of our wonderful members, we hope to inspire others to volunteer, become active, and find the reward of working with the church.

## Our Mission

To create a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice

# Interview with Reverend Peter Morales UUA President

By Phil Wheeler

The Reverend Peter Morales, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), will be a part of our Sesquicentennial celebration this April, attending our April 9 banquet and also preaching the Sunday services on April 10. He is a vigorous advocate for a shared social justice ministry in UU congregations, as well as for increasing congregational growth and diversity. Morales, the first Latino president of the UUA, was elected on a platform of growth and multiculturalism.

Morales began his second four-year term as UUA President in June 2013. As President of the Association, he is responsible to the UUA Board of Trustees for administering staff and programs that serve its more than 1,000 member congregations. Among other things, UUA services include assisting congregations with interim ministry and ministerial search, advising congregations on financial, personnel, and governance matters, and organizing staff and lay leader training.

*Morales arrested in D.C. during immigration protest (UU World)*

The UUA President is the principal spokesperson and minister-at-large for the UUA, relied on for public witness on matters of social justice. As a recent example, the "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign began in part in 2004 as an outcome of UUA President Bill Sinkford's witness in opposition to President Bush's call for a constitutional amendment to outlaw same-sex marriage.

Public witness is also central to Morales's presidency. Passionate about immigration reform, he was among those arrested while protesting Arizona's immigration law and a crackdown on illegal immigrants. In a letter to then Attorney General Eric Holder and Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, Morales wrote that he engaged in the protest in front of the jail to impede, "if only for one day the Sheriff's dehumanization of migrants, his raids on the barrios, and his campaign of terror."

Prior to his election, Morales served as the senior minister at Jefferson Unitarian Church in Golden,

Colorado, one of the UUA's largest and fastest-growing congregations. From 2002 to 2004, Morales was the UUA Director for District Services. Morales has also served on the UUA Board of Trustees, as trustee from the Mountain Desert District, and on the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) Executive Committee, as the first person to carry its anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism portfolio.

I met with Reverend Morales over Zoom, the Internet meeting software used by the UUA. He is a very amiable and engaging person and fun to talk with, but we nevertheless focused on the following questions ("Q's"), to which he gave thoughtful answers ("A's").

Q: Growth and outreach have been a priority for you. You have said in UUA publications that we need to grow in part because serving the people who need our spiritual sustenance and spiritual home is the moral equivalent of providing food to the hungry and shelter to the homeless. What are the impediments to growth?

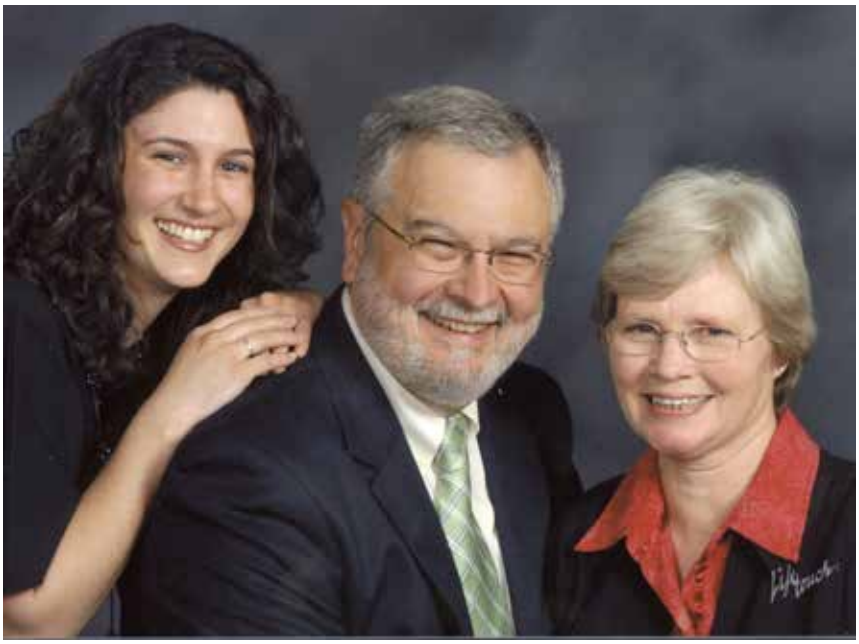
A: *Our growth is in the hands of our congregations. There are lots of small impediments to growth, but the major impediment is the culture of the congregation. Some congregations become inward-looking, so that they become a tight-knit group of friends who enjoy each other's fellowship to the point of seeming indifferent to visitors and newcomers. Congregations that are more outward-looking tend to be more hospitable and open. People can sense when they are genuinely welcome. This is not something that can be handled like a checklist; the music is not in the notes, but in the performance.*

*In the Internet Age, people come to us already knowing what our beliefs are, what programs we offer, and what we are up to in the community. They come to us to see if we are where they belong.*

Q: Recently, our congregation established a process for adopting congregational resolutions (which we have so far used just once, in support of same sex marriage equality). Some see this as inconsistent with the individual right of conscience. What is your view?

A: *I don't have an issue with this. We have a process for taking collective positions on matters of justice at the Association level as well, and it is not in conflict with the right of conscience. The congregation should be fully informed and involved, and there should be a significant majority in support of the position being taken. All of the congregation should have a voice in such matters, but no individual among us has a veto. My congregation may take a position that I disagree with, but it does not diminish my right to disagree.*

*In July 2015, UUA President Rev. Peter Morales and Rev. Dr. William Barber II, president of NC NAACP and architect of the Moral Mondays voting rights campaign, marched with thousands of people for voting rights in Winston-Salem, NC.*



*Morales with his family, daughter Marcela and wife Phyllis Windrem Morales*

Q: In your view, how are spirituality and justice linked together?

A: *For me, spirituality comes down to a sense of connection, with others, with community, with the environment, with the universe. When we truly feel ourselves connected with other people, then when other people are marginalized or oppressed, when their inherent dignity is ignored, working to restore their dignity is a natural response, an organic outgrowth of our spirituality. Spirituality is not a retreat from the world; it is engagement with the world.*

Q: According to past UUA President Rev. John Buehrens, "... the work of the church is the transformation of society." What makes a church an effective channel for social change?

A: *Social change is an outgrowth of the church's primary task of nurturing spiritual growth, of growing souls, teaching compassion and respect, and providing a place to practice spirituality. Because of the linkage between spirituality and social justice, seeking social change is a natural outgrowth of the spiritual practices that take place in the church. While politics tends to focus on competing interests, promoting some interests sometimes at the expense of others, justice work is work for a moral order.*

*In addition, carrying out social justice programs without a spiritual component is not sustainable. Most serious social justice issues will outlast us; working on them without spirituality ultimately results in bitterness. We need spirituality to sustain a faith in the fruitfulness of efforts, the success of which is beyond our lifespan.*

Q: Our church is in significant ways a social network. Millennials and other young adults seem to use social media as their network. What is the future of the traditional church congregation in the Twitter age?

A: *There has been an amazing abandonment of traditional congregations by young adults in the past decade. The largest denomination among this age group is now "Unaffiliated." Among young adults, there is no peer pressure to attend a church, no sense of obligation to support a church, no sense that church is a part of a duty of civic responsibility. Consequently, there is really no room for mediocrity; the church has to provide programs that meet their needs. Young adults need a sense of connection. Congregations that are genuinely welcoming can provide an opportunity for deeper connections across class, race, gender, and generational lines.*

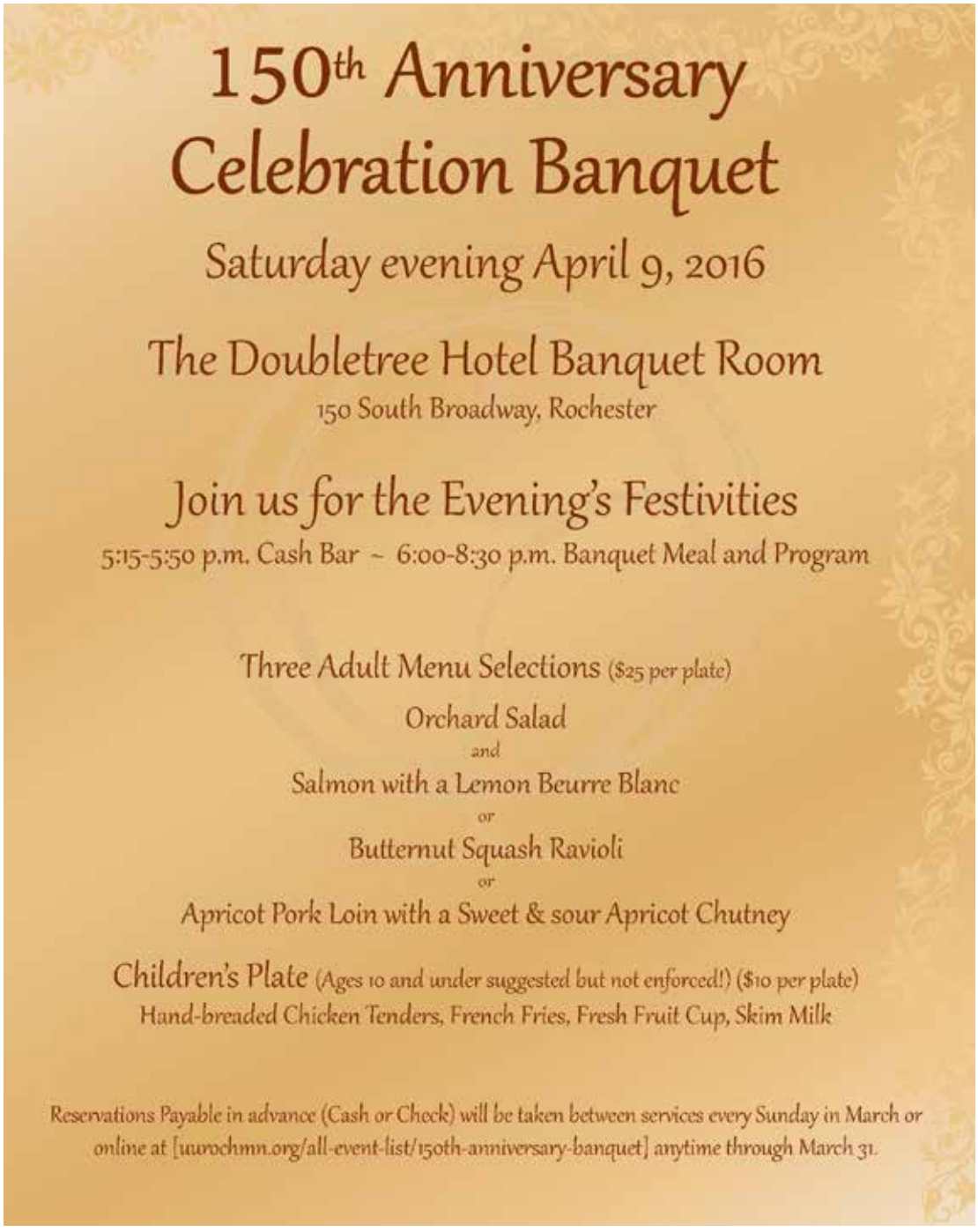
*With young adults, as with all of the other groups under-represented in our congregations, it is not about their coming to join us, it is about our reaching out to them. Doing so changes us as much as it changes them, and we are better for it.*

*Our churches need to adapt more rapidly than ever before, and part of that means using new technologies to advance our efforts. As an example, the UU Church in Albuquerque live-streams its Sunday services to smaller towns in New Mexico, where people get together in a member's house, share the service, and share fellowship. Those remote members are full members of the Albuquerque church, and the whole congregation gets together a few times a year to interact. The towns involved would never be able to support a building, staff, and minister, so would not be able to participate in the UU movement without this live-streaming service.*

Q: Finally: your first grandchild was born last fall. How does it feel?

A: *It's great. Our grandson Felix lives in Seattle and we live in Boston, so we are a continent apart. We've been out there only once, but we get to see pictures pretty much instantaneously, and of course, we connect by video over the Internet. It is amazing how much and how fast infants change. We expect to enjoy a lot more interaction with our grandson after I retire. My wife Phyllis and I can only conclude that we are born grandparents.*

At the end of the interview, we talked about Colorado, Seattle, vehicle safety, the intersections among classism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and fearmongering, and retirement. Morales asked how the weather would be here in April. I did my best to keep his expectations low. I asked if there was anything else he wanted to talk about, and he said you should never ask UU ministers a question like that, because all of them can go on forever. So we postponed that discussion until the weekend of the Sesquicentennial Banquet.



# Pat Calvert:

## How a Struggling Reader from the Backwoods of Montana Became an Acclaimed Children's Author … and a UU!

By Robin Taylor

It was the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, ironically, that propelled Pat Calvert through the doors of the First Universalist Church of Rochester in 1961.

Pat and her husband, George, had just moved to Rochester, and she read an article in the *Post-Bulletin* about the Universalist minister, the Rev. Vern Curry, who was advocating for passage of the treaty.

"I'd never heard of such a creature as a Universalist," says Pat, who told her husband they should check out the church. "It was a marvelous discovery for us both." They found others who were passionate about social justice issues and opportunities for intellectual stimulation, and made lifelong friends.

For Pat, who had spent most of her growing up years in an isolated cabin in the mountains 60 miles east of Great Falls, Montana, joining a church was a new and exciting experience.

"No sooner was the Test Ban Treaty headed toward resolution than civil rights issues took center stage. We participated in local civil rights marches, where a few tomatoes were thrown. It was lively!"

In Montana, Pat lived near a reservation of landless Native Americans and witnessed how they were discriminated against. She developed a sensitivity to issues of unfairness and neglect, which fueled her social justice work at the church—and inspired many of her story ideas in her future writing for children.

However, Pat had to struggle to learn to read. "The term dyslexia wasn't used at the time, but I wasn't promoted to second grade because I couldn't read." Her mother drilled her with flash cards for a whole summer before letters and words finally made sense. "By the end of summer I was more or less up to speed—because my mother said I was 'just too tall to be held back!'"

It wasn't until Pat was in fourth grade, however, that she was able to read well enough to devour children's books from the library, and she made up her mind to become a children's author.

She started collecting characters and story ideas in her youth, dashing off poems and essays, and storing them in an old metal suitcase that she kept in the attic at her mother's house. Even so, her path to publication was slow and unconventional.

Pat began college at the University of Montana, enrolled in a medical technology program, but

*Pat, age 15, at the cabin. "My dad had no flash and did a timed snapshot. (Remember the old oil cloth tablecloths?)"*

dropped out after a year and a half. Her high school boyfriend, George, had been called into military service as America got involved in the Korean War, and they decided to run off and get married (after telling their parents their intention). The newlyweds moved to Georgia, where George was stationed with the Air Force. A year later, Brianne was born, followed by another daughter, Dana, less than two years later. The busy mother had no time to write a book.

When George finished his Air Force duty, he entered the insurance business, and the Calverts "took a chance on Rochester," in 1961. Soon after, they discovered the First Universalist Church at 3rd St. and 3rd Ave. SW. They raised their daughters in the RE program, where Pat taught Sunday school.

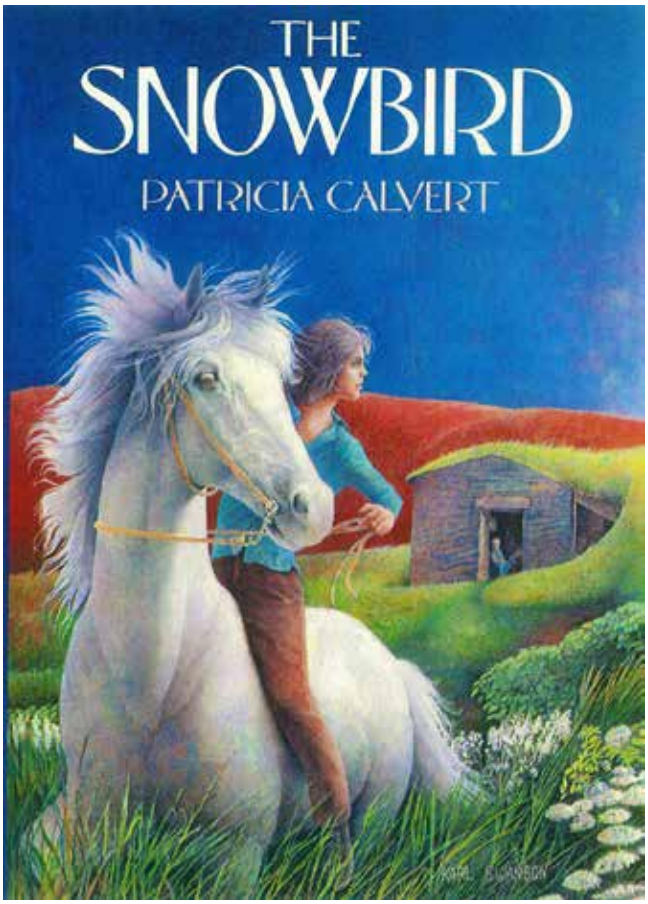
In 1962, when the girls were school age, Pat began working as a technician at Mayo Clinic. She took classes whenever she could towards her college degree, still planning to be a writer. In 1970, she transferred to the Section of Publications at Mayo Clinic. "That's where I learned to do research—because the doctors had to document EVERYTHING."

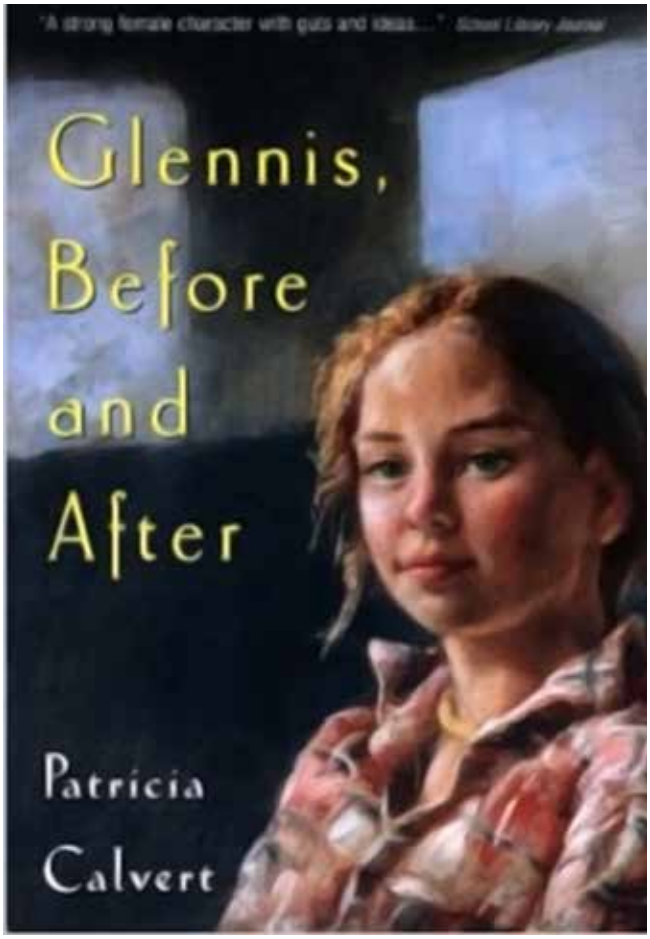
She wrote after work in her office in the Plummer Building, until she and George bought a 50-acre farm near Chatfield in 1973. There she began writing and studying in a converted chicken coop on the property. Finally, in 1976, Pat received her bachelor's degree in English and History from Winona State University.

*"The only thing worth writing about is the human heart in conflict with itself."*

**William Faulkner (and Pat Calvert agrees)**

*The cabin where Pat grew up in Montana, along Timber Creek in Lewis & Clark National Forest. "No Neighbors!"*




"There was a time when I wanted to write to make money, so I decided to try a steamy romance. But George asked, 'What do you know about that?'" Pat recalls wryly. She quickly reverted to writing the kind of stories for children and young adults that she enjoyed reading. Over the years, she succeeded in having almost a hundred short stories and articles published by magazines such as *Highlights for Children, Jack and Jill, American Farm Journal,* and *The Friend*.

Despite small victories, Pat began to doubt that she'd ever find the time to write a whole novel. On a visit home to her mother, she actually took that old metal suitcase of story ideas down from the attic and burned the contents, thinking she could never be a wife AND a mother AND an author.

"Years later, however, I was able to make many of those dreams I'd sent up in smoke whole again by transforming that incident into fiction," Pat relates in the *"Something About the Author" Autobiography Series, Vol. 17*. "In my first novel, a 14-year-old girl named Willana committed the same act I had years before .... It was then that I discovered no experience or event is ever lost; a writer can always call it up again, make it new, can make it speak to readers about their own lives."

When she was 49, Pat completed her first book, *The Snowbird*, which had taken four years to write and revise. "I submitted it to three publishers," she remembers. "The first two rejected it—but with praise." The third time was a charm: it was published by Scribner's in 1980 and went on to win several awards, including being named a coveted "Best Book" by the American Library Association.

After that, writing got easier, and Pat published a book almost every year for the next 20 years. She retired from Mayo in 1992 to write full time, specializing in historical fiction for young adults and her main love, nonfiction for middle grades. (Pat wrote biographies of Daniel Boone, Robert E. Peary, and Hernando Cortes, among others, for Benchmark Books, as well as Scholastic Press.)

She went on to teach and lecture at many children's writing festivals and workshops. However, among her career highlights would be a fan letter that she received from a 21-year-old prisoner. He had just read *The Hour of the Wolf*, her novel about a city boy spending his senior year in Alaska, who decides to run the Iditarod—a 1,000-mile dog sled

race. The hero struggles against adversity at every turn. “The prisoner wrote that he decided that if that kid could do what he did and change his life, then *he* could shape up, too. “

Her favorite book, if she had to choose one, might be *Writing to Ritchie,* about two boys who are put into foster care. “That happened to my cousins, with unfortunate consequences, and I have thought about them all my life. I loved that book; it was both funny and painful to write.”

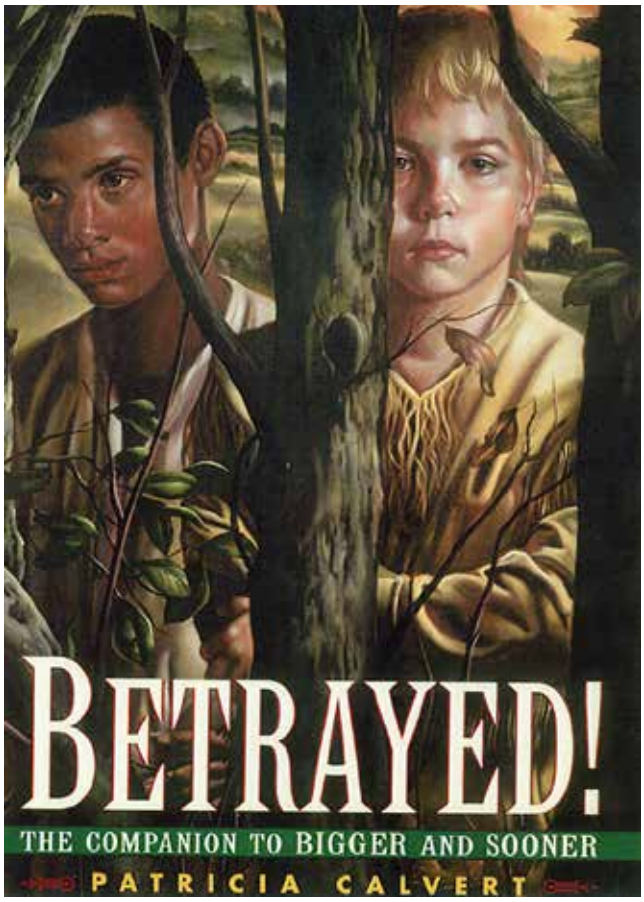
Pat discovered that a writer doesn’t necessarily need to have experience about something in order to write about it. “The thing that is magical about writing is the writing. It’s about getting an idea on paper, exploring a certain issue, and imagining what it’s like to be a kid—or a cat, a dog, a horse—in that situation. You grow in awareness about what it means to be a living being.”

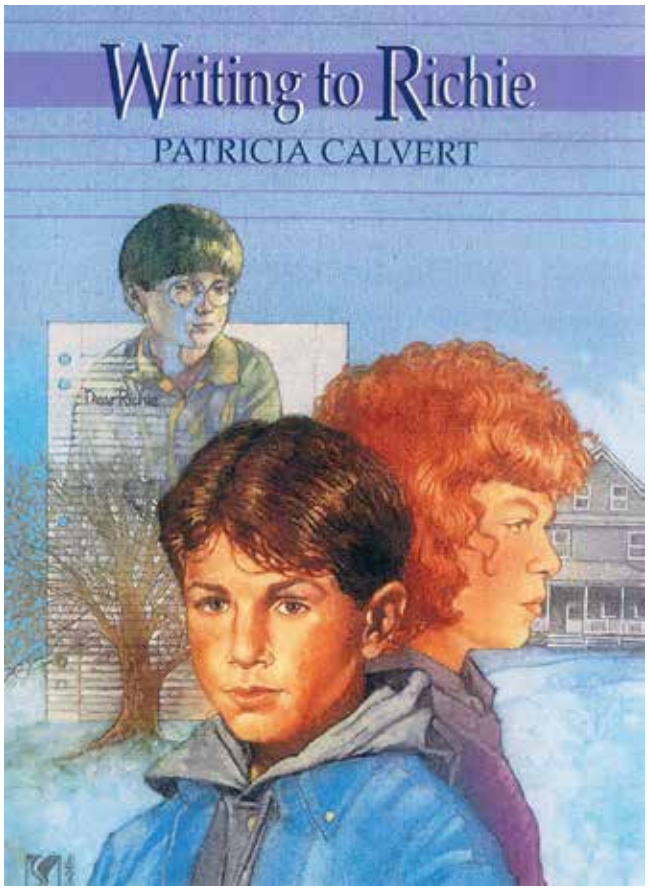
“I had four books under contract when George passed away suddenly,” says Pat. “They were lifesavers. They kept me going. And when I was finished, I decided I’d said almost everything I wanted to say—after 26 books I didn’t need to write another. Nevertheless, I keep files of titles, names of characters, and plot lines—just in case.”

Pat sold her farm in Chatfield shortly after George’s death in 2001, and moved to Rochester. Her proximity to the church has made it easy for her to participate in all kinds of classes and discussion groups, like the Principal Four Study Group and the Buddhist discussion group. “It is a thinker’s haven,” says Pat. Over the years, she has balanced those pursuits with volunteering as a coffee host, guest table greeter, usher, rummage sale assistant, and recently, mentoring.

When her younger daughter, Dana, passed away unexpectedly in May 2015, Pat felt the embrace of the “church family,” a term she’d never fully appreciated before. “I don’t think I ever anticipated, when I joined the church, that it would come to mean so much to me,” she says.

*Robin Taylor is a former journalist who loves writing about interesting people and places. She has been a member of First UU since 1992.*



# Little Church on the Prairie: Our Founding Parents

By Sue Wheeler

We often hear the history of the First Unitarian Universalist Church in terms of our ministers and their words and deeds, but we all know that our church's history was made by the members and friends who supported it for the past 150 years. The first members, men and women who signed the church constitution of the First Universalist Society on March 12, 1866, were pioneers in the building of Rochester and the Universalist faith, "a faith everywhere spoken against," according to the *Universalist Registry of 1874*, in an obituary for charter member Rev. S.W. Eaton.

Charter members Moses and Hattie Fay were distinguished citizens of Rochester. Moses W. Fay was born in New York, but it is unclear when—sometime between 1823 and 1827. He moved to South Bend, Indiana, where he worked as a printer, and then to Rochester, where he set up a law office in 1856, two years before Minnesota became a state. On June 13, 1860, he and Hattie Stevens were married in Paw Paw, Michigan. They had two children.

Moses Fay was the first mayor of Rochester, serving a one-year term 1858-59. He was also elected Judge of Probate, and in 1866 was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as Rochester's Postmaster.

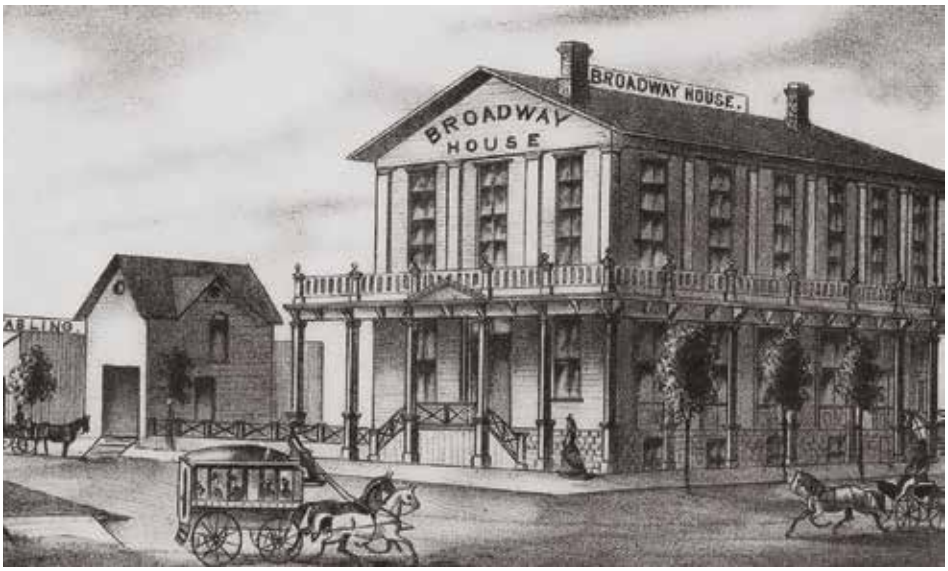
Mr. Fay, along with S.W. Eaton and J.B. Clark, wrote the first church constitution. Our first settled minister, Rev. Silas Wakefield, wrote of Judge Fay: "he combined...sound judgment, good sense, and unusual integrity and candor which made

*Susan Rice Eaton (1817-1903)*

*Samuel W. Eaton (1815-1890)*

his services desirable and reliable....He was among the first to encourage the organization of the Universalist society." According to Rev. Wakefield he gave liberally to support building the church and preaching the gospel.

Moses Fay died on April 26, 1867, at the age of "about 40" of smallpox. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery. On June 15 the *Rochester Post* reported that Mrs. Fay received her commission as Postmistress in "response to petitions signed by the whole community and well met with full approval of the people."




*First Universalist Society held services on the second floor of this building in 1866, which also served as the county courthouse until 1867. (Courtesy Olmsted County Historical Society)*

Two more charter members, Rev. S. W. and Susan Eaton staunchly supported Universalism and Rochester's Universalist church. Samuel W. Eaton was born in Concord, New York, in 1815, and Susan Rice Eaton was born in Boston, New York, in 1817. Married in 1837, they had five children, three dying before the age of eleven. According to the 1910 *History of Olmsted County*, the roof of their house was blown off in the "great cyclone" of 1883.

Rev. Eaton farmed in New York, in Wisconsin, and when they first moved to Minnesota in 1861 before moving to the city in 1862. In addition, at the age of 20 he began work at a local newspaper to learn the printing business. On December 24, 1860, he was ordained a Universalist minister. He was a newspaper editor, served in the Minnesota legislature in 1868, and was elected Judge of Probate for two terms. According to the *Register and Union*, he also held the offices of city recorder, alderman, and city justice. He co-authored a history of Olmsted County published in 1883. In 1884 he retired because of poor eyesight due to a cataract. After his retirement, he wrote opinionated letters to the editor on such topics as statehood for the Dakota Territory, amending the Rochester city charter, and criticizing a newly elected mayor as being "so pronounced and unqualified a democrat."

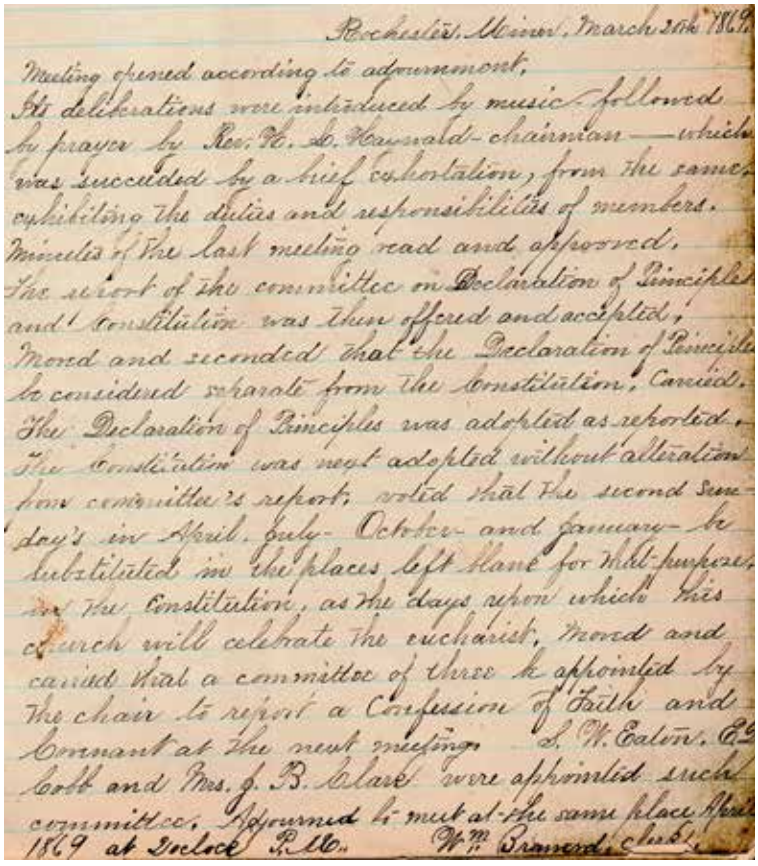
S.W. Eaton called the organizational meeting at the Court House, where the 25 charter members signed the constitution. In 1869 when Rev. Hayward reorganized church governance, Eaton, along with E. D. Cobb and Sarah Clark, composed the Confession of Faith and Covenant. He was permanently elected Deacon that same year and served as part-time minister, filling in during meetings and Sunday services whenever needed. In 1887, a few years before Rev. Eaton's death, the church minutes state the following: "[Rev. Eaton] made a few remarks touching his fondness for the church of which he had so long been a member, and the hope of his passing from this to the 'higher church above.'" Rev. McGlauflin, presiding at his funeral in 1890, remarked that he was devoted to the church, "the upbuilding of which he lent valuable and untiring aid."

According to her 1903 obituary in the *Olmsted County Democrat*, Susan Eaton was "a young lady when first privileged to hear a Universalist sermon. It so influenced her that she ever remained firm and unwavering and with absolute trust in the comforting faith." Rev. Evans remarked that she always "took a deep interest" in the welfare of the church. She and her husband celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1887. Both are buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

John B. (J.B.) and Sarah Clark were latecomers to Rochester, arriving in 1864, shortly before they added their signatures to become charter members of the church. John was born in Exeter, Maine, in 1822, and Sarah was born in Lancaster, Massachusetts, in 1821. They were married in 1849, moved to Pennsylvania, and finally settled in Rochester in hopes of improving his health.

Mr. Clark's occupation is unclear from available sources. He was a member of the Rochester Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry and, in fact, when he died, a Resolution of Respect was written by I. M. Westfall, also a Grange member and our church's first minister (see *UU Revue*, Spring 2015). He also served two three-year terms on the newly organized Rochester school board. During his tenure the board recommended building three new buildings—two elementary schools and Central High School, which opened in 1868 and was located on Zumbro and Franklin directly west of First Universalist Society chapel.

In addition to helping to write the church's original constitution, Mr. Clark was an elected Deacon and served as a delegate and committee member at the State Universalist Convention. However, the consumption that brought him to Rochester continued: in 1870 the *Rochester Post* reported that he was recovering from severe illness, in 1871 he took a trip to Lake Superior for his health, and in 1874 he and Sarah traveled to Colorado Springs, hoping that a change in climate would bring relief. He died there in 1875 at age 53. Rev. Deere conducted the funeral service.



Rochester, Minn. March 30th 1869

Meeting opened according to adjournment,
Its deliberations were introduced by music - followed
by prayer by Rev. W. S. Hayward - chairman — which
was succeeded by a brief exhortation, from the same,
exhibiting the duties and responsibilities of members.
Minutes of the last meeting read and approved.
The report of the committee on Declaration of Principles
and Constitution was then offered and accepted,
Moved and seconded that the Declaration of Principles
be considered seperate from the Constitution. Carried.
The Declaration of Principles was adopted as reported.
The Constitution was next adopted without alteration
from committee's report, voted that the second Sun-
day's in April, July, October and January be
substituted in the places left blank for that purpose
in the Constitution, as the days upon which this
Church will celebrate the Eucharist, Moved and
carried that a committee of three be appointed by
the chair to report a Confession of Faith and
Covenant at the next meeting. L. W. Eaton, Esq
Cobb and Mrs. J. B. Clark were appointed such
committee. Adjourned to meet at the same place April
1869 at 2 o'clock P.M. Wm Brainerd, Clerk

*Minutes from an early board meeting*

His wife, Sarah Clark (Mrs. J. B.), was baptized by Rev. Hayward in 1869. She was part of the committee that wrote the Confession of Faith and Covenant in 1869, she served as church Steward from 1877 until her death in 1891, and she was a delegate to the State Universalist Convention for several years. In 1887 she attended her daughter Emma's graduation from Buchtel College, founded by Ohio Universalists. According to an obituary, "early members remembered the zeal with which she acted as president of the sewing societies as well as her efficiencies in Sunday School." An obituary also mentioned that she gave generously to the new church that was erected in 1876. "Her habits of industry never languished."

All indications from newspaper articles prove that statement true. In 1870 Mrs. Clark was vice president of the Rochester Women's Suffrage Association (Mrs. J. W. Keyes, our minister's wife, was treasurer) and attended a convention in Chicago along with Rev. Keyes. In 1875 she sold 35 acres of land "on College Street beyond Bear Creek" to Dr. Mayo for $3,500. In 1881 she evidently owned a store on Broadway, for which she had the floor lowered to street level and added large plate glass windows. In the August 3, 1883, *Rochester Post*, the following item appeared: "We call attention to the corsets made by Mrs. J. B. Clark. They are said to be equal in every respect to the very best. Ladies will do well to examine them." In addition to all her other activities, she was a corsetiere! She died at age 70 after a brief illness, and Rev. Boynton conducted the service.

Three members of the Ozmun family signed the constitution on that day in March 1866: Abraham (Abram), his (second) wife Maria, and his daughter (by his first wife) Mary. Abraham was born in Thompkins County, New York, in 1814. Mary was born in 1838 in New York. Maria Schneck was born in Owasco, New York, in 1820 and was a teacher when she met and married Abraham in 1853. They moved to Minnesota in 1856 to a farm in Cascade Township and in 1862 to Rochester.

Mr. Ozmun, owner of Ozmun & Sons Hardware, was active in the Rochester community: he was elected to the legislature in 1859 from Cascade Township. He also served a term as Rochester's mayor, 1864-65. In January 1870 his hardware store suffered great loss from a fire that destroyed five buildings on Broadway, and by December of that year he was part of a fire engine company formed to protect the city. *Rochester Post* reported in December 1872 that Ozmun & Sons had built "the most perfect hardware store in Minnesota, and, we doubt not, in the West. Every effort has been made to render the building fire-proof."

Elected the first treasurer of the church in 1866, Mr. Ozmun was active in governing in those first years. His obituary in 1887, states "being one of the earliest members of the Universalist church, he was zealous and active in its service. When only a handful of people rallied round its altar in Rochester, he worked sincerely and faithfully in its building up."

Mary Ozmun was 28 years old when she became a charter member with her father and step mother. Her name appears in the church records as an active member who gave quarterly "subscriptions" to support the church. When she died in 1886, the following was published in the local paper: "We have been deprived of one of our earliest and best members, one who was always present at our services, ready and cheerfully willing to do her duty from the love in her heart. Amiable and pleasant in times of prosperity and sympathetic and comforting in trials and adversity." All three of the Ozmun charter members are buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

*Abraham Ozmun*
*(1814-1887)*
*History of Olmsted County, Minnesota, 1910*

Interestingly, one of Abraham and Maria Ozmun's grandsons was Kenneth Leland Ozmun. He and his wife, Lillian, donated generously to the Mayo Foundation, and the Ozmun complex is named in their honor, according to a May 28, 1995, article in the *Post-Bulletin*.

These are just brief descriptions of 9 of the people who started our church and worked to build it into a welcoming community and a voice in Rochester. All were pioneers and part of the early economic transformation of this area. Many were active in the civic life of Rochester, surrounding townships, and the State. We celebrate their vision and are proud to inherit their legacy.

*Sue Wheeler has been a church member since 1983, is a member of the History Committee, and loves to dig through all the church archives.*

# Caring Congregation

By Jennifer Harveland

"A compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice."

Everything the Caring Congregation Committee does stems from that compassion. In fact, whether you are "officially" a member or not, if you have ever offered a listening ear, sent a card, made a phone call, given a hug, taken a meal, provided a ride, or any of the hundreds of other things we ALL do to show each other we care, you are part of the committee. That care that we as a congregation show to each other is something I value deeply in this church. It is powerful and profound.

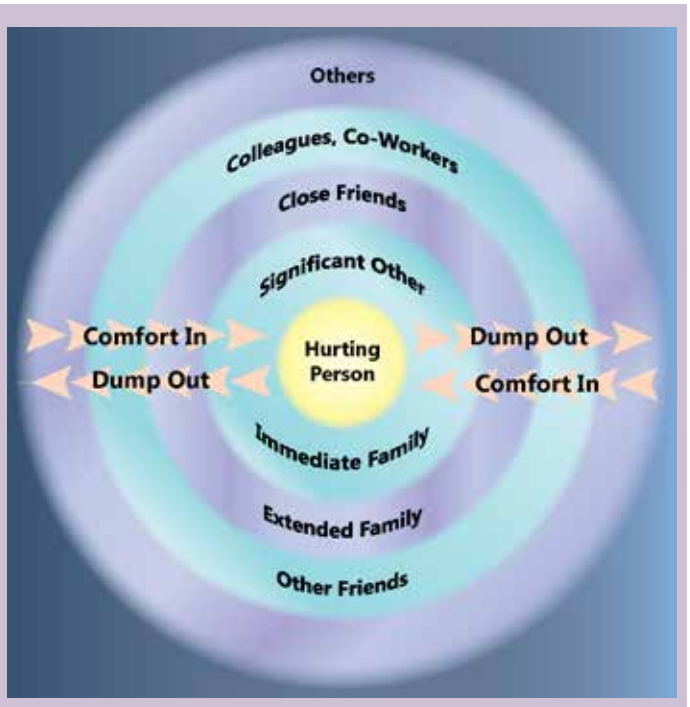
The Caring Congregation Committee is a group of about two dozen volunteers who each take a two-week block of time once or twice a year to be the Caring Coordinator. Every week the order of service lists the Caring Coordinator – this is the point person for the week. If you have an emergency, a crisis, a death, an illness, a celebration, a joy – you can contact the Caring Coordinator.

*Jennifer Harveland, Chair, Caring Congregation*

With the help of a small army of volunteers who have indicated they are willing to provide rides, or child care, or meals, or other kinds of support, the Caring Coordinator does the work of caring for our beloved community. In addition to sending out cards for births, deaths, illnesses, and more, the Coordinator corresponds with a number of church members and friends who have moved away, need extra support, or are unable to come to services regularly. Of course, those Coordinators are backed up and supported by me, by our Coordinator of Congregational Life, Sarah Rothwell, and by all the staff and the minister. When you call one of us, we share the information with each other.

So how can you help? Specific offers of what you can do are helpful. "I can come over and shovel." "I can help make sure the dogs get fed and walked." "I will bring a meal." While saying, "Call me if you need anything" sounds helpful, it is often too open-ended, and many tasks feel as if they are too much to ask of people. If you are asked to bring a meal to someone, don't panic. Many people are nervous to bring food to others; there is no need for one to be a gourmet cook, simple homemade meals are always appreciated. For that matter, an entire meal from the supermarket deli, a fast food joint, or a gift card to a restaurant is appropriate. How many times have you been stressed after a long day, only to have to face the question, "What's for dinner?" It is a gift to know there will be a meal that you did not have to cook.

## Ring Theory




Susan Silk and Barry Goldman have described a way to help people understand how to be helpful in times of crisis, whether it be medical, legal, financial, or other.. In an article in the *L.A. Times*, they recommend that you start by drawing a circle. This is the center ring. In it, put the name of the person at the center of the current trauma. Draw more circles around the first one, and repeat the process as many times as needed. In each larger ring put the next closest people. Parents and children before more distant relatives. Intimate friends in smaller rings, acquaintances in larger ones.

The rules are simple. The person in the center ring can say anything he or she wants to anyone. Everyone is allowed to feel stressed, or scared, or uncomfortable, but you can only say those things to those outside of your circle. When you are talking to a person in a ring smaller than yours, someone closer to the center of the crisis, the goal is to help. Offer comfort and support, by saying, "I'm sorry" or "Can I bring you dinner?" Offering advice or telling your own story of a crisis is not helpful, and should be avoided.

If you want to scream or cry or complain, if you want to tell someone how shocked you are or how the situation bothers you, you can do that, as long as you tell someone in a bigger ring.

Comfort in, dump out.

One thing I had not anticipated in being part of the Caring Congregation group is all of the issues we as a group face with regard to privacy. In today's very connected, digital world, sometimes we forget that caring for our beloved community is ALSO about respecting others' right to privacy. When dealing with medical issues, diagnoses, and other kinds of challenges, there can be concerns about revealing information that people don't wish to have made public while making sure that they have the support they need.

If you let the office staff know about an illness or any other situation you are facing, the information only goes as far as you want it to. Even if you don't want it made public, it is helpful for the staff to be aware that you are dealing with a challenge. You should always assume that if the office is aware of something, it will be made public only if permission has been granted.

*Sarah Rothwell, Coordinator of Congregational Life*

Social media is both a help and a challenge for us; of course it is helpful when we see that a church member is injured or needs assistance. Unfortunately, we can't possibly see everything on Facebook, and people often assume we are aware if the situation has been posted on social media. Please do feel free to reach out to the Caring Coordinator or staff if you know of a need.

Don't share news that is not yours to share, whether it's good or bad. Sometimes people post things on social media without thinking, not realizing that they may unwittingly be "breaking news" to people who probably should be told BEFORE it goes public. And notice I mentioned good news, too -- please DO share that. As we mourn together, so should we celebrate. Call or email Sarah Rothwell and let her know about that promotion, that new baby in your extended family, or the victory, whatever it may be, that you have been working toward.

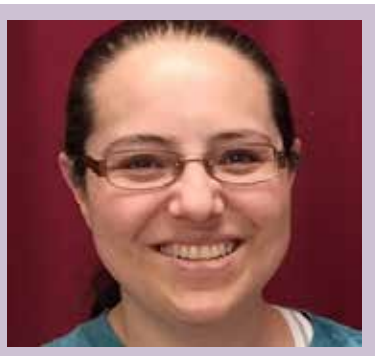
If you want to help, we welcome you. Talk to Sarah about joining our committee or being on one of the lists of helpers we maintain. We also have resources for you if you want to help. You can check out our Pinterest boards. They are alphabetized, and you will find several boards starting with "Caring." There are gluten-free recipes, vegetarian recipes, and a board called "How to help" with ideas, big and small, to help someone who might be going through a rough patch.

Ask yourself how you want to show caring to this community. Be intentional about it. Be specific when offering help. Don't panic about whether or not you are good enough. Ask for help. Share joy.

I am grateful for the people who care for our Beloved Community. As we move through this time of transition, let's look for opportunities, big and small, to take care of each other. To show each other mercy and unconditional love. To work together to free ourselves and our souls from disconnectedness from each other and the world. To do small things, as Mother Teresa said, with great love.

*A dabbler who enjoys family history, cooking and photography; a Springsteen fan who loves old cars, cocktails, and all things shiny, sparkly, and glittery, Jennifer can usually be found reading with her husband, 3 teenage sons, and their spoiled pug, Pippa, nearby.*

## Denise Feddersen



Congregant Denise Feddersen faced open heart surgery in the spring of 2015. She had known the surgery was needed, but doctors had told her it would likely occur in 2016. In March she found out that her condition required her to have surgery much sooner, and she and her family had two weeks to prepare. Her husband, Jakob, and teenage daughters Sarina and Chantelle, had little time to prepare mentally and emotionally, and neither Denise nor Jakob anticipated the toll the surgery would take on the family as a whole. The situation became more difficult when, 7 weeks after the first surgery, Denise had to have a second open heart surgery.

"We have no family in the area, so we were so grateful to our church friends and the Caring Committee for providing meals, taking our girls when needed, and the emotional support they got in addition to the logistics of getting them to classes and activities. Often people offered support in ways we hadn't realized we would need," Denise said.

The experience proved to be educational for Denise, a naturally giving and helpful person, when she saw the situation from the other side. "It was difficult for our family to ask for the help, because we didn't want to take advantage of people's generosity," she commented. "But I realized that everybody is worth being cared for, and that in accepting help you are allowing people the opportunity to give you the best of themselves."

# The History of our Building

By Kathy Brutinel

When Don and Phyllis Layton—both life-long UUs—arrived in Rochester in 1961, they found a Universalist church in desperate need of a make-over. Church membership had doubled in 10 years and the limitations of the building were evident. The traditional 1916 sanctuary comprised the entire main floor, and the basement was a large open area with storage closets and a small tucked-in kitchen. Offices, the nursery, and a parlor resided in a small building off to the side.

RE classes were held in two shifts in the basement, with classes separated only by the panels we now use for bulletin boards. Little insulation between floors meant that worshippers could hear the noise made by the children and vice versa. A fellowship event required that the entire church school set-up be dismantled.

At its February 20, 1962, meeting, the Board of Directors decided to "pursue vigorously the possibilities of disposition and relocation of the church." Before committing to a building campaign, however, eight subcommittees of the Long Range Planning Committee thoroughly reviewed every aspect of church life. By November Don had become chair of the committee and in his report for the 1963 annual meeting referred to this work as "agonizing self-analysis."

A summary of the analysis was submitted to the congregation in January 1964. It concluded that the auditorium was large enough, but its style "lends itself symbolically and actually to the centrality of the Word spoken from the minister to the believers, and neglects the democracy of our faith." In addition, the RE Director administers "the whole education program [of 150 enrolled children and 35 teachers] from a corner of the basement room, sans desk or file or supplies closet."

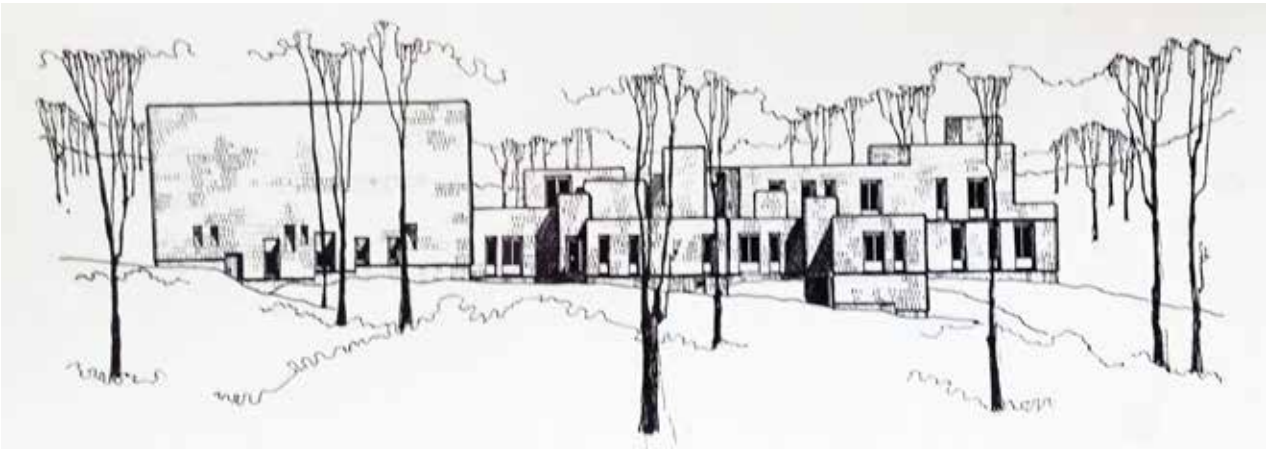
At the 1964 annual meeting, Don reported on the financial analysis, which concluded that the cost of land, a building, assessments, and the architect's fee would total about $300,000. Since the Mayo Foundation had offered $200,000 for the current property, the congregation would need to raise about $100,000. Based on these estimates, "an overwhelming majority" of the congregation approved the recommendation to proceed with a building plan. The Long Range Planning Committee metamorphosed into the Building Committee, Don remained chair, and another plethora of subcommittees was formed. One subcommittee went to work defining the values of the congregation and how those should be translated into architectural concepts. Others were charged with defining the needs of specific programs of the church, such as Fellowship and Social, Worship and the Arts, and Religious Education.

*Prospective site as seen from the air - before Walden Lane existed*

The Site Selection Subcommittee scoured Rochester for building sites. The one ultimately recommended was particularly appealing because of its beautiful, wooded setting. In October 1964, the congregation voted unanimously to purchase five acres of land in southwest Rochester for $39,500. When originally purchased, the property extended to the Hwy. 52 frontage road where the Jehovah's Witnesses' church now stands. The congregation agreed to sell its downtown site to the Mayo Foundation, and was granted 3 years to vacate.

In early 1965 the Architect Selection Committee began its work. From a pool of 12 interviewed applicants, the Board selected Victor Christ-Janer and Associates of New Canaan, Connecticut.

According to the website of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Mr. Christ-Janer was born in Waterville, Minnesota, in 1915. He attended St. Olaf



*Architect's concept drawing after the 180° rotation*

College in Minnesota and then enrolled at Yale University, where he received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with honors in sculpture in 1940. After serving as a conscientious objector in the military during World War II...he returned to Yale and received a Bachelor of Architecture degree.... Shortly after receiving his degree, he...became part of the first wave of Modern architects ...."

The Selection Committee's report to the Board cited Mr. Christ-Janer's "originality and his versatility in design, his attention to details, and the feeling that he pays attention to costs." According to Don Layton, his lack of preconceptions about what a church should look like was also a winning attribute. He was willing to dispense with a traditional church spire and concentrate on the building's functionality. The cement block shingles that cover our building were patented by Mr. Christ-Janer. For our building they were "used for the first time west of the Mississippi" and cost "about 60 percent of the price of brick," according to the July 13, 1967, *Post-Bulletin*.

Over the summer of 1965 Mr. Christ-Janer worked on plans for the church, trying to make the best use of the site's topography. That winter the congregation approved three basic design concepts: (1) a multi-level building that would take advantage of the hill elevations; (2) a central court that would bring views of nature into every zone of the building; and (3) separation into three functional zones: worship and fellowship in a central location; education in a two-story wing; and administration in a one-story wing.

In the summer of 1966 the plans went out for bids and theory began to meet up with hard reality. The bids were 40% higher than anticipated. The difficult process of cutting costs while attempting to maintain functionality began.

The biggest adjustment was the relocation of the building, which was originally designed to be further up the hill to the east, with a courtyard that opened up to parking on the west side. By rotating the building 180° and moving it down the hill, the builder eliminated $14,400 in excavation and site work costs. Other significant savings were $9,457 by eliminating air conditioning; $5,880 by eliminating storm water piping and root drains; $6,000 by replacing much of the carpeting with Torginal, a resinous aggregate; $4,000 by downgrading the parking lot and road from pavement to crushed rock; $2,260 by converting the steam heating system to hot water; and $3,876 by eliminating a teak dance floor and a fireplace in the minister's office. In all, the bid was reduced from $384,000 to $300,829.

Even with these deductions, the UUA advised the Board that the congregation did not have the capacity to repay a mortgage of the size needed to con-

*Site preparation*

struct the building. At the time the annual operating budget was around $30,000 from 119 pledging units. After all the work that had been done to bring the plan to fruition, the Board considered starting all over again, with now only a year left before they would have to vacate the downtown church.

However, at the February 22, 1967, annual meeting, the congregation voted to accept the building plan and sell some of the land to help pay for it. On April 10, 1967, Don Layton reported to the Board that our general contractor Floyd Larson had signed a contract to purchase about 2 acres for $32,800. With this contract for sale in hand, the long-awaited ground breaking took place in May 1967.

About the same time, the Board debated the possibility of selling the parsonage. This change would eliminate the cost of repairs from the operating budget and give our ministers the opportunity to accumulate equity in their own homes. The sale would provide funds to loan the minister a down payment and the balance could be used for the new church. Rev. Vern Curry found a new home and the parsonage at 844 8th Avenue SW was sold for $23,000.

When the construction began, Don Layton's commitment to the project mushroomed. He claims he visited the building site every single day during the 10 months of its construction and dealt with numerous telephone calls each day from the local supervising architect. According to Don, many residents on his neurology service remember 1967-68 as "the year Dr. Layton built the church."

In fall of 1967 an Environmental Planning Committee was formed "to oversee the furnishing of the new church." The committee adopted a "design now, pay later" concept; their intent was to create a unified design scheme that could be implemented as funds became available. As Mrs. Ray Wheeler optimistically stated in the February 13, 1968, *Post-Bulletin*, "We've really been nickel and diming it and it'll be a little like camping out right now. But we're following a master plan for the future."

The first service was held in the new church on February 18, 1968, and the first annual meeting was held on February 22. At that meeting, Don Layton reported that the final cost, including the building, architect, land, assessments, minor landscaping, some furnishings, and miscellaneous totaled $405,000.

Even this amount, which exceeded original estimates by more than $100,000, did not include painting, paving for the parking lots and walks, landscaping beyond the bare essentials, furnishings for the chap-

el and offices, chairs and tables for the fellowship hall, and carpeting or seating in the sanctuary. For three years people brought folding chairs from home to supplement the chairs that had been scrounged from the former church.

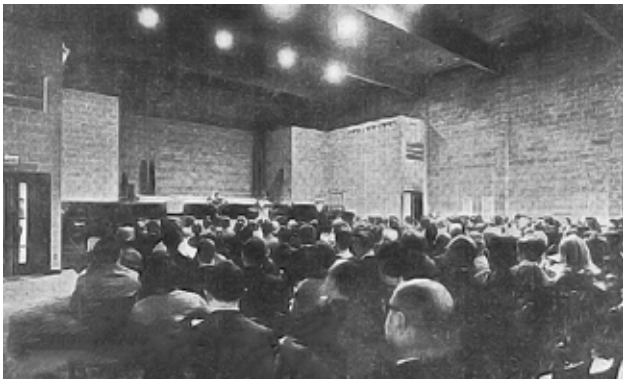
In addition to the property sales, the congregation had pledged $104,000 to the building fund. They also borrowed $10,000 from the UUA and obtained a first mortgage from the First National Bank of Rochester. While annual pledges had increased from $19,000 to $30,000 during the years of planning and building, the 1968 budget included $1,100 for debt retirement, while the actual payment was $5,200. As Don put it, “we had made a tremendous investment of money we didn’t have.”

As expected by the original planners, however, the space and opportunities created by the new church energized the congregation. They were delighted by the versatility of their new worship space (no fixed pews!). They were proud of the church school wing that eliminated double shifts and gave the children a private, quiet area. And they greatly appreciated the expanded kitchen and convenient fellowship space.

Members donated extra funds to complete particular projects and held special fundraising events, new people joined and contributed, and many stepped forward to volunteer their skills in carpentry and ingenuity. As time passed, the dreams of the original planners and builders came to fruition. In 1969 the parking area and courtyard were paved. A bequest from Phyllis Layton’s mother paid for furnishings for the Children’s Chapel. In 1971 the Clara Barton Guild purchased chairs for the auditorium.

In response to one of Mr. Christ-Janer’s first proposals, the congregation directed that he, “make it possible for people to enter church auditorium from the rear (such as women making coffee) or leave from the rear (such as a paged physician).” Obviously, that did not happen and no one I have talked to remembers why. Does anyone have the ingenuity to tackle this dream that remains?

*The structural bones of the sanctuary*



*First service in the new sanctuary*

*Kathy Brutinel is an English major who finally figured out she should have studied accounting instead but, nonetheless, loves to play with words.*

## A Statement of Architectural Principle

With our tenets and functions in mind, our architecture should represent:

- Our identity with nature
- Our respect for the orderly process of life
- Our concern for the individual
- Our confidence in mankind
- Our emphasis upon creativity and beauty

## A Statement of Criteria

Our philosophy, aims, and functions logically lead to a set of seven criteria by which we can judge an architect and his design:

- Acceptance and understanding of our ideas and needs
- Creativity in expression of our philosophy and purposes
- Imagination in developing space to promote our functions
- Beauty and integrity of interior and exterior design
- Practicality of design for function and maintenance
- Economy of design and materials for construction and maintenance
- Devotion to the expression of our tenets by his design

These observations suggest that our church need not be built like a traditional church purely because that is the way churches have been built in the past, nor should we seek the unusual merely for the sake of being different. Our architecture should not be afraid to carry with it appropriate heritage from the past. However, it should seek creatively and imaginatively to serve our purposes with integrity, beauty, simplicity, economy, and utility.

# The Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism

We covenant to **affirm** and **promote** …

The inherent **worth** and **dignity** of every person

**Justice**, **equity** and **compassion** in human relations

**Acceptance** of one another and encouragement to **spiritual growth** in our congregations

A free and responsible search for **truth** and **meaning**

The right of **conscience** and the use of the **democratic process** within our congregations and in society at large

The goal of **world community** with **peace**, liberty, and justice for all

**Respect** for the interdependent web of **all existence** of which we are a part


## First Unitarian Universalist Church

1727 Walden Lane SW, Rochester, Minnesota 55902
507-282-5209 uurochmn.org