

**Minister's Report** Rev. Sarah C. Richards      **January 2018**  
*Reporting period 12/13/17 – 1/8/18 (vacation taken 12/25-30)*

**Worship:** This year I decided to do something completely different for the Christmas Eve service: I adapted an "Improvised Christmas Pageant" skit written by my DRE sister. With the assistance of Rob Gallegly and Jodi Ruffner, and a number of volunteer pageant participants, we presented an appealing and meaningful multigenerational service. The feedback I received was positive. For the first Sunday Service of the New Year, I developed the third "experiment in spaciousness" meditation on intention, January's theme. I thought that all of the elements of the service cohered well together, Pat York's contributions as musician and song leader were a major contribution to the experience.

Compiled Order of Service and slides for the Children's Holiday Service.

Met with many members of the LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation Committee, and guest Chip Loghry from Rainbow Café to plan the 1/14 service, "Welcoming All Genders."

*Rites of passage:* Officiated the wedding of Martha Shum and Kamran Mogharreban at CUF 12/22. I enjoyed writing and delivering the homily for their intimate ceremony.

**Counseling and Pastoral Care:** Made pastoral visits, calls, and emails. Met with Pastoral Friends to review pastoral updates and activities, plan for vacation coverage. I'm very pleased that Dan Marsh has rejoined Pastoral Friends—we're back up to six members, all experienced deep listeners. Although we had scheduled and advertised a Blue Holidays sharing circle for the evening after our meeting, no one attended.

**Practical Arts/Administration:**

- Wrote and posted monthly Minister's Report.
- Met with BOT President (and/or VP after President's injury) 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. Edited the weekly Bulletins. Worked with the OA to institute the new stream-lined version of the Bulletin and new quarterly FAQ publication.
- Hosted the third annual Holiday Staff Appreciation Lunch at Hunan, with six of seven staff members attending. It was a small symbol of my gratitude to work with such a dedicated and conscientious staff.
- Participated in the interview process for the Building Use Manager position; we had three strong candidates. Angela Watters accepted our offer. Drafted letter of (contract) employment.

- The Communications Committee was cancelled, but I did communicate with Committee members about relevant items, chief among them is that new member Mallory Swafford has volunteered as Outreach team leader (other members of the team to be invited); she'll attend our January meeting. Also of interest is the Congregational Conversation regarding the "In This Congregation, We Believe..." banner, and how we want to present ourselves/our principles in the community.
- Met with Committee on Shared Ministry: reviewed relevant material on purpose and activities of CoSMs, sketched out a timeline to support the Vision/Mission process. Bob Swenson has resigned from the Committee, Al Babbitt (who served on the CoSM 2014 – 16) has agreed to serve through July 1, in order to help with my evaluation. I appreciate Bob's service on the Committee over the last year and a half, and also Al's willingness to come (back) aboard at short notice. I request that the Board approve Al's appointment.
- Met with Sunday Services Committee, discussed options for the 1/28 lay-led service, and follow up on the Survey results.
- Wrote introduction to the Sunday Service Survey Report, wrote introduction to the members' responses to UUism and Social Justice and Minister's Column for January CUF Links.

#### **Organizational Ministry:**

- Coordinated the Annual Carol Sing and Potluck, which drew over 70 people – I think inviting people via Facebook was part of the reason for the big crowd. We had just enough space, and even some left over food; the Unitarian Folk Orchestra provided boisterous accompaniment as usual. In addition to the UFO, Connie Payne and Jodi Ruffner deserve thanks for setting up and monitoring the craft/Christmas card table. Next year, we'll invite all ages to make the cards – we have artistically talented adults as well as children and youth.
- Attended Children and Youth Holiday Service.
- Met with Stewardship Committee to discuss plans for this year's campaign.
- Facilitated January Facilitator Covenant Group – missing three group members, but still had a rich sharing and discussion. Hope to have a "make up" session with those who couldn't attend.
- At the LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation Committee meeting, planned a post-service congregational discussion of the "In this Congregation, we believe" banner, January 14.
- Due to lack of response, and because the Women's March to the Polls has been set for the same date, cancelled the 1/20 new members class. We'll discuss options at the next Membership meeting.

**Personal Growth:** exercise, meditation, playing mandolin and singing with family.

**Professional Growth:** met with Spiritual Director, Family Systems Coach, minister peer group, Bi-State UU Ministers.

**Teaching:** [Response to the Building Your Own Theology course in the spring has reached six participants, I'm optimistic that I'll reach or even exceed the goal of eight.]

**Denominational Activities:** Bi-State UU Ministers monthly meeting – second livestream web meeting.

**Prophetic Outreach:**

- Met with Democratic gubernatorial candidate Daniel Biss during his information-gathering visit to Carbondale.
- Helped with the I Can Read move from Eurma Hayes Center to the District 95 addition on Giant City Road.