



# UU REVUE

Fall 2016

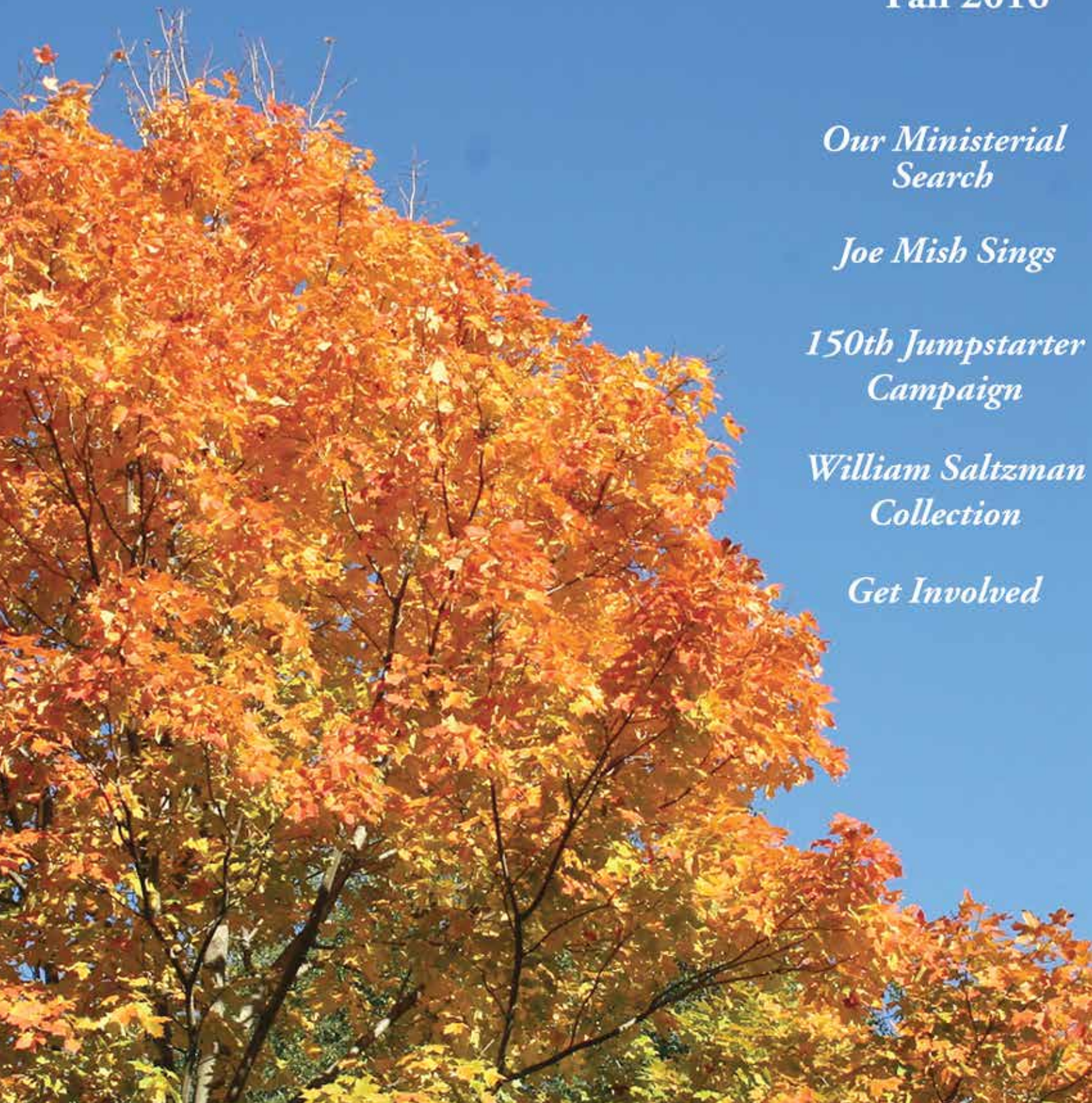
*Our Ministerial  
Search*

*Joe Mish Sings*

*150th Jumpstarter  
Campaign*

*William Saltzman  
Collection*

*Get Involved*







*Photo by Ron Chrisope*

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## Church Mission

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

## 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 Ministerial Search*



*Search Committee Members: Dave Siljenberg, Mary Amundsen, Robin Taylor, Amy Nelson, Judy Jensen, Aleta Borrud, George Thompson*

*By Kathy Brutinel*

On a hot day in July the seven-member Search Committee met with seven members of the two prior Search Committees (1990-92 and 2005-06) in order to “pick their brains” about the prior search processes.

Some of the “prior” people were struck by how much the process had changed. In 1990 and 2005 the “packet” sent to ministers was a near-bushel of paper, organized in sections in a plastic binder. The packets received from prospective ministers were the same. One binder was received from each minister and had to be read quickly and passed around among committee members. Today the “packets” are online. The content is much the same – though a bit snazzier, thanks to online graphics and desktop publishing – but can be viewed simultaneously by many people.

In 1990 an official at the UUA decided who our top prospects should be and doled out names and packets a few at a time. Today any minister at all can read the Congregational Record we post online. If they click “like,” we can then see their Ministerial Records. If we “like” them back, we exchange more

information and the relationships develop from there. Sort of like online dating.

After its selection in May the current Search Committee had a retreat in June with our District Settlement Representative, Janne Eller-Isaacs, who is also co-minister at Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul. You may remember Rev. Eller-Isaacs’ sermon last March on “The Dance of Faith,” in which she urged us to have confidence and patience during this time of transitional uncertainty.

At the retreat the newly-elected committee members worked on team-building. They will be spending A LOT of time together and must master the basics of being open and honest with each other, resolving conflicts constructively, and having massive amounts of fun together. For a year they will be almost closer than family.

The committee also delved into all the facets of its job, allocated responsibilities, developed its decision-making guidelines, and learned about the importance of confidentiality. The search process itself is not a secret (only the identity of the appli-



cants is confidential), so you should feel free to contact committee members if you have questions.

"The Settlement Handbook for Ministers and Congregations" sets out a short but challenging job description for the chair of the Search Committee: "The chair is responsible for the care and feeding of the committee, and for holding the vision. The chair needs to enjoy keeping a finger on the pulse of everything and to be easy to reach, not terrified by conflict, and able to use tough love if necessary."



**Amy Nelson - Chair; Technology**  
*Amy has been a UU all her life,  
but it took her 33 years to figure it out.*

This description so clearly described our former president Amy Nelson that the group unanimously chose her to serve as chair. The job of secretary, which requires organizational ability and meticulous attention to detail, was taken on by another natural talent, Judy Jensen.

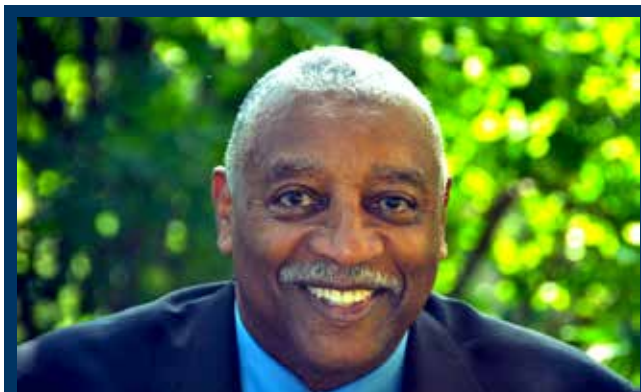


**Judy Jensen - Secretary**  
*Judy loves the ocean, where she has scuba dived  
with barracuda and sting rays.*

The first major task of the Search Committee, which has been undertaken by Aleta Borrud and George Thompson, is to create a survey of all church members. As described in the Settlement Handbook, "The purpose of the congregational survey is to offer every member of the congregation the chance to express needs and wishes for the congregation's future ministry. Survey data also lend themselves to quantitative analysis and can give a factual basis to support or correct vague impressions of the congregation's make-up or direction."



**Aleta Borrud - Survey Captain;  
Reference Checker**  
*Aleta's favorite place is communing  
with bison on the open prairie.*



**George Thompson - Focus Group Coordinator;  
Pre-Candidate Contact**  
*George was a Dow Chemical Co. fire chief while  
attending Washington University at night.*

The survey team plans to supplement statistical data from the written survey with "cottage meetings." These small group meetings enable people to talk more informally about their hopes and dreams. This type of setting has the advantage of encouraging a deeper investigation of our needs through the lens of our whole congregation, rather than individual desires.

The intended outcome from both the statistical and anecdotal data gathering will be an honest and accurate portrait of our congregation – both the places where we shine and the places we...don't. The survey not only informs the Search Committee about the needs and desires of the congregation, it also paints a picture of us for a potential minister. Although at first blush one might think we want to look altogether flawless, ministers know that no congregation is perfect and might be concerned about our inability to see or our unwillingness to admit our flaws. In any event, we want to find someone who has the skills we need to help us build on our successes and is eager to guide us through our challenges.

If you are new to the congregation, do not imagine that your opinion is not valued. The Search Committee needs the perceptions of all. The perspective of a new pair of eyes is just as important as the perspective of a long-time member. Knowing the needs of younger members and newer members and friends is fundamental as the committee selects a minister who will lead our church into the future, not only for next year but for the next 10 or 25 years, when those new eyes will suddenly find themselves being the long-time members.



**Mary Amundsen - Historian;  
Neutral Pulpit Coordinator**  
*Mary has hiked in the jungle of Venezuela and climbed the pyramids at Tikal in Guatemala.*

At the same time that survey data is being collected, Mary Amundsen will be leading the committee in assembling a historical record of our church. In addition, Dave Siljenberg will be working with the Board to draft a ministry agreement that sets out our employment expectations and includes a salary and benefits package.

Using all the information gathered, the Search Committee will compose the Congregational



**Dave Siljenberg - Treasurer;  
Contract Negotiator**  
*Dave survived all the machines his dad built and expected him to use and still has all his fingers.*

Record that comprises two documents: a Congregational Profile, which summarizes and interprets the historical, statistical, and anecdotal data; and a Ministerial Profile, which describes the qualities and abilities we are looking for in a minister. Every congregation that is looking for a new minister responds to the same questions to facilitate an easy comparison of congregations.

In the current cycle—for churches that are looking for a minister to start fall of 2017—Congregational Records can be posted online beginning on November 30. If ministers like what they see, they then allow the Search Committee to see their Ministerial Records. If a mutual interest is kindled, the minister and the committee exchange packets that include broader and deeper information than that found in the Profiles.

Robin Taylor is already working on our packet.



**Robin Taylor - Packet/Photo Coordinator;  
Congregational Communications**  
*Robin has inadvertently set 2 cats on fire, but managed to put out the flames before either cat was hurt.*



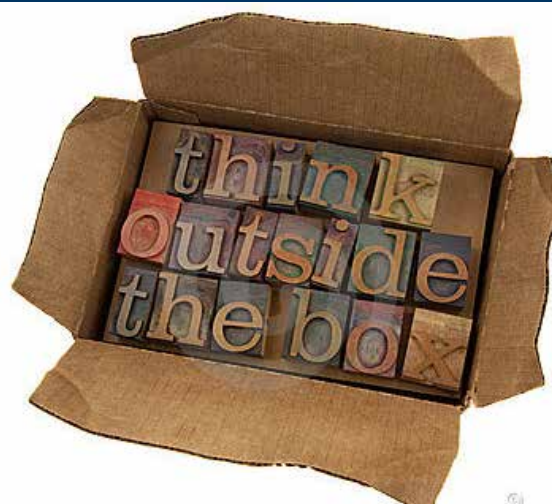
An informative, thoughtful, easy-to-read, and eye-catching presentation is crucial to making a good impression and standing out from the crowd. According to Robin, Paulette DeMers is our “secret weapon” in this regard. She is a master with layout and graphics. And, though Robin won’t say it, she herself is our other secret weapon. She has already begun looking for examples to emulate from other congregations that have recently completed a successful search, and she is a master at organization and clarity in her writing. Through the *eNews* Robin has asked us to send her “beautiful photos of our city, church, and congregants, and a sentence or two describing what you love about our church, or what you like to do in our city.” If you haven’t responded yet, you still have time.

After November 30, we won’t be seeing as much of the work of the committee, since all their interactions with potential ministers are confidential. They will be pouring over ministerial packets, talking to references, interviewing applicants online, and eventually narrowing the field to 3 or 4 applicants to meet in person. At this point the selected applicants become pre-candidates and are invited to Rochester for a weekend. Partners come, too, if desired by the pre-candidate.

The committee’s weekend with the pre-candidate includes a tour of our church and community, extensive interviews, and meals together. The weekend culminates with the minister leading a Sunday service out of town in a “neutral pulpit.” For both the committee and the pre-candidate the weekend is nerve-wracking and exhausting, as well as energizing and full of possibility.

Around the end of March, following all of the pre-candidate weekends, the Search Committee must make a momentous decision: whether it can reach consensus on a candidate whom it can whole-heartedly recommend to the congregation. Sometimes it’s an easy decision; sometimes it’s not. Sometimes a clear candidate emerges; sometimes no candidate emerges.

In order to encourage a thorough, deliberative process in every congregation that is searching for a minister, the UUA Transitions Office asks that no offer be extended until noon on the first Thursday in April. If the committee makes an offer that is provisionally accepted, they move on to seek additional references from the minister’s current employment, a criminal background check, and the negotiation of a ministry agreement that is signed by the minister and the Board. If all these are satisfactory, the minister becomes our official candidate.



### ***Beyond Categorical Thinking***

On September 18 the Search Committee is bringing the “Beyond Categorical Thinking” program to Rochester.

Consisting of a Sunday service and a 3-hour workshop that afternoon, it is designed to address any biases we have before they place limits on our search. As the description of the program on the UUA website points out, “Because the ministerial search is a refined selection process and involves a certain amount of discrimination, search committees and congregations should be aware of the ways in which they may inadvertently make discriminations that are unnecessary and unjust.” And as Jerry Katzmann pointed out in a recent *Board News*, “A discrimination-free search not only reflects the commitment of UU congregations to justice and diversity; it also assures the widest possible field of ministers from which to choose.”

Clear your calendar on September 18 and participate!

At this point our congregation re-emerges as an important part of the process. "Candidating week," which probably will occur in mid-May, gives the entire congregation the opportunity to spend time with the minister and visa versa. Online dating has progressed to the serious evaluation of a life together.

Candidating week has many moving parts, but it usually begins on a Saturday with a large evening gathering. The candidate performs the Sunday service two weeks in a row and spends the intervening week meeting as many people as possible in both large and small groups. Ample time is also allocated for house hunting and resting. After the departure of the minister on Sunday following the service, the congregation gathers for a special meeting to decide whether to call the proposed minister.

The importance of the participation of a broad spectrum and significant number of the congregation in candidating week and the special meeting cannot be overstated. On one hand, it is important that our congregation as a whole agrees that this

minister is a good match for our future. On the other hand, the minister is also evaluating us and lack-luster interest would be a huge red flag. In the past attendance has not been an issue; our congregation has flocked to these events because the selection of our next minister holds so much potential promise.

Since crystal balls are in short supply, it's impossible to know how our year will end. Will we find a good match? Will we know one when we see one? Will our good match love us back? As in life, choosing a match is part art, part science, and part gut reaction, and all are unpredictable. At this point, however, we will move forward with abundant optimism and assume that the great foundation we have built here, our good hearts and good works, and the charm of our Search Committee will attract a minister who can inspire us, guide us, and walk with us (and sometimes gallop) along our ever-changing path.

*Kathy Brutinel is a regular contributor to the UU Revue and was a member of the 1990-92 Search Committee.*





# How Paulette's Passion Became a Class Act

By Robin Taylor

You could say that playing around on Facebook in pursuit of her passion for social justice led Paulette DeMers to a spot on a national UU committee—and a trip to Boston.

True. But there were a few steps in between. Paulette started attending the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester three years ago, attracted by the church's social justice work and humanist sermons. She soon began channeling her quest for fairness and dignity into the Welcoming Congregation Task Group and her creative energy into the Communications Committee, where she started and designs the *UU Revue*.

By day, Paulette does the accounting at Sargent's Nursery, but says, "I nourish my creativity and my soul by what I do at church."

Throughout our denomination, Welcoming Congregations strive to "make welcome a spiritual practice." The focus has expanded from LGBT issues to other intangibles that might make people feel unwelcome. Last winter, the Task Group at First UU decided to explore the ways that classism affects our congregations, and for Paulette, this gets personal.



Paulette was raised in a working class family in Moorhead, Minnesota. She married at 17, but when her husband left four years later, she struggled to raise two young children on her own. She put herself through technical school, earning a two-year business degree, and learned graphic design on the job years later

as a secretary at the Plains Art Museum and the Lake Agassiz Arts Council in Fargo, North Dakota.

"I've always felt that statement, 'UUs are highly educated and above average in income' excludes the people (like me) who are not in that bracket," she explains. Classism not only divides people against each other and causes untold emotional damage, but it limits opportunities . . . and the potential for growth in our congregation.

Exploring the Unitarian Universalist Association website on Classism led Paulette to a Facebook

*We can appreciate differences in our social classes without classism—just as we can celebrate the differences in our races without racism. We're stronger together.*



**UU Class Conversations**

**Saturday, October 1**

**9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

The workshop is open to everyone. Free childcare will be available and lunch will be provided.

page called UU Class Conversations, which "helps congregations explore class and address classism through a UU lens." The page serves as a forum but also promotes a workshop on the topic. Inspired, Paulette and Patty Trnka attended the MidAmerica Regional Assembly in April to participate in one of these workshops, which they found eye-opening.

One thing led to another until Kellie Kelly, who chairs the national steering committee of UU Class Conversations, invited Paulette to serve as secretary of the organization. In July, they flew Paulette to Boston, where she spent the weekend "with a group of incredibly caring people," including her host, the retired Rev. Dr. Bill Gardiner, former co-director of Faith in Action for the UUA. "We charted the organization's path for the year and began plans for workshops at UU churches from Vermont to California," says Paulette, who made sure that one of them will happen in Rochester.

On October 1, Kellie Kelly will lead a day-long *UU Class Conversations* workshop at First UU. Participants will examine their own feelings about money, education, privilege, power, relationships, culture, and ethnicity, and work toward "dismantling classism within our congregations and communities in order to bring about a fairer and more equitable world."

The workshop is free, but donations will be gratefully accepted. For more information, please contact Paulette DeMers or register online at [uurochmn.org/classconversations](http://uurochmn.org/classconversations)

"I hope that people will leave the workshop with a lot more empathy for the community at large," says Paulette. "And I hope that we will learn to be a lot more welcoming to everyone at First UU."

# JOE MISH SINGS

## *An interview with our Co-Director of Music*

*By Phil Wheeler*

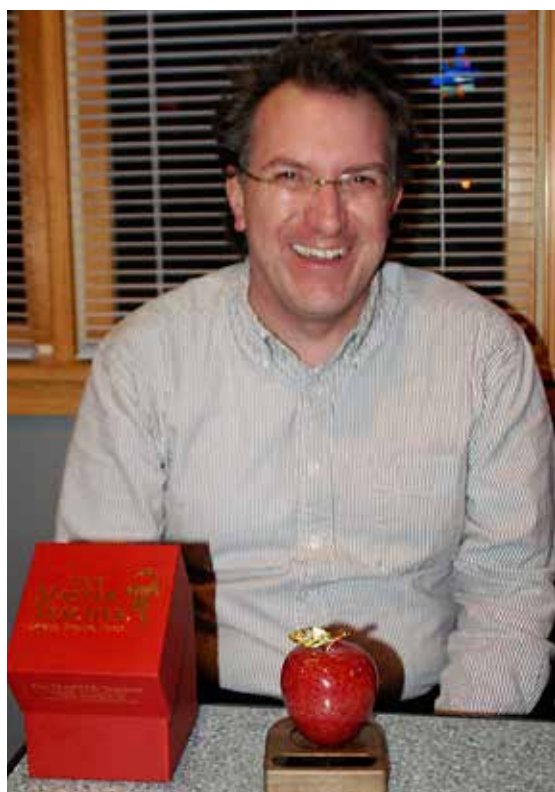
In a 1977 *Saturday Night Live* skit, Dan Aykroyd, playing talk show host Tom Snyder, asks Ray Charles, "What the heck are the blues, and how does a guy go about getting them?" I had the opportunity recently to meet with Co-Director of Music, Choir Director, and resident composer Joe Mish to ask him a series of questions mostly about music, creativity, and spirituality. Fundamentally, recognizing Joe as a genuinely accomplished composer, I wanted to find out how a guy goes about getting it, composing-wise.



*Joe Mish, enjoying Lake Superior*

Joe, an active composer and arranger of music, as well as a teacher, is a good guy to ask. He has been teaching music and directing six orchestras (two of them jazz orchestras) in Pine Island since graduating from the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh in 1986. He earned a Master of Arts in Music Education from the University of St. Thomas in 2006. In 2011, he was recognized as the Pine Island Teacher of the Year. In addition, he plays double bass in the Rochester Symphony Orchestra and has played bass with the Nodding Wild Onions (see *UU Revue* Summer 2016). He is a past president of the Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest and a member of the American String Teachers Association, the Organization of American Kodály Educators, Music Educators National Conference, and the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network. He also serves as Co-Director of Music at the First Unitarian Universalist Church in Rochester, Minnesota.

I pointed out to Joe that musicians frequently perform other people's compositions and asked in what way musical performance is art. Joe responded that performing music is like reading somebody's text. Reading words can be done with different levels of skill in pronunciation, expression, comprehension, and so on. "Music is like that, but at a higher level. There's a whole other level of translation and interpretation." While computers can play music, human orchestras play music much better than computers. "It's like actors performing a play, versus reading a play off the page. Actors reveal the nuances, they bring it to life." Joe Cocker's cover of "I Get By with a Little Help from My Friends" interpreted the song differently probably than Lennon and McCartney ever imagined.



*2011 Pine Island Teacher of the Year*





*Home concert with daughter, Rose*

Under the impression that composing was a higher level of musical creativity than musical performance, I asked Joe's take on it. To my surprise, he disagreed. Joe feels that "they're both just things musicians do. A good musician can play an instrument, sing, listen to and hear and analyze a piece of music, improvise, and compose... Not everybody is equally adept at all of those, but they are all part of being a musician." It takes a certain amount of technique to do it, he acknowledged, but "the creativity is there if we're open to doing it."

I asked how he goes about composing music, "Do you sit at the piano and dink around until a tune comes to mind?" Joe had to think about how he does it. He explained that he wrote a canon a day for five years and would just make time every day to write them, usually on the computer, putting notes on a staff. "Sometimes I used a keyboard, sometimes I would be out walking the dog and I would write it all out in my head and write it down when I

got home, like taking dictation." He noted that when he is working on a larger piece, like "The Larger Circle" (the choral piece composed for our UU church's 150th anniversary) he sort of sketches things out first. Sometimes that involves actually drawing visual sketches of things.

Joe said that the canon-a-day thing was a self-imposed assignment, undertaken as an alternative to solving Sudoku puzzles, because it was "more challenging." For Joe, composing is part inspiration and part work. "It has to be both." You need inspiration, but inspiration without the effort is not good enough.

Joe wrote in the program notes at the 150th celebration that parts of "The Larger Circle" are "different realizations of 'Jacob's Ladder.'" I asked him to explain what he meant. He described the process as "taking apart a piece of music and putting it back together differently. It's like a cover on steroids. Or recombinant DNA." One of the things I like about "The Larger Circle" is that all of the parts (tenor and bass, at least) have their own internal integrity. I asked how he did that. He explained, "It's called counterpoint." He tries to have the parts make sense by themselves and weave together musically. "I learned more about counterpoint doing the canons than anywhere else."

When asked about people in the congregation who say they can't sing or they lack musical talent, Joe revealed his passion as a music educator. He acknowledged that there may be a few people who don't do music well, but the number is far fewer than the number of people who say they don't. He attributes it to "music education malpractice, basically," or the lack of good music

### *Composing*





*Conducting  
the adult  
choir at  
First UU*

education. "We don't have courses in math appreciation, or reading appreciation, or PE appreciation; we expect people to learn how to do these things. Music should have the same level of rigor. There are parts of the brain that only work with music."

He described "a thing that happens in fifth or sixth grade." If you ask a first grader to sing a song or draw a car, of course they can do it. But if you ask a sixth grader, they maybe say they can't draw. When a kid gets an instrument, they're ready, they're not afraid to play. But at a certain point they become convinced that they're not good enough. "We have to start breaking it down into bits that kids can handle, and then build the confidence" that they can be musically creative.

Joe is convinced that music is an important part of being human. "It allows us to come together, being on the same page. It makes people better listeners and helps us realize our connections to each other." Joe believes that music is for everyone. "One of our problems as a society is that we treat music as entertainment, instead of as a shared activity. It shouldn't be a surprise that President Obama sang 'Amazing Grace' at a funeral – it's a human response."

It turns out that the genesis of Joe's involvement with our music program is "Robin Taylor's fault." (Robin Taylor is a longtime UU Church member.) Back in 2000, the church was looking for a choir director after Laurie Helmers left the position; Robin knew Joe was a music educator and told him she thought he would be pretty good at it. "I had never

*High school music trip*





considered it, but I thought 'Why not give it a try?'"

He likes it. "The people in the adult choir are pretty cool. They're all there because they want to be there, they take it seriously. There are a lot of other things the people in the choir could do that are a lot easier." Joe says he enjoys the sense of responsibility they bring to it and the commitment.

"And the kids in the children's choir are just adorable. They give me a look at the world through kids' eyes. They're the best of the best."

According to Joe, the role of music in a church service is part of the message. The music has to fit with the message for the whole thing to come together well. That requires some lead time to choose the music and rehearse the choir (adult or children), but with the adult choir at least, the repertoire is big enough and the choir familiar enough with it that they can make it work. The ideal situation is when the choir is prepared and the music fully complements the service.

Joe had a convoluted path to involvement in the UU Church. He grew up Catholic, although he went to public schools. By high school he was struggling with Catholicism, but he nonetheless attended a local Catholic church in Oshkosh in college. When their liberal priest was killed in a car accident and was replaced by a rigid conservative, he quit going. He went to an Anglican church for a while because the music was good, but after he moved to Rochester, he didn't really go to church, partly because of traveling weekends to be with Kathy (UU Kathy

### *Boundary Waters canoeing*



### *Composing cairns*

Shepel, married to Joe), who didn't live here. Then (former UU Music Director) Kevin Dobbe invited Joe to play at the UU Church, and then (fellow Rochester Symphony member and UU) John Vettel kept inviting him to attend, and he and Kathy started coming and joined. "Where I've come spiritually since coming to this church, I can't even imagine where I was before. I grew up a confirmed Catholic, but I can't say that Catholicism shaped my everyday life." By contrast, "I'd be hard-pressed to think of something in my daily life that hasn't been shaped by my being a UU. That's why I love it here, I always feel like I always come away with something that has changed my life. Like, (long-time UU member) Jeff LarsonKeller got me to meditate. I can't say I'm good at it, but I do it every day. For me, being a Unitarian Universalist just opens spiritual doors."

At the end of the interview, he pointed out that I had not asked him WHY he composes. "I can't think of any other activity that I lose myself in more easily," he said. Joe finds composing to be a satisfying personal spiritual expression. "There is no separation for me between music and spirituality. All of my most intense spiritual experiences have involved music. Well, except watching my children being born."

*Phil Wheeler has been a member of this church since 1983. He joined the choir in 2003 and has been learning about music ever since. Good music gives him goose bumps.*

# *150<sup>th</sup> Jumpstarter Campaign:*

*How did we get here, and... where are we?*



## *By The Jumpstarter Team*

In our church's 149<sup>th</sup> year, the Stewardship Committee made plans to conduct a capital fundraiser during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our church's founding. The fundraiser would have a goal consistent with our sesquicentennial: \$150,000.

In the four years leading up to this decision, the church had spent approximately \$50,000 on capital projects such as accessible doors, rain garden, sanctuary lights, tables for the Commons, and the RE wing heater repair. The Board recognized that cash assets had slowly been declining, approved the fundraising project, and appointed an ad hoc team to work with the Stewardship Committee. The team was composed of two Board members (Jerry Katzmann and Rob Harveland), the chairs of Communications (Paulette DeMers), Property (George Huston), and Finance (Dave Siljenberg), as well as Gail Bishop, who co-chaired a large capital fund drive in 1998.

The team identified a number of maintenance and improvement projects and took the concept to members of the Program Council, who made a number of suggestions. Based on that feedback, the team made several decisions.

1. The fundraiser would be called the "Jump-Starter Campaign" and not a capital fund drive. The previous capital fund drive targeted a goal that was equal to three times our annual budget. That project was intended to make our church more inviting and accessible by opening up the entryway and adding an elevator to reach all four building levels. The 150<sup>th</sup> campaign, however, would be for a series of smaller maintenance and improvement projects and had a goal equal to 1/3 of our annual budget. It was on a completely different scale from a church remodeling fund drive.

2. The JumpStarter Campaign and our annual operating budget pledge drive would be done simultaneously so that congregants could have a



clear picture of their combined donations and the operating budget would not be jeopardized.

3. A list of projects would be assembled, analyzed, and prioritized by the Property Committee. The list would include both short- and medium-term projects, as well as long-term and planning projects. Jumpstarter donations would get us started on this long list.

1. Sanctuary heating and cooling system.
2. Sanctuary audio and projection systems.
3. Church management software for staff and committees.
4. Roof repair.
5. Roof replacement fund.
6. Handrail replacement on stairs from parking lot.
7. Concrete flatwork in select sites around building.
8. Accessibility solutions for sanctuary stage, courtyard, bathrooms, and kitchen.
9. Parking lot repair fund.
10. Planning for LED lighting, energy efficient windows and wall treatments, and kitchen expansion/remodel.

## Where are we now?

The kick-off date for the combined fund drives was March 6, 2016. On April 9 at our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Dinner we were able to announce that the JumpStarter Campaign had exceeded its initial goal of \$150,000. To date we have pledges of over \$168,471. Although the donations could be spread over three years, some people have "prepaid" their contributions, and we have already received JumpStarter donations in excess of \$68,335. We anticipate automated monthly payments of approximately \$2,880 for the next three years. The JumpStarter campaign will continue for the next three years. If you were not in a position to contribute last year, you can still join the JumpStarter Campaign during our next annual pledge drive.

We are using some JumpStarter funds on a number of high priority projects, and some will be put aside for larger, longer-term projects.

## Current Projects:

The initial plans from our Property Committee, Treasurer, and Finance Committee included four projects that have been completed or started:



### 1. Sanctuary heating and cooling system–

Four Lennox Pulse furnaces installed in 1985 were 30 years old and failing. An ignition switch and two fan control modules failed in the spring and fall of 2015, and replacement parts were not available. Parts were swapped between furnaces so three of the four furnaces could be used for heating going into fall/winter of 2015. Four new furnaces were installed in November 2015 at a cost of \$10,170. However, because they are 95% efficient, each furnace carried a \$350 rebate, so the final expense for our church was \$8,770. These furnaces will provide a comfortable and efficient heat source for the Sanctuary for many years to come.





## 2. Roof repair–

An inspection of our roof in early November of 2015 indicated the need for immediate repairs to prevent water damage from the winter freeze/thaw cycling. These repairs were made in early December 2015 and totaled \$2,920. In addition, “life extension” repairs were required in order to maximize the service life of the roof membrane. These repairs were made in early July 2016 and totaled \$3,055.

## 3. Handrail replacement–

The bases of the handrails on the stairs leading from the parking lot had rusted and corroded at an accelerating rate during the past couple years. One base was completely detached from the concrete step, and several others were loose. The Property Committee worked with Custom Iron to devise a repair that will last for many years.

The handrails were removed and taken to Custom Iron, where the lower part of the handrail posts and the flanges were cut off. New posts and flanges were welded on to the remaining upper sections of the posts. The new sections, as well as the bolts and anchors that were used to re-attach the flanges

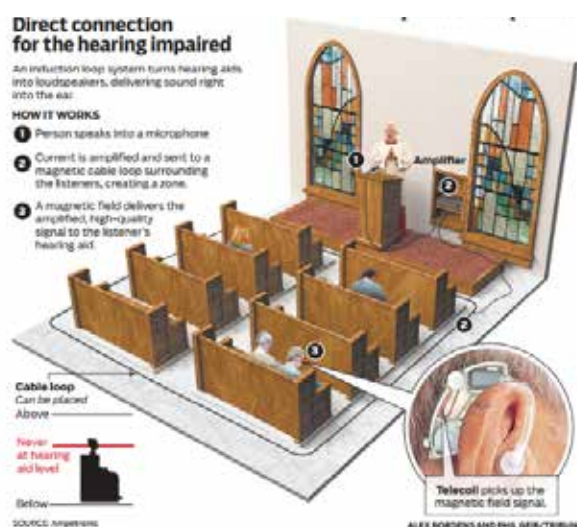


to the steps, were made of stainless steel, which has a much longer life than galvanized steel. After welding, the completed handrails were sandblasted and powder-coated to provide long-term corrosion protection. The cost of this project totaled \$3,025.



## 4. Sanctuary audio and projection systems–

We have signed a contract with Sim Sound and Video to replace and rewire the Sanctuary systems. Beyond the Sanctuary, we will be providing audio to the Hearth Room, Commons, and Nursery, as well as installing wiring for future video capabilities for the Hearth Room and Commons. We are waiting for delivery of some of the required components and will then schedule installation. We hope to start by mid-September.





## Possible Future Jumpstarter Projects

### Church Management Software

As the complexity of our operations has increased, our staff and congregation have done an amazing job of keeping many technology balls in the air. We have created a website and online church calendar, along with separate lists and databases for membership, stewardship, religious education, and committees. Each function and list is housed in a different place on church computers and the Internet with different ways to access them.

Church management software (CMS) consolidates this information and simplifies access. It streamlines operations and coordinates staff efforts. Staff and technology-savvy congregants are studying CMS packages to select which one will best fit the needs of our church now and as it grows in the future.

### Concrete Flatwork

The flatwork has settled in six areas: 1) courtyard section next to double door; 2) courtyard section next to single door; 3) steps from parking lot to courtyard/Memorial Garden; 4) RE 2nd floor exit door; 5) Sanctuary rear exit; 6) main entrance section near steps.

### Accessibility

Many components require attention and possible upgrading to make our church fully accessible. These include: 1) wheelchair ramp, railing, or lift from Sanctuary to stage level; 2) courtyard access: powered openers, locking mechanisms, signage; 3) bathrooms; 4) kitchen counters; 5) others as identified by SEMCIL.



### Parking Lot

The parking lot was last resealed in 2013 for \$6,500, and since then we have gotten by with filling and re-sealing cracks, and repainting parking lines.

*Example of church management software*



### Electrical Lighting

The LED lighting in the Sanctuary was completed in 2014. Ultimately we would like to replace all fluorescent lighting in the church with high efficiency LED lighting.



### Energy Efficient Windows and Walls

Our single pane windows are as old as our 50-year-old building. However, a Minnesota Energy audit concluded that the windows account for only 5% of total building heat loss. The concrete walls are responsible for the major loss of heat.

### Kitchen Planning

Potential kitchen remodeling consists of many components, including the replacement of ovens, fans, and cupboards; the installation of a professional grade dishwasher and 3-section sink with garbage disposal; and improvements in accessibility. If structural changes are made, fire code requires that a sprinkler system be installed throughout the entire building at an estimated cost greater than \$100,000.

# William Saltzman Collection

By Beth Atkinson with Martha Clagett Lussenhop



1968, grade 2, First Universalist Church

In the late 1940s our congregation adopted a children's religious education curriculum published by the American Unitarian Association (AUA) called "The New Beacon Series."

Sophia Lyon Fahs was the children's editor of this series, and it was widely used in Christian churches, not just by Unitarians and Universalists. She was 61 years old then, and according to a 2003 article in the UUA's *World*, she helped lead what the author, Christopher Walton, referred to as "a Unitarian religious education revival."

At Columbia University's Teachers College she had learned about children's cognitive development. After her four children were grown she attended Union Theological Seminary and taught an experimental Sunday School. She wrote, "A modern faith must take science and modern attitudes seriously; faith is rooted ultimately in a person's own experiences." A number of the books in this curriculum can be found in our Sophia Lyon Fahs library.

In the words of Rev. Dr. Barry Andrews, winner of the UUA's 2011 Angus H. MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education, "Sophia Fahs was a progressive religious educator who believed deeply in engaging children where they lived, in the world of their daily lives, in the process of equipping them to deal with everyday problems. She also sought to stimulate their sense of wonder and curiosity about life.... Instead of telling children what they ought to believe, Fahs encouraged them to ponder for themselves the mysteries of the universe and human destiny." In Sophia Fahs' own words: "We wish children to come to know God directly through original approaches of their own to the universe."

In the early 1950s, with the leadership of Rev. George Lapoint, our church religious educators worked to improve the drab conditions of the classrooms in the First Universalist Church building and create a backdrop for the common religious education service. Our congregation hired a young artist and Director of the Rochester Art Center, William Saltzman, to paint murals depicting the New Beacon Series curricula. He was seen as a rising and talented artist who was underemployed and might be willing to work for a modest fee. His daughter was also a student in the church school.





Martha Clagett Lussenhop grew up in this congregation and said, "Those colorful visuals made a huge difference to me in defining and remembering the specific curricula in a way that a class name or book title would not. I think the mural images are why I have such strong memories of each class." She recalls that Sunday School classes were held around the perimeter of a huge open room in the church basement. Each classroom had a counter with storage below, but the other three "walls" were standing, movable bulletin boards that separated the spaces from each other and from a central children's worship area. Each oil painting was mounted on the wall above the appropriate classroom's counter.

The kindergarten mural, as well as Fahs' curriculum, was called "Martin and Judy Playing and Learning." It encouraged children to explore the natural world with their families, asking questions about life around them.

Fahs wrote that the Martin and Judy stories "were meant to encourage in small children, a sensitivity to the intangible values that are basic to all real living, which deserves to be characterized as spiritual in quality."

In first grade the stories came from a curriculum called "The Tuckers: Growing to Know Themselves" by Katherine Wensberg. They were about everyday situations that bring emotional difficulties and questions to young children, such as a new baby in the family. The aim of the stories was for children's pent-up feelings to break through into the open where they can be understood and accepted without feelings of shame. The class description stated "An attempt is made to create an atmosphere where children can look squarely at themselves, and know that we who are parents and teachers accept them

and respect them as they are and are trying to help them to grow emotionally as well as physically."

The second grade class was based on one of Sophia Fahs' books, *From Long Ago and Many Lands*. The goal of the stories was to help children appreciate that they are part of a common world brotherhood and that their values are shared by other peoples and other cultures.



Third grade centered on the book, *How Miracles Abound*, by Bertha Stevens with a preface by Fahs. Martha remembers that "two dads who were physicians at the Mayo Clinic took turns working with my class with both inorganic and organic materials. We looked at stars, experimented with magnets, examined a salt crystal and a dew drop under a microscope, compared snowflakes, counted tree rings, planted lima bean and petunia seeds, studied a spiral sea shell, watched a goldfish swim, and examined our hands."



Her oldest sister, now 80, wrote about her memory of the class: "It was so interesting and 'important' to me, that I saved the folded pages each Sunday—about seeds, snowflakes, butterflies..... Much later in life, I obtained a complete set to keep. My Sunday school class felt connected with the 'real' world, and I didn't want to miss a session."





Fourth grade focused on the book, *Beginnings of Earth, Sky, Life, Death* by Sophia Fahs and Dorothy Spoerl. A church brochure stated that "These stories present accounts drawn from sacred literature, folk lore and science dealing with interpretations of creation, life, and death. The child shares the imaginative quest into the beginnings and meaning of things engaged in by mankind throughout the ages."







The fifth grade curriculum was based on two New Beacon Series books, *Child of the Sun* and *Moses*. They dealt with the historic and cultural backgrounds of western religious ideas that evolved from Egyptian and early Hebraic sources.

Sixth graders read *Jesus, the Carpenter's Son*. It provided an historic and human treatment of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.



Although not a part of the curriculum series, Saltzman also created the triptych with Earth in space as the centerpiece, symbols for science on the left side and of world religions on the right that is now on the back wall of our Sanctuary. It was created in consultation with Rev. Lapoint who worked with Saltzman to design symbols of Universalism. Martha remembers it as being the backdrop for children's worship services in the First Universalist Church basement. To her, the space around it was filled with question marks, it represented all the mystery that she experienced in Sunday School classes—everything that made her sit in wonder.



*Beth is a lifelong UU and a member of the History Committee. Martha grew up in our UU congregation, and she researched Sophia Lyon Fahs for a service she recently presented at a UU church in Bend, Oregon. Much of this article is based on that service.*

# Getting Involved at 1st UU

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester offers many opportunities for sharing our interests, our joys and passions, and our yearning to give back to the community. We worship, learn, explore, discuss, create, guide our children, take a public stance on moral issues, eat together, and celebrate life. Through our participation, we form lasting and meaningful bonds.

We encourage your involvement to whatever extent best fits your interests and lifestyle. Explore the many opportunities to nurture your personal and spiritual growth, as well as the many opportunities to serve the congregation and wider community. Contact Sarah Rothwell, Director of Congregational Life, for more information about any of these groups.

## Congregation Building

Church volunteers work to create a welcoming community on Sunday morning and whenever help is needed.

- ☐ Caring Congregation (supporting one another in times of distress)
- ☐ Hospitality Teams (helping to create a warm and inviting atmosphere)
- ☐ Child and Youth Religious Education Teacher
- ☐ Nursery Attendant
- ☐ Worship Associate
- ☐ Adult Religious Education Facilitator

## Interest Groups

Religious education takes a lifetime. We strive to support one another—all ages among us—in religious questioning, personal change, and ways to better live in faith.

- ☐ Chosen Faith (focusing on the role of spirituality and language in our lives as UUs)
- ☐ Principle 4 (exploring “hot button” religious words)
- ☐ Buddhist Interest Group
- ☐ Exploring Humanism
- ☐ The Women We Become
- ☐ A Course in Miracles (understanding forgiveness as a path to inner peace)
- ☐ UU Creative Spirits (examining spirituality through the lens of creativity)
- ☐ Bible as an Historical Document

## Property and Administration

- ☐ Maintenance for Building and Grounds
- ☐ Writing and Photography for Publications
- ☐ Advice and Support for Technology

## Small Group Ministries

- ☐ Caregiver Support Group
- ☐ Chalice Circles
- ☐ Walden Hill Vocal Ensemble

## Fellowship Activities

Fellowship activities provide many ways to have fun and meet church members. Some of our activities occur on a regular monthly schedule, some are seasonal or annual events, and many are special, one-of-a-kind opportunities.

- ☐ Great Books Club
- ☐ UU Bridge group
- ☐ Mah Jongg group
- ☐ Caring Crafters
- ☐ Fellowship dinners
- ☐ Movie afternoons
- ☐ Ethnic lunches
- ☐ Clara Barton Guild



## Social Justice

Bringing our values to life is a core part of our congregation's mission and vision. We seek not only personal transformation, but also transformation of the world around us, with our foundations being the worth and dignity of every person and the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Check our website at [www.uurochmn.org](http://www.uurochmn.org) to find more information about getting involved.

**Social Justice  
Sunday  
October 2, 2016  
Sign up to get involved!**

- ☐ **People with Disabilities Task Group** (enable our congregation to become engaged, educated, and informed advocates for people living with disabilities and their families)
- ☐ **Racial Justice Task Group** (combat racism in its various forms and hold local institutions accountable for eliminating institutional racism)
- ☐ **Refugee Task Group** (work with Catholic Charities to support new refugee families)
- ☐ **Standing on the Side of Love—Welcoming Congregation** (use love's power to end oppression and biases; maintain commitment to LGBTQ community and raise awareness of economic inequality; facilitate a timely response when situations call for united UU actions)

**Community Service** (partnering with outside organizations on an ongoing basis)

- ☐ **Hawthorne Helps** (provides support that affirms personal dignity, welcomes newcomers to our community, and encourages all students' educational success)
- ☐ **Community Food Response** (provides free meals to adults and children. Food donations come from restaurants, cafeterias, businesses, and grocery stores)
- ☐ **Family Promise** (helps homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response)
- ☐ **Saturday Noon Meals** (provides family-style, nutritious meals in a warm, safe atmosphere for persons in need)



*Hawthorne Helps*



*Community Food Response*



*Saturday Noon Meals*

# 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



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