



UU REVUE

Church Mice

Behind the Scenes

The Men's Chalice

Bending the Arc

of History Toward Justice

Building a

**Multigenerational
Ministry**

Winston Vermilyea

Does That Name Ring A Bell?

Spring 2018





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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.

Church Mice: Behind the Scenes, But Hardly Unnoticed

Story and photos by Robin Taylor

Despite what it may seem like to anyone perusing “Happening this week...” in the weekly Order of Service, the church does not run by committees alone.

In fact, much of the work done to keep the church beautiful, welcoming, and running in an orderly fashion is performed by people who do not necessarily fall under the umbrella of any committee at all. Some of them just adopted a job they like doing. Others invented new roles for themselves that best use their talents and interests. They come in and out of the building quietly and do their jobs without attracting attention, to the point that many church members are unaware that the work has been performed at all.

Take **Joyce Wood**, a member since 1974, who alphabetizes the name tags in the entryway. “I don’t really know how that became my job,” she says; “I’ve been doing it for so long.”

Joyce says she likes it because “I’m a math major, and math people like to keep their ducks in a row. It is just a fussy thing that has to be done every once in a while.” Although most church members appreciate her attention to detail, she admits that one or two people find the alphabetizing annoying because they like to keep their name tags in certain easy-to-find spots. “I don’t hang out and wait for feedback, though,” she says matter-of-factly. “We just surprise them.”





Laura Lukes, a since member 1993, has been caring for the plants at church for many years, a job she took over from Darrel Waters when it became too much for him. "At the time, I couldn't take on any big committee work, but I thought, 'This is something I can do for the church and make it fit my schedule.'"

Laura comes over once a week and waters our eight plants. "Most of the time I enjoy doing it," she says. "I think the plants add a lot to the rooms, and they are definitely worth taking care of." Only one plant has earned a nickname over the years: "Big Fig," the fig tree that was recently moved to the Commons because it outgrew its space in the Hearth Room. "It got a little shocked from the move and the trim, but now it is doing really well. It is nice to have a plant down there," she says.

Laura inherited her love of plants from her father, who always had big gardens. At home she only has one houseplant because her cats dig in the dirt, so taking care of the church plants keeps her thumbs green. A few years ago, Laura's husband, "who isn't even a church member," helped her trim the root balls and give all the plants new soil so they would not get too pot-bound. He also took over the watering duties when she was going through breast cancer treatment.

"I never found a back-up person to do the watering," says Laura, who got right back into the routine when her health returned. "It's a nice job that doesn't take much time."

Even if you try, you can't come into this church for more than a second without being surrounded by the love and care these quiet workers infuse into this church.

*They create the space for our children to learn about love and mystery and justice,
they keep the boiler running and the lights on,
they add beauty and color to every corner,
they spread a feast to help heal people who have only come in the doors
this one day to remember a loved one lost,
and they take the very names of every person entering these doors into their hands
and keep this church, plants included, alive.*

The very first song in our hymnal is "Prayer for this House," which includes the words, 'til every casual corner blooms into a shrine. '

*All of these folks, and countless others,
quietly and consciously and persistently,
tend the garden that is our church
and by grace and by their will
they help every casual corner bloom –
into this, our common, beautiful, everyday shrine.*

~ Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer



Karmen Frana, on the other hand, created a job for herself in the hopes of saving others time. An educator for 23 years (and currently a Kindergarten teacher at Lincoln K-8), Karmen prepares the Sunday School lessons for the lower grades (Explorers, Trailblazers, and Pathfinders) and gets all the materials ready so that a volunteer can walk into a classroom on Sunday morning and be ready to teach with an edited curriculum, stories to read, and all craft materials assembled.

“When Drew and I joined the church in 2014, we had an understanding that I wouldn’t have to teach on the weekends—it was going to be my quiet time. He wanted to teach in RE, but every once in a while, he would need some assistance and I’d jump in.” Back then, many of the RE curriculums were planned for one to two-hour lessons, so volunteer teachers would have to pick and choose which activities they could do in our 45-minute RE classes. Karmen recognized that this was daunting for people who were not educators.

“It was easier for me to know what was going to work well,” says Karmen, who by now is so familiar with the children in each class that she customizes the lessons to what would work best for them. She not only adapts the

lesson plans, but makes them available online so that teachers can preview them the night before.

A second problem was that volunteers would buy supplies because they didn’t know what materials were available at church. By preparing the craft materials and putting them in the classrooms on Saturday mornings, Karmen saves the volunteers a trip to the store and keeps the RE craft closets from exploding.

Although it takes her a few hours during the week to customize the lessons, and another hour or two on Saturday mornings to prepare the supplies, “The feedback I’m getting is so good.”

“She has made it 10,000 times easier to volunteer!” enthuses Ramona Barr, RE Council Chair.

Karmen finds her volunteer job very satisfying. “I’m learning along with the kids. I love reading the folk tales and studying the principles. I have been a teacher since 1995, so teaching is very natural to me. I feel like I’m working to make a difference in children’s lives, and I love what I do. To be able to share that with my church community is wonderful,” says Karmen. “But on Sundays, I don’t have to be the teacher. I can just be me.”

Ramona Barr's off-the-committee contributions are staggering. After joining the church in 2008, she founded the first church Chalice Camp in 2011 and has been one of its volunteer co-directors every year since, a job which consumes the better part of the year.

"I've always had a special attachment to RE and a connection to children and youth," says Ramona. "I was already the director of the Girl Scout Day Camp, and I said, 'Why don't we do one here? I don't want to send my daughter to Bible Camp!' Jasper Daube was the Board Treasurer at the time, and he helped secure a budget of \$800 for the first year, and . . . we worked it out."

In addition to running Chalice Camp, Ramona, along with Rachel Froud, totally re-organized the layout of the classrooms years ago to make them more welcoming and functional. She also cleans and arranges the RE closets (with occasional help from Sue Wheeler, Kate Thompson-Jewell, and Joyce Rood) and was relentless in her pursuit of turning Amy Nelson's vision of a maypole mural in the RE wing into reality. Congregant and muralist Greg Wimmer eventually painted it.



"I'm always looking for ways to improve things," says Ramona. She attributes this to her years in retail, managing Hallmark stores in North Dakota and New Mexico. "I look at space in four-foot increments, because that was the size of our shelving, and think, 'How could this be done better without spending a lot of money?'" As she says this, her roving eye settles on some shelves in the Hearth Room. "See, those two could be reversed for better viewing," she suggests.

Another lesson she learned in management training was to stop thinking of the church as just a church. "We were taught to think of our workplace as our home away from home. We were hosts, trying to make customers feel welcome. I try to get that same feeling across here. It is my church, my table—not 'their table needs to be dusted.' We all need to take part in making our church better. If I see something that needs to be done, I don't think of it in terms of, 'Is it my job?' I'll email someone and say, 'I did it.'"

When she first started attending, Ramona insists that she didn't feel like a member right away. "I felt like I needed permission to come into the building. I noticed things that I thought could be done better, but I didn't even know who to ask about them." Then Phil Wheeler invited her to serve on the Board, and the rest, as they say, is history. Now Ramona and her two large cups of Dunn Bros iced chai tea are practically fixtures here.

By virtue of growing up in this church and then serving for so many years on the Membership Committee, **Jean Hanson** has fallen into a job that she can't seem to pass on to anyone else: she maintains the "UUs in the News" bulletin board.

"I just know people," says Jean, "or I recognize their names." She reads the *Post-Bulletin* and some of the local magazines, and if she finds an article about a UU, she cuts it out and pins it on the bulletin board. "I think it is important to highlight what they do, and it is good for the rest of the congregation to know about it."



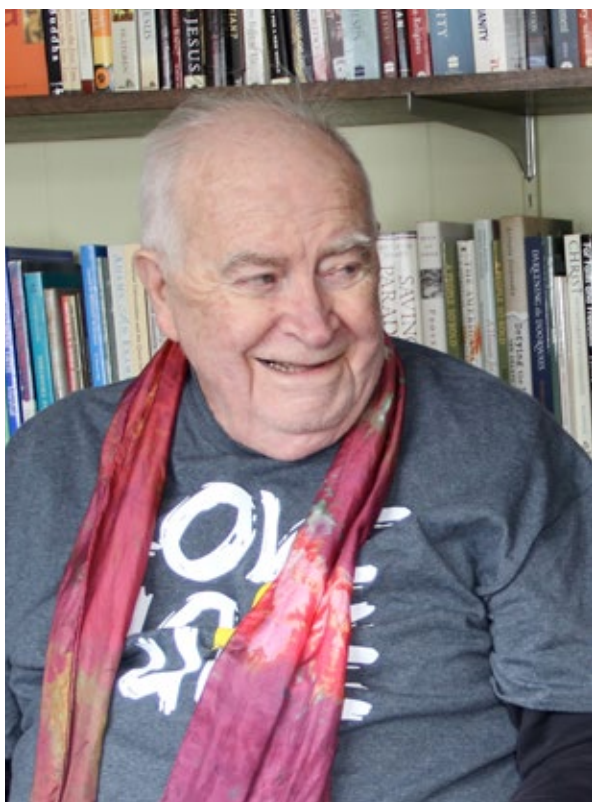
Jean also has another church job, which doesn't fall under the umbrella of any committee, but this one comes with a title. "I really enjoy being the Memorial Service Reception Coordinator," she says. Rev. Dillman Baker Sorrells (our Minister Emerita) asked Jean to take on this role many years ago, and it has been a perfect fit for her.

"I often know the people [who died] and sometimes their family members," says Jean, who appreciates the personal connections and the opportunity to be of service. "I like to make a pretty table and have attractive food for everyone. The family is (almost) always VERY appreciative and easy to please."

Dillman recognized that the memorial receptions would be smoother if they were somewhat streamlined. With more women working outside the home, it was too much to ask people to volunteer to bring food all the time. Now, Jean recommends a fairly simple menu and has a routine down pat. She purchases everything and recruits from a list of volunteers to help with the serving.

"From start to finish, it's about eight hours of my time—talking to the family, getting helpers, ordering and picking up the food, arranging the Commons and cleaning up," she says. "Unless they want something unusual!"

Behind the Scenes



Darrel Waters did not grow up in our church, but he quickly grew to be an integral part of it since joining in 1994. Over the years, Darrel has served in many capacities, from leading Adult Religious Education classes and being on the Welcoming Committee to overseeing our 1999 remodeling project. He is the person the sextons call at all hours when there is a problem with the plumbing or a leak in the roof.

"I'm the 'Wise Old Advisor for the Building,'" he says of his evolving role. "I love the building: the construction and the architectural features—even the frustrations—the problems with heating and lighting. It is fun to see them get solutioned."

As Laura mentioned, Darrel used to be the one who watered the plants. "Because I was at the church so much," he explains. He also used to help Jean with memorial services by recruiting the ushers for the service, escorting the family to the conference room to wait for the service, and getting the flowers up to the sanctuary. He even secured the police escort to the cemeteries when people didn't use the services of a funeral home. "But Jean thinks

I'm too old for all that now," he says in the frank manner that makes him so beloved.

The reward for giving so much of his time, energy, and advice as "The Wise Old Advisor," Darrel says, is that, "I can smart off whenever I feel like it."

For years, **George Huston** has been picking up the recyclables from our recycling center (located in the corner of the Commons, behind Jean's bulletin board). He took over this task from Rick Devine when he became Property Chair. "I try to schedule the pickup when they play Mahjong in the Commons so Darrel Waters can bark at me and tell me to hold down the noise," jokes George, a member since 1988. "He likes to yell and complain, but he's pretty soft underneath."

Truthfully, the frequency of picking up the recycling varies depending on how quickly the collection grows, so George keeps an eye on the piles. "I usually need to pick it up after big events in the Commons when there's food and beverage, so I check the church calendar," he says.

George enjoys this job because he is a firm believer in recycling and reusing, and thinks it is a good fit with our Seventh Principle, respect for the interdependent web. In addition, he already hauls his own garbage



and recyclables, so he can often take the church recyclables on the same trip. And, he admits, he likes to do a bit of dumpster diving when he has the chance. Once he snagged some \$100-dollar construction-quality extension cords from a dumpster. “You wouldn’t believe what people throw out!”



Ron Chrisope, a member since 1988, saw an opportunity to lighten the load on our Congregational Administrator a few years ago and offered to help Jody Tharp make all the nametags. “Jody set me up with the fonts she used, and Coordinator of Congregational Life Melissa Egglar texts me the new names,” he says. It is a little job he can do from the comfort of home. “Sometimes it takes longer to deliver them than it does to make them—and I live pretty close to church!”

After making the church name tags for a while, it occurred to Ron that sometimes you don’t know if a person is new or a member who has been there for 30 years but you just haven’t met, so he came up with the idea of colored borders. Now a nametag with a blue border indicates that the person requested a name tag in 2017 and a green border means 2016. (Purple will be the color for 2018!) When they join, new members get a white name tag with the year they joined in the upper left corner.

Ron, who chairs the Fourth Sunday Hospitality Team, next volunteered to help Jody program the scrolling screens on our new monitors. “I just asked how I could help,” says the self-proclaimed Jack-of-all-trades, master-of-none. Ron’s 30 years with IBM in marketing, circuit design, and computer maintenance taught him some useful skills. After a meeting with Rob Harveland, Paulette DeMers, and Jody, Ron figured out the technology for putting up the announcements on the screens. Now that the technique has been worked out, the staff has taken back the job.

“But I’m not done with those monitors,” he insists. “There is a problem turning them off. I’ve designed a circuit that will allow Jody to set the times to automatically turn them on and off from her Wi-Fi, and it will let her know when the battery is low.” The device can fit in an Altoids box and will sit on the back of the monitor.

Recent health issues have made Ron cut back on his volunteering at church, but he does what he can from home. “I wish I could do more,” says the guy for whom “I can help with that” is a personal mantra.

Ronice Donovan is the artist who decorates the tables in the Commons to reflect the month or the season, keeping the room looking fresh and inviting.

“I started many, many Christmases ago,” says Ronice, a member since 1981. “Ella Van Laningham needed decorations on the tables and I said I could help with that.” (Hmm. Maybe there is a theme here?)

As a member of the Design Committee, Ronice knew there was no budget for decorating tables, yet every group that held a function in the Commons felt the need to buy something new. “I suggested to Design that we could buy runners for the tables,” and that is how it all started. Ronice takes particular joy in reusing or repurposing scraps and recyclables, or scouring clearance bins at Michael’s to find what she wants. “It is fun to see what I can make out of this...”

“Once I started putting down runners and then placing things on them, then I had to clean and organize the storage room, and suddenly it became ‘Ronice’s Room.’ I don’t ever feel like I’m in charge—anybody could do it. But hopefully it saves some pennies.”

“Ronice is usually the person who makes the individual tables pretty for a memorial service—even decorating them with things important to the person whose service it is. She’s amazing,” says Jean Hanson.

Ronice also fills the sconces in the sanctuary. “I took that on because I felt we needed something more in the Sanctuary...just a little color!” She found the sconces on sale at Garten Marketplatz and takes responsibility for changing them about six times a year, plus Christmas.

“I enjoy doing it,” says Ronice. “I go in and work when no one else is around. It is satisfying to know we’re not spending a lot of money on it. And people thank me—I think it is helpful for them. I don’t think of this job as a big deal. We all poke in where we can.”

‘Poking in where we can’ is how we build a church community, with everyone offering their time and talents to the best of their interests and abilities to strengthen our programming and improve our space. Perhaps you can be a church mouse, too?



Robin Taylor has been a member of First UU since 1992, and is the epitome of a church mouse. She serves as co-chair of the Fellowship Committee and writes for this magazine.

Form Ever Follows Function: The Men's Chalice

By Kathy Brutinel



Like many activities and pieces of art in our church, the men's chalice was born out of serendipity and the creative imaginations of Mike and Stephanie Podulke.

The chalice arose out of the natural beauty of Camp Olson, a YMCA camp in northern Minnesota near Longville. In the 1980's and 90's Mike and Stephanie's family was one of several UU families from our church who regularly set aside a week each summer to enjoy both the out-of-doors and the camaraderie of fellow UUs and other campers from around the state.

Mike was famous for gathering random objects for as yet unknown, but sure to develop, purposes. One year he brought home a very large granite boulder from the area around Camp Olson. He also collected agates from the area around Brainerd, Minnesota, for their beauty and potential utility.

Soon after bringing the boulder home, Mike invited Jerry Katzmann to join him at a 1-day workshop at the University of Minnesota to

learn how to hammer copper bowls. According to Jerry, he went mostly because he enjoyed doing things with Mike, but Mike learned a new skill and was intent on putting it to use. He made a large copper bowl in the shape of a leaf from the ginkgo tree, a 270-million year-old species with unique and beautiful fan-shaped leaves.

Next, Mike asked Don Layton if he could find a piece of wood on his property that could support the copper ginkgo bowl, and Don found a perfect three-fingered branch amid the trees being removed to build Vikki and Bruce Wolff's house next door. Don sawed it, cleaned it, and donated it to the project that was gaining steam in Mike's mind.

Finally, Mike brought the idea of fabricating a chalice to the church men's group, which had begun around 1990, inspired by Robert Bly and the men's group movement that had grown out of his book, *Iron John*. The group began the loud and dusty job of drilling holes in the boulder for the metal support rods, and the project was finished on a beautiful weekend in Mike's driveway. Mike and Stephanie,

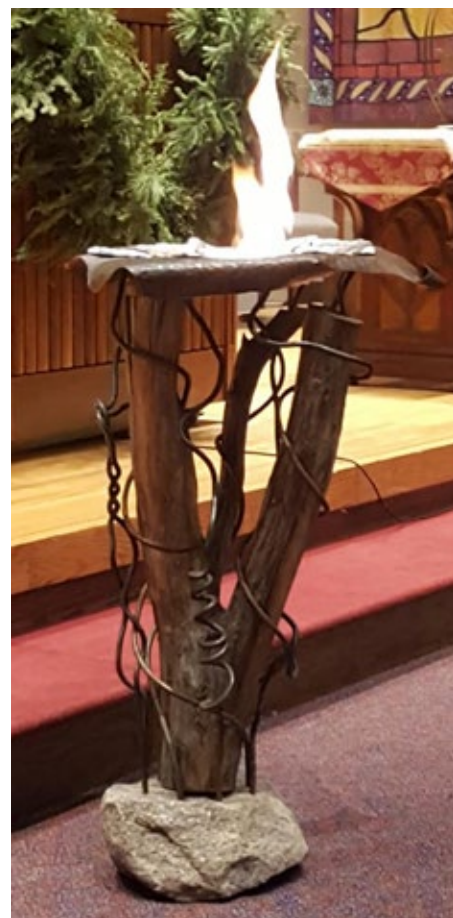
along with Jerry and Elizabeth Katzmann, inserted metal rods into the holes drilled in the rock, used a welding torch and blacksmith tools to twist the rods into vines climbing up the tree trunk, and attached a ring on top to cradle the copper leaf.

In 1992 the men's group presented the chalice as a gift to the church. The chalice has been used most frequently during our annual Ritual for Change and Growth. Pieces of paper on which congregants write what they wish to leave behind are literally burned in the copper bowl—a simultaneously symbolic and dramatic act. On All Souls Day it has also held candles secured in sand for us to light to remember our loved ones. It has held water for child dedications, as well.

Originally, Mike filled the copper bowl with his collection of agates, planning that children would take some and learn to love stones as he did, but at some point an over-zealous cleaner dumped them on the ground outside the kitchen door. In the end, however, Mike's purpose prevailed, as occasionally a child finds one during the Maypole ceremony.

Most recently the chalice was used for the Ritual for Change and Growth on December 31, 2017. A mixture of Epsom salts and rubbing alcohol in the copper bowl created a beautiful, multi-colored flame to consume what we wanted to shed in order to make a space for new connections and ways of being in the coming year.

And at the same time that we engage in this ritual of liberation, the men's chalice grounds us in the interconnected web of existence of which we are a part: earth, life, air, and fire.



Thich Nhat Hanh uses trees as a metaphor for his term "inter-being." He erases the distinctions between me and you and the world: rather than the inter-connection of all beings, we are all one.

The Buddhist monk tells a story and asks, "What is a tree, where are its boundaries?" The rays of the sun provide energy for the leaves to make sugars from carbon dioxide. Clouds drop moisture from the sky and the rain is absorbed. Minerals are taken up from the earth. The seasons change, leaves fall, and carbon dioxide, water, and minerals are returned to the sky and earth. Do we see the sun and clouds in the tree, or the tree in the sky?

When I look at the ginkgo tree chalice, I see the earth and sky and the hands of the men who made it. Art has "fuzzy boundaries" that can evoke our connections with the world.

Jerry Katzmann

Kathy Brutinel is a regular contributor to the UU Revue and has been an active member of our congregation since 1986.

Bending the Arc of History toward Justice

By Elizabeth Katzmann

Sanctuary--the practice of providing a temporary safe haven for undocumented immigrants who are facing unjust deportation--is an issue that many Unitarian Universalist congregations have been examining over the last year as detentions and deportations have become more alarming. Our church has embarked on a timely and compassionate course through an intentional, deliberate and transparent process of inquiry, information seeking and sharing, and agreement. What were the steps that brought our congregation to a resolution about Sanctuary? What has happened since the resolution was overwhelmingly approved? And, what are the actions we can pursue now and in the future?

Beginnings

Early last year, Rev. Fritz Hudson, Aleta Borud, and Phil Wheeler attended a meeting on Sanctuary and immigrant justice at Peace United Church of Christ, where, along with other information, it was disclosed that St. Francis Catholic Church in Rochester had held a session at which pro bono attorneys helped undocumented parents assign custody of their citizen children to relatives or friends who would provide care if the parents were to be deported. The governmental policies that created the need for these measures seemed egregiously harmful, so they put the issue on the agenda of the February Racial Justice Task Group meeting. The group agreed that immigrant rights are a racial justice issue that could be addressed using our church's congregational resolution process.

As they crafted the resolution, members of the Racial Justice Task Group became educated about the issues and prepared materials to assist the congregation's discernment. They collected information from the UUA website, First Universalist Church (Minneapolis), UU churches in Denver and Des Moines, ISAIAH, Jean Binkovitz (immigration attorney and rabbi), the Sisters of St. Francis, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, and Peace UCC.

The Resolution

The resolution addressing immigrant rights and Sanctuary begins by declaring its consistency with UU principles affirming the worth and dignity of every person, justice and equity, compassion in human relations, and the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all. It continues with

- our commitment to side with love and witness against injustice; our moral responsibility to welcome and care for the immigrant, the stranger, the most vulnerable;
- our recognition that the deportation of otherwise law-abiding but undocumented residents is inhumane and in conflict with our values;
- our opposition to statements and actions which are discriminatory to immigrants and refugees; and
- our opposition to actions which separate children from their parents and spouses from each other, violating universal human rights.

The resolution declares the intent of members of the church to educate ourselves and our community about the issues of immigration reform and immigrant rights; to speak out against discrimination toward any and all marginalized people; to collaborate with immigrant groups and oth-

ers advocating for just treatment; and to assist in providing Sanctuary, support, and refuge to otherwise law-abiding undocumented immigrants in cooperation with other area Sanctuary faith institutions in Rochester and elsewhere in Minnesota.

The Process

This proposed resolution was published in the *E-News* and *Venture*. Materials on immigration law, immigrant rights, ICE enforcement issues, and the Sanctuary church concept were made available. Stories addressing personal and local experiences with immigration rights were presented during Sunday services. A "Sanctuary Question Box" welcomed the congregation's questions about the proposed resolution. Our interim minister, Rev. Hudson, facilitated a Questions process. The Task Group created a "Sanctuary Question Site" and "Sanctuary Answer Site" on the church website to handle the congregation's questions.

In addition, the Task Group conducted four separate forums/panels involving faith community representatives, an attorney working in immigration law, a representative from ISAIHA, and community members working with immigrants. Approximately 50 congregants and friends attended each meeting. Rev. Hudson and guest speaker Rabbi Jean Binkovitz, both attorneys with experience in immigration law, conducted Sunday services focusing on immigration issues.

Following months of discussion and discernment, on October 1, 2017, our church voted, 232 yeas, 18 nays, to adopt a resolution to "assist in providing Sanctuary, support, and refuge to otherwise law-abiding undocumented immigrants in cooperation with other area Sanctuary faith institutions in Rochester and elsewhere in Minnesota."

Actions

Passage of the resolution has allowed increased, focused activities. The Board formed a Sanctuary Steering Committee to address and handle "the logistics of being a Sanctuary-supporting church and/or a full Sanctuary church." Members include Molly Dingel, Chris Wendt, Kathy Miner, Patricio Aleman, Sue Wheeler, and Elizabeth Katzmman. The church board of directors has asked this committee to begin volunteer recruitment, provide training to our volunteers to assist other churches, identify ongoing needs to support Sanctuary, and maintain communication within our congregation and the regional Sanctuary community.

Members of the Sanctuary Steering Committee continue to meet with a coalition of the seven Rochester faith communities who are currently part of the regional coalition committed to providing resources and/or Sanctuary. Integrating the provision of resources and volunteers will allow for ample opportunities for donations and services from all participants.



July 17, 2017 Forum with ISAIHA representative and DACA recipient, Catalina Morales.

Members of the Racial Justice Task Group, in coordination with three of the other faith communities who are Sanctuary or Sanctuary supporting in Rochester, continue to make presentations to faith communities and community organizations. These members were invited to talk to a meeting of faith communities in Winona on February 24. Two Kiwanis Clubs have invited them to speak. The Rochester Public Library sponsored a community-wide presentation by this coalition on February 25.

Racial Justice Task Group Chair Phil Wheeler has taken the lead on attempting to establish a Legal Defense Fund for undocumented people. The fund would be used to provide legal assistance to persons at risk of detention and expedited removal by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement branch of Homeland Security. According to a 2015 study, undocumented immigrants with legal assistance were 10 times more likely to be granted legal residency than those without. Currently, twelve community organizations have signed on in support of the fund and are looking for a non-profit agency to serve as a fiscal sponsor. There were 684 persons deported from Minnesota from October 1, 2016 to August 2017. If this rate stays the same, we would expect 25-30 persons from Olmsted County to be detained by

ICE over the next twelve months. This number could well go up with changes in the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and asylum policies.

Ongoing and Next Steps

On February 21, 2018, the church Board of Directors voted to become a full Sanctuary church. Board members also accepted a bid for remodeling a space within the church to accommodate a Sanctuary guest/family and approved establishing a separate fund for Sanctuary-related purposes.

With our initial steps now behind us the Social Justice Council, the Racial Justice Task Group, and our members and friends look forward to

- continuing education regarding immigration rights, law changes, and immigration law enforcement issues;
- organizing services (meals and other support) in cooperation with other coalition organizations;
- planning the provision of overnight lodging and pro bono legal assistance, on an emergency basis, if needed;



Rochester Post-Bulletin, October 2, 2017

The four Rochester faith communities that have so far joined a movement aimed at providing refuge for undocumented immigrants say their actions are meant to be more than symbolic.

- witnessing our congregation's support for sanctuary and immigrants' rights and collaborating with coalition organizations in expressing solidarity with undocumented immigrants;
- sponsoring opportunities for the congregation to advocate for changes in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities, consistent with human rights and humane practice, and for changes in state and federal laws affecting immigrants and immigration with regard to such issues as paths to citizenship, disparities in status, treatment of immigrants vs. employers, and access to services;
- collaborating with other faith communities to develop organizational frameworks for assistance to immigrants, and networking to work together on education, advocacy, and witness activities.

Our country's government is turning neighbors into pariahs and families into refugees. Let our voices be heard on the side of love.



To provide a safe and comfortable space, this room will be remodeled to include an energy-efficient egress window, a fire-proof door with lock, and any wiring needed for smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Our individual commitments, our coordinated efforts, our collaborative actions have gotten this work this far. What can you do?

- Join the Social Justice Council and/or the Racial Justice Task Group and move forward in post-resolution actions: education, service, witness, advocacy and community organization.
- Sign up to assist with meals, groceries, transportation, socializing, and overnight stays. Sanctuary-supporting faith organizations can share resources with full Sanctuary churches when the call goes out that supplies are needed.
- Donate money to support our participation in this and to the Legal Defense Fund, once it is established.
- Volunteer to be present with guests in their Sanctuary site, much like the buddy system of Family Promise. You will be trained and oriented to our church's Sanctuary policy and practices, as all coalition volunteers will be.

Elizabeth Katzmann has been a church member since 1981 and currently serves on the Sanctuary Steering Committee.

Building a Multigenerational Ministry

By Judy Jensen

A new vibe is gathering momentum within our church. We see it in the increasing number of children at our services. We see it in the number of young families who come to “check us out” at Sunday services. We see familiar faces from the past that are rediscovering our church. We are seeing an increase in people of all ages telling us they have heard about our welcoming church. One of our goals this year is to become a church that is in touch with, involved with, and supportive of younger people and that is creating multigenerational opportunities with children, youth, young adults, and families. To achieve this we must be intentional.

Why multigenerational ministry?

The foundation for a strong congregation is in its relationships. At any one time our church participants are of many ages, but the quality and quantity of relationships that cross age boundaries is a reliable indicator of how vibrant our church is.

The further removed we are from another person—by age, in this case—the number of connection points we have becomes less apparent. And relationships require some sense of commonality. Author C. S. Lewis says, “Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, ‘What! You too? I thought that no one but myself....’” We find delight in sharing common ideas or experiences with another. We build a multigenerational ministry



Celebrating Each Other

by seeking out and celebrating commonalities in our fellow congregants, no matter our ages.

John Roberto, editor of *Lifelong Faith*, has written, “Every church can become intentionally intergenerational! Most churches are intergenerational or multi-generational by membership. Some churches are intentionally intergenerational. They make their intergenerational character a defining feature of their community life, ministries, and programming. These churches make it a priority to foster intergenerational relationships, faith sharing, and storytelling; to incorporate all generations in worship; to develop service projects that involve all ages, and to engage all generations in learning together. For these churches, being intergenerational is a way of life. It is an integral element of their culture. It is who they are! Bringing generations together within the church provides benefits and blessings on a variety of levels.”

What Are the Benefits?

Opportunities for church members of different age groups to interact have many benefits. Angie and Ash Gupta, members of our church who have 9 and 11-year-old boys, say, “It creates an opportunity for various generations to meet, build relationships, and become more fully connected to the church. It allows adults to mentor youth to grow into caring adults and potential church members and leaders.”

Intergenerational activities create special relationships among adults and youth. A 10th grader who completed the Coming of Age program in spring 2017 discovered that the experience “allowed me to get a new perspective on life.” He participated in the yearlong mentorship experience with veteran church member Jim Jensen. Jim, in turn, delighted in the maturity and thoughtfulness of his younger friend.

Margaret Brandl, who teaches 3-5 year olds in the Explorers RE class, characterizes the RE experience as a “natural way of meeting the younger generation and their parents. It gives us an opportunity to be welcoming. It would be hard to greet or visit with kids only during coffee hour.”

What does a multigenerational ministry look like?

Several prominent theologians also have weighed in on this question.



Family Game Night



Multigenerational Choir

According to Judith A. Frediani, developer of the UUA Tapestry of Faith curricula, “[a multigenerational congregation] would be the ultimate committee of the whole: a community in which everyone is seen as teacher and learner; in which every age and stage of life is equally valued and equally supported by whatever tangible and intangible resources the community has to offer; in which every age and stage of life is allowed to contribute whatever tangible and intangible resources it has to offer; a community in which no decision is made about the life of the community—whether in the area of worship, physical plant, fundraising, budgeting, social action, the arts, education, or any other—without consideration of its impact on and opportunities for every member of the community.”

UU minister Linda Olson Peebles explains her vision of multigenerational ministry this way. “Every age group is a participant, leader, and recipient of every part of the life of the church (e.g., worship for ALL ages, pastoral care of ALL ages, social justice for and with ALL ages, governance including ALL ages, learning happening with many ages together both as teachers and learners). At the same time each generation is empowered, honored, and uniquely served (i.e., there are still programs and ministry unique to that generation). The NORM is a room filled with people of all ages who choose to be there because of a shared interest, such as singing, cooking, talking about books, planning for a fundraiser, talking about who to hire, or selecting good community-building games to

play. Age-based groups can also form alongside of these multigenerational activities in order to meet specific needs or interests.”

Where Do We Start?

When I asked members of our church which activities have been most effective for them to connect across generations, they have enthusiastically talked about the following:

- Potlucks
- Multigenerational Fellowship Activities
- Walden Hill Youth Fundraisers
- Coming of Age
- Religious Education Classes
- Social Justice Events
- Participation on the Caring Community
- Participation in summer Chalice Camp



Signing up for Coming of Age

We encourage all church members and friends of all ages to check out our *Weekly E-News* for details on the myriad opportunities to participate in these and other randomly occurring activities.

The theme for this year’s Stewardship Campaign is “Getting Better All the Time.” And we are! Our intentionally multigenerational congregation involves commitment and willingness to give our talents, resources, and love to building and improving relationships in our community. The more we give and the more we seek out commonalities, the more we receive in return. It is a privilege to engage with this caring assembly of people of all ages, backgrounds, and gifts. Let’s continue this amazing adventure!

12 Questions to Get Intergenerational Groups Talking

- If you could describe your ideal day, what would it be like?
- If you could take lessons in anything, what would you learn?
- If you could have dinner with one person, past or present, whom would you choose?
- If your house caught fire and, after all people and pets were safe, you had the chance to save one item, what would you grab?
- How would you describe spirituality?
- What to you is a spiritual experience?
- If you had \$100,000 to spend on others, how would you use it?
- Can you think of a time when you helped someone? How did you feel?
- What is one of your favorite hymns or worship songs? Why?
- What is one of your favorite books? Why is it a favorite?
- What are the qualities of a really good friend?
- What is one thing you wish you knew how to cook?

Many of these questions were found in “Faithtalk Cards” published by Vibrant Faith, and “Propellers” published by Search Institute.

Judy Jensen has been an active member of our Religious Education program as well as on the Hospitality and Fellowship Committees.

Winston Vermilyea - Does That Name Ring A Bell?

By Sue Wheeler

Maybe not a bell, but it should ring a chime. Winston has soloed on the hand chimes as a guest musician in a few services over the years — an unbelievable feat of both musicianship and dexterity. He has also been a guest musician playing his primary instrument, the tenor saxophone. But he envisions broader participation than solo performances. “Ideally I’d like to get together an instrumental choir at the UU Church with different age and skill levels to play for services and just for fun,” says church member Winston Vermilyea. He’s tried it a couple of times with our church’s hand chimes,

but he also envisions an instrumentally diverse group with a regular practice and performance schedule.

Winston says he has been interested in music since the time he first started walking. He remembers he used to sneak out of his Sunday school classroom and walk down the hall to play the piano. Although he never took piano lessons, his musical ability was nurtured in other ways, and at age 10 he was chosen for a select chorus in his Brooklyn Park community. He was heartbroken when, that same year, he moved with his family to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,

where his father worked for the Joint Economic Commission Office. He started saxophone lessons at the International School in 5th grade and continued with that instrument when he returned to Minnesota at age 13. A year later he saw and heard the hand bells at his church Christmas service. He recalls being absolutely mesmerized by the sound; “the reverberation of the sounds in the sanctuary was magical.” From that age on, he participated in the hand bell choir until he graduated from high school and after that whenever he got the chance. “Being part of the worship services as a young person was very important to me.”



Winston and his daughter play “Carol of the Bells” for December 2017 services.

Winston auditioned for and was accepted into the Marine Band after a couple of years of college, stationed in El Toro, California. "Being in a Marine band means we completed all the physical Marine training, but our main job was practicing our instruments and performing, mostly as public relations." During his tour of duty, his band played at the traditional lighting of the Los Angeles Ritz Carlton Christmas tree, as well as for the funeral of President Nixon in 1994 and five Rose Bowl parades. Winston continued to serve as a member of the Minnesota National Guard Red Bull Band based in Rosemount, Minnesota, until 2008.



Marine Band in the funeral procession for President Richard Nixon, 1994 in California.

In 2002 Winston and his wife Natasha moved to Rochester; she worked at IBM and he commuted to the Twin Cities until their daughter was born in 2004. That's when Winston became a stay-at-home parent. Their first son was born in 2008 and another in 2012, so he has been busy with parenting and homeschooling for the past 14 years. At present, four evenings a week he is the developmental swim coach for the Bull Sharks, a swim club in Northfield, Minnesota. In the summer he volunteers at Concordia Language Villages on Turtle River Lake near Bemidji, Minnesota, during the weeks that two of his children are there learning Swedish, a language he learned while attending the camp as a teenager.

After spending a couple of years "trying out" Rochester churches, the Vermilyeas eventually made their way to the First Unitarian Universalist Church. Natasha grew up Lutheran, and Winston was dedicated to the youth music program in his family's Presbyterian church: "I was there for the music, not the worshipping. I could not agree with a god that allowed the kinds of discrimination that I saw in Saudi Arabia as a young child." Women and children always had to be in the back

Hand Chime History

Our church purchased hand chimes in 1990 with a gift in memory of church member Margaret Parker, a donation from the Clara Barton Guild, and a congregation fundraiser, "40 Gifts of \$25." Immediately, music director Kevin Dobbe began rehearsals and performances with help from church member John Vettel who sometimes led the group that was "open to all ages and musical levels." In 1994 Music Director Laurie Helmers named a group Chiesa Chimers and scheduled weekly rehearsals and regular performances.

Since then some of the hand chimes have been used each year for our All Souls service in October—tolling a chime as we remember each one of our congregation who died during the previous year. Also the choir occasionally uses a few to enhance particular pieces of music. Co-Director of Music, Connie Schuelka agrees, "They are definitely underused at this time."

A Hand Chime Resurgence?

Last November a hand chime group under Winston's direction played for the church services, despite having had only one rehearsal. According to Winston, "If we have that many talented people who can do that well after only one rehearsal, think what they could do with more practice!" Lisa Talcott, who was part of that group, explains, "It was fun to be able to participate even though I'm not very musical." Anita DeAngelis also "chimed" in saying "Winston was very patient. It was really fun, but next time we should start with easier music."

With Connie Schuelka's encouragement and help, Winston is trying to gather people, music, and practice times that will come together as the UU Hand Chime Choir. As Lisa says, "I'd do it again, but with more practice!"

Be on the lookout for breaking news about Hand Chimes. And consider joining in the fun.



*UU Hand Chimes,
and there are two more cases!*

of the buses. Anyone from another country, including Americans, was treated rudely. "Seeing that at an early age formed a lot of my ideas on equality."



Learning to play the hand chimes takes concentration.

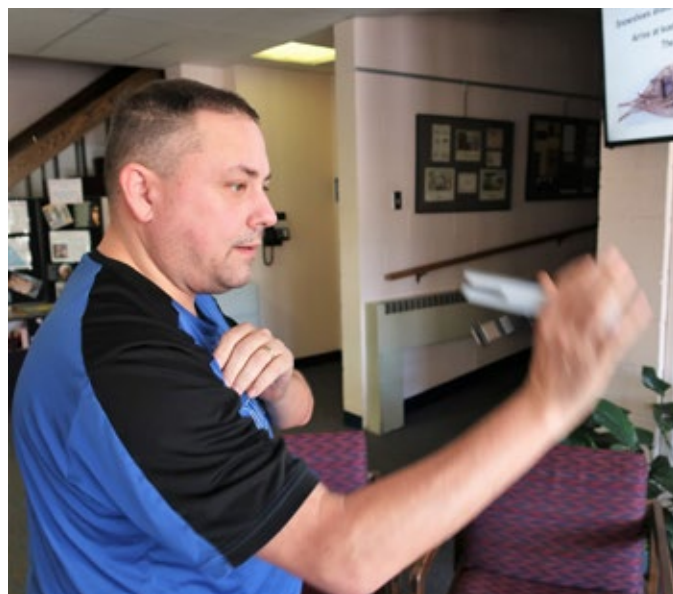
They both felt comfortable at the UU Church and joined in 2009. Winston especially liked our church's Christmas pageant when they first joined and the fact that children and youth were involved. Since then Natasha has been active in Religious Education; she has regularly taught RE classes, was a member of the RE Council, and chaired the Council for a year. She has been a coordinator for summer RE classes and has taught 4-6 grade Our Whole Lives (OWL).

The whole family is musical. Natasha's instrument is the trumpet, their daughter plays the flute and saxophone, and their older son seems to be leaning toward the trumpet after attending the Rochester Symphony Orchestra's "Honk Squeak Scratch Boom" event in January.

Their younger son hasn't yet chosen an instrument, but he is only in kindergarten so he has some time. "We both used to sing to them as we changed their diapers, never a pleasant task," says Winston of one parenting trick. "Everyone enjoyed it more with music!" He uses music analogies as he teaches children how to use their breath while swimming and musical rhythms as he teaches them the pulls and kicks of various strokes.

Although he has studied the bassoon, flute, and harp, Winston's primary instrument is the saxophone, alto and tenor. He has played all sorts of music from marches (while marching) to jazz, but he prefers classical music. "It is more of a challenge, and because the saxophone is unusual in classical music, it has a neat sound." His favorite classical piece is "The Old Castle" from *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a piano composition by Mussorgsky, orchestrated with a saxophone solo by Ravel.

Winston says, upon reflection, "I can't think of a day in my life without music; I can't imagine not having music in my life."



Winston demonstrating a hand chime technique.

Sue Wheeler has been a church member since 1983 and enjoyed her experience as part of the Hand Chime Choir in the early 1990's.

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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