

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

*Reporting period 10/11/17 – 11/4/17*

*Connections made and strengthened in Sunday Services, collegial gathering and a variety of community events during this reporting period.*

**Worship:** The first two Sunday Services that I led in this reporting period were both “non-traditional” in format and feel. I worked with Becca Tally from the Southern Illinois Immigrant Rights Project to invite Ana Hernandez and Oneida Garcia SIU student-leaders to speak at “The Courage to Dream” service, which focused on the situation of DACA recipients and their families. It was great to make that connection with SIU students, as well as with UU social justice work. I also enjoyed our fourth Samhain service I led with CUF member Tabitha Ayres. Every year is a bit different, but this “Day of Remembrance” was especially meaningful, with a family sharing during “Joys” that as pagans, they feel welcome and accepted at CUF. I also wrote the sermon for “Open Our Eyes” service, after choosing the Time For All Ages story, “The Stolen Soup Aroma”\* for the service. As is my custom, I wove it into my sermon as one of its source “texts.” which included the invitation for folks to write down their thoughts about the signs and sources of abundance at CUF. I think these could be useful for the vision and mission team, as well as the congregation itself, and so I’m thinking of extending the invitation throughout the month.

Worked with each Sunday Service Facilitator in preparation for service, communicated with music coordinators, accompanists, chose hymns for all services. Compiled and submitted Orders of Service. Invited Rev. Bill Sasso to deliver the sermon Nov. 12; I look forward to serving as Facilitator for the service. Planned the Time for All Ages and submitted the Order of Service early due to upcoming absence (see Professional Growth section).

\* Kudos to volunteer actors Jan Eisenhard, Stephanie Reece and Facilitator Jerry Molumby, who did a great job on only about 5 minutes of rehearsal.

*Rites of passage:* officiated at the Celebration of Life of CUF member Jim May. Since his death was unexpected, it was an especially emotional service of thanksgiving and farewell for his friends and family. I believe they gained some measure of comfort and closure from it, as several family members and guests said that the service evoked Jim’s personality and presence.

**Counseling and Pastoral Care:** Made pastoral visits, calls, and emails. Gave “Comfort Shawl” to Kathy Starbuck during Sorrows & Joys. Met with Pastoral Friends to review pastoral updates and activities. Laura Van Abbema presented the CE portion, reporting on the presentation “Piecing Together Faith and Safety for Rural Victims of Sexual Assault.” she and I attended in August.

### **Practical Arts/Administration:**

- Wrote and posted monthly Minister's Report.
- Attended October BOT meeting.
- Met with BOT President weekly.
- Met or talked with RE Coordinator weekly to discuss current RE program concerns and to review progress toward professional development goals.
- Talked with Choir director as needed.
- Met with Office Administrator weekly; Linda Linsin has taken over the compilation of Orders of Service, and is doing a great job. Edited the weekly Bulletins.
- Met with Committee on Shared Ministry: unfortunately, the wi-fi connection was inadequate to play the UUA webinar as planned, but it's downloaded and ready for our next meeting. We discussed other relevant matters, including the CoSM's role in the mission and vision process.
- Met with RE Coordinator, Coordinator Assistant, High School youth and parents to discuss options for youth group meeting times, frequency, and content. Jamie Niman and Jodi Ruffner volunteered to serve as HS Youth Group advisors.
- Sunday Services Committee meets later this month (postponed due to my upcoming absence). The Sunday Services Survey closed with 53 respondents – a very good response rate, which generated more data than I or the Committee have the capacity to analyze. New CUF member and qualitative sociologist Kate Niman agreed to analyze the data for us – thanks Kate!
- Recruited actors for Sunday Service TFAA, directed quick pre-service rehearsal.
- Met with newly elected Rainbow Café Board President, Tara Bell. She plans to meet with the CUF Board at our December meeting to renew our connection with RC.
- Wrote Minister's Column for CUF Links; posted sermon to CUF web site, formatted it for copying.

### **Organizational Ministry:**

- Met with three people who missed the second session of the New Members class, and two of them joined that evening. Set the New Member Recognition Ceremony for Nov. 12; we will welcome six new members.
- Led UU/CUF intro in 20 minutes with three newcomers, all of whom expressed interest in New Member classes.
- Facilitated the second Facilitators' Covenant Group meeting with four of the six facilitators. Met with Facilitator who missed the first meeting.
- Met and communicated with Jim May's family members to plan his Celebration of Life service.

- Had second (of nine) one-on-one meeting/conversation with individual BOT member.
- Participated in CUF Trivia Night – had lots of fun! It was great to meet many non-CUF folks there – it’s an unconventional and enjoyable method of outreach.
- Spent some time at the RE Halloween party, and went through the Haunted Room. Props to all those involved, especially the middle school youth.

**Personal Growth:** exercise, meditation, Choral Union.

**Professional Growth:** met with Spiritual Director, Family Systems coach, Mentor, minister peer group. Finished reading *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living* by Krista Tippett. Attended the Central Midwest District Retreat and Business meeting at Siena Retreat Center, Racine, WI 10/16-19. With the assistance of my friend and colleague Rev. Lynnda White, devised ingathering ritual and led opening worship service, the first time I’ve done for colleagues. As new District Secretary, I took minutes of the business meeting and submitted them for approval.

**Teaching:** New Members make up, 20 minute intro to UU/CUF as listed elsewhere.

**Denominational Activities:** Attended CMD retreat (described above).

**Prophetic Outreach:**

- Attended SIIRP-sponsored screening and discussion of Homeland: Immigration in America.
- Attended the annual NAACP Banquet and fundraiser.
- Attended the annual Carbondale Interfaith Council “Taste of Faith” held at First Christian (DOC) Church.
- Attended I Can Read! Board meeting.
- Served as worship leader for the Church Women United World Community Day service at Bethel AME church. This was a wonderful interfaith and interracial community experience for me, and a good moment of connection for CUF.