

Minister's Report Rev. Sarah C. Richards **October 2016**

Note: I was on vacation 10/2-8, but did respond to important email messages, pastoral care calls, and prepared the Order of Service, service script and slides for the following Sunday.

Worship: Worked with Sunday Services Committee to plan and present Ingathering Sunday, enlisted Connie Payne, new RE Coordinator as facilitator. Researched, wrote and delivered "Ways of Truth and Affection" service on the history and meaning of covenantal community. Interviewed three CUF members (including Rev. Bill Sasso) on their efforts to educate and inform themselves and the congregation about welcoming GLBT folks in 2000, then worked with new members Peggy Degen and Darl Young to develop the "Renewing Our Commitment" service. The service celebrated the Welcoming Congregation recognition earned by CUF sixteen years ago, and outlined the process of renewing that status this year. Performed child dedication for Skylar Elaine Marie Wilson during the service- joyful occasion! Wrote descriptions for October services, and selected the hymns for the month, posted them on the CUF music calendar. Met with RE Coordinator and members of RE Committee to discuss new plan for Time for All Ages (post 20 hour DRE involvement). Invited Baha'i community members to present the 10/9 service, developed the Order of Service, Service Script, and slides and facilitated the service (including performing the Time for All Ages story). Worked with B & G chair to project slides on ceiling rather than screen. Although the brightness of the room means the images are not as sharp, I've received positive feedback from a few people on the increased text size. This may not be the permanent fix, but it represents improvement.

Counseling and Pastoral Care: Made pastoral care phone calls, emails, and one hospital visit; have been more consistently logging these contacts. Met with Pastoral Friends; in addition to the usual pastoral care discussions, we discussed the "Healing Ear" 10/23 Sunday Service and upcoming continuing ed opportunities.

Practical Arts/Administration:

- Attended the September BOT meeting.
- Met in person or on the phone with BOT chair weekly or more to go over CUF happenings.
- Met with Office Assistant weekly to review tasks and short and long-term goals.
- Met or talked with Choir Director several times per week, up until 9/29, when he resigned, effective immediately. As I wrote in an email to choir members that afternoon, "I can't comment on specifics, but I can tell you that the resignation was his decision, and that we both expressed regret that his employment didn't work out." Worked with Music Coordinator, co-chair and musicians to ensure hymn accompaniment through October.

- Met or talked with RE Coordinator weekly (except during my vacation week), established and followed meeting agenda to ensure thorough discussion of professional development as well as short term program goals.
- Monthly phone conversation with RE Consultant Lynn Hunt to go over plans for the upcoming workshops, and discuss professional development opportunities for RE Coordinator.
- Met with office volunteer who has been working to update the calendar book—this is an inefficient and ineffective use of volunteer and staff time, and now that we use on line calendars, we should be able to “go paperless.” I plan to meet with concerned parties to develop a transition plan to help make the transition. We have a tentative goal of January 1, but that may be too ambitious.
- Attended Communications Team meeting. Purchased voice recorder so that CUF can record sermons/talks and post them on the website.
- Attended most of the quarterly Social Action meeting (had to leave early for another commitment).
- Office Assistant and B&G members (particularly Al Babbitt, Jerry Molumby and Bob Swenson) continued the efforts to resolve our phone/alarm problem this month.
- Attended Racial Justice book group discussion of Ta-Nahesi Coates’ *Between the World and Me* (subsequently finished reading the book).

Organizational Ministry:

- Invited Bob Swenson to join the Committee on Shared Ministry (Rob Gallegly stepped down), and he accepted. He’ll make a great addition to the CoSM,
- Attended both of the RE workshops led by RE Consultant Lynn Hunt 9/24-25. It was good to have folks from Programs Committee so we could share perspectives and goals for RE for all ages.
- Attended BOT retreat 9/9-10 hosted by Amelia Robinson, was gratified by the honest discussions and the setting of goals for the coming year.
- Wrote newsletter column for October CUF Links.
- Led the 20 minute intro to CUF & UU, with five newcomers attending. The Membership Committee chair sat in, and provided info on the November New Members class. We’re going to try to have someone from Membership at those intro sessions from now on, so they can make connections with newcomers.
- Attended Membership Committee meeting, outlined the merging of greeters and welcomers (Mary Campbell and Barb Youther will coordinate that), as well as short and longer term membership goals.
- Hosted a viewing party for the Ken Burns documentary, *Defying the Nazis*—the story of a Unitarian couple who followed their beliefs and risked their lives to help Jews escape Europe.

- Attended Rainbow Café Gala at CUF.

Personal Growth: exercise, meditation, singing with Choral Union, and have begun practicing mandolin more regularly. Attended Carbondale “Clergy Gals” monthly gathering.

Professional Growth: Monthly telephone conversations with Family Systems coach, ministry peer group, and Spiritual Director. Attended monthly meeting of Bi-State UU Ministers Society (BUUMS) in St. Louis, where we discussed re-design of our presentation and worship programs.

- Have progressed in reading Margaret Marcuson’s book, *Money and Your Ministry: Balance the Books While Keeping Your Balance*. I recommend chapter two: “Understand the Meaning of Money” to CUF leadership, especially as we are beginning the Building a Culture of Generosity process.

Teaching: N/A.

Denominational Activities:

- Participated (with Bill Sasso) in the National Moral Monday Day of Action (organized by UUANI) in Springfield, IL Sept. 12, similar demonstrations were held simultaneously in 30 states and the District of Columbia. Accepted invitation to read a section of the Moral Declaration as part of the interfaith program (the Declaration was then delivered to the Governor’s Office).
- Attended the film and discussion of *Dream On*, part of the Community Film Series at the CPL, co-sponsored by CUF.
- Met with other members of Carbondale Interfaith Council (CIC) to discuss the future format and schedule of the Ralph Anderson Interfaith Dialogues.
- Met with two other members of CIC to begin planning the 20th Annual Carbondale in Thanksgiving, which will be hosted by the Bethel AME church.

Prophetic Outreach:

- Regular attendance at the weekly We Say Enough videoconferences (except on vacation).
- Attended the Moral Revival tour stop at St. Louis with a colleague and CUF member—powerful experience listening to the testimonies of local people impacted by harmful policies, singing together, and hearing Rev. William Barber II preach (he was a speaker at both the UU GA and the Democratic Convention this past summer). Pledged with the other clergy in attendance to preach on the Moral Declaration October 16 (I was already planning on doing that, I just had to switch dates to be able to join the campaign).