

Minister's Report Rev. Sarah C. Richards **May 2017**

Reporting period 4/11/2017 – 5/9/17

Worship: Developed thematic Sunday Service components (e.g. Order of Service covers, hymn selection, service scripts). Wrote and delivered the Easter sermon, “Cracking Open,” an Earth Day meditation, and the “How Do Lobsters Grow?” Time For All Ages for our White Supremacy Culture Teach-In. For the Earth Day service, I solicited participation through song and reflections by Facebook, then worked to create a cohesive service with those different pieces. For the Teach In, I did not take the lead – a group of five CUF members who had responded to the call for a Teach In worked together on the service. We learned a lot from both the planning process as well as the service and responses to it; we plan to meet in the coming weeks to debrief more fully and plan next steps. I’m proud that CUF was among more than 600 UU congregations (well over half of the total) that participated in the Teach-In. Now we look for ways to continue the momentum.

Worked with Kathy and Sara Starbuck to plan and coordinate Ken Starbuck’s memorial service; gave opening and closing words, and facilitated the service. The many participants provided a mosaic of Ken’s life and relationships; I thought it was a fitting service of thanksgiving and farewell to a man who helped to shape CUF within and beyond its walls for many years. Thanks to all the CUF members who helped make it happen—and cleaned up afterward!

Counseling and Pastoral Care: Made pastoral care phone calls, emails, office visits. Attended monthly meeting with Pastoral Friends, reviewed updates, debriefed about the Time with Pastoral Friends monthly gatherings—they continue to be unsuccessful at attracting people. Nan Sorrels made a very informative presentation about the realities of dialysis and the support and pastoral care needs of dialysis patients.

Practical Arts/Administration:

- Met in person or on the phone with BOT chair weekly or more to go over CUF happenings; met with Exec Committee to set BOT meeting agenda.
- Met with Office Assistant weekly to review tasks and short and long-term goals.
- Met or talked with RE Coordinator weekly to discuss current RE program concerns and to review progress toward professional development goals.
- Monthly phone conversation with RE Consultant Lynn Hunt about planning final workshops, RE Coordinator professional development and recommendations for next year.
- Attended BOT meeting.
- Attended Congregational meeting.
- Attended monthly CoSM meeting.

- Communicated with monthly music coordinators, set hymns and posted them on google calendar, communicated with accompanists.
- Participated in annual performance review meetings for Office Administrator and RE Coordinators along with Personnel Committee members, compiled staff-and evaluator comments and placed signed forms in personnel files. Both staff people performed very well this year, I'm gratified that the CUF congregation recognized their conscientiousness, competency and quality and approved raises for them in FY'18.
- Attended Membership meeting, discussed and set New Member class (5/31 & 6/7), sent out email invitations and posted the announcement to the Bulletin.
- Attended Sunday Service Committee meeting; brainstormed ideas for Summer Sunday Services while I'm away. Met with Kim Asner-Self to plan Sunday Service Survey, time-table for distribution moved back to mid-late May.
- Made appointments with BOT members for one:one conversations; given the benefits to communication, I plan to meet with each Board member on at least an annual basis.

Organizational Ministry:

- Held monthly meeting with Covenant Group facilitator. This is a great way each month for me to check in on the group, and also preview the theme for the following month.
- Attended the last Racial Justice Group book discussions of the year; on *It's the Little Things: Everyday Interactions That Anger, Annoy, and Divide the Races*, by Lena Williams.
- Wrote newsletter column for May CUF Links.
- Three people (full disclosure: one was my mom) attended the monthly "Theme Salon," and we had a good discussion. I have yet to make a Facebook Event page for this month's salon in order to get RSVPs as well as publicize it, but I'm planning a special version with food this month.
- Led Intro to UU/CUF session, with two newcomers attending—one has committed to attending the New Members class.
- Met with new CUF Interfaith Liaison for orientation.

Personal Growth: exercise, meditation, singing with Choral Union. This month we sang with the Paducah Symphony Orchestra in Paducah, as well as the regular end of semester performance at Shryock. It was physically exhausting, but spiritually and emotionally nourishing experience to be one of nearly 200 voices, making music with a full orchestra.

Professional Growth: Monthly telephone conversations with Family Systems coach, UUMA mentor, ministry peer group, and Spiritual Director.

- Attended MidAmerica regional ministers' gathering at the Hinsdale UU Church April 26-28., and the Regional Assembly 29-30 in Oak Brook. Posted news briefs and photos to my Facebook page.

Teaching: N/A

Denominational Activities: Attended UUA MidAmerica gatherings as noted above. Highlights were worship services; connecting with old and new colleagues; panel and small group discussions of Public Ministry; interfaith leader Eboo Patel's keynote talk and the UUA Presidential Candidates forum; "Building Bridges across Race and Class" workshop.

Prophetic Outreach:

- Participated in the faith-based community organizing "Come and See" event led by Gamaliel of Illinois organizers. Building a local organization with congregations from Marion, Carterville and Murphysboro, as well as Carbondale has great potential. It's not yet clear to me if there is enough "buy-in" to make it happen, but we've scheduled our next gathering at the Carbondale mosque early next month.
- Attended Carbondale City Council meeting to support the SI Immigrant Rights Project-sponsored resolution.
- Attended monthly Clergy Advisor Group meeting with Mayor and City Manager, heard Jo Poshard's presentation on her foundation's work to raise awareness and prevent child abuse.
- Participated in the Carbondale City branding focus group with other clergy.
- Offered opening prayer at a Vigil for Syria at the Gaia House.
- Made a sign for the Climate Justice march 😊
- Attended monthly Racial Justice Coalition meeting.
- Attended monthly I Can Read! Board meeting.