

## **March 2023 President's Report**

Looking out my window I can certainly say spring has “sprung” in Southern Illinois. We have fields and wooded areas filled with blooming daffodils. The hyacinths are in flower as are the forsythia. And our plum trees are covered in thousands of white flowers for the bees to enjoy. But now our weather has turned cooler once more, and we are facing some freezing weather again. I fear we may not have any plums this summer if winter makes a comeback.

As I worked at the computer in our study on this Report, our mail came. In the mail was a card signed by CUF members and friends wishing me well as I deal with a leg injury. This reminded me of what it means to belong to a community and to be supported by people who care about me. Thank you.

### **Recognition:**

One of the best parts of writing my monthly President's Report is including recognition for all the good things CUF members and friends are doing for our Fellowship and the wider community. There are lots of things to note this month.

- CUF has always been a dedicated supporter of the Carbondale Warming Center. Lead by Jerry Molumby, CUF members have regularly provided meals for the Center. On February 25 a team from CUF participated in the “Coldest Night of the Year” international fundraising walk to benefit homeless shelters such as the Warming Center. The CUF team, the “Wuulkers,” captained by Jeletta Brant, raised \$2750 out of the total raised locally of \$29,846. The Wuulkers placed third among the 33 local teams and 39<sup>th</sup> nationally among all 575 teams. Thanks to all who were part of the Wuulkers team and to all who gave to the event.

And it's not too late to donate and add to the Wuulkers' total. Just go to <https://cnoy.com/home> by March 31 and donate to CUF's team to benefit the Warming Center.

- The pandemic gave rise to so many changes for all of us and at CUF. One of those changes was a new and fun way to send Valentine wishes to family and friends and also raise some money for CUF. This year's version of the event was called “Songs for a Sweetie.” For a \$5 donation people could send Valentine greetings with a “love” song sung by one of our great CUF musicians! CUF raised \$105 and lots of people got a low calorie, environmentally thoughtful and very sweet gift. Thanks to Candy Davis and Glenn McLernon for handling the requests as well as for singing. And thanks to all the other singers

including TeeKae Kelly, Bob Swenson, Marty Merrill, Elana Floyd-Kennett, Warren Bush, and Givivra Herr.

- Each year the Social Action Team holds several food drives for food banks and charities in our area. The first food drive of 2023 was held in February. We collected a lot of food items for the Murphysboro Food Pantry which serves all of Jackson County. Thanks to everyone who donated to this drive and to the RE kids for helping to load all the food into the car to deliver to the Food Pantry.

- One of the recently formed groups at CUF is the Reproductive Justice Discernment Group (RJDG). The RJDG organized CUF's first action to support the new Choices Clinic in Carbondale and its patients. Working with other local faith communities, RJDG assembled care packages for patients with items donated by the CUF community. Youth from the Church of the Good Shepherd joined in the "assembly line" to prepare the packages. Thanks to the RJDG for doing this important work and to all who donated items and helped with the project.

- The Survivor Empowerment Center held its annual Taste of Chocolate fundraiser on February 10. CUF was a sponsor of this event and placed an ad in the program recognizing the contributions of CUF members Joyce Webb and Martha Shum to the Center. In 1972, Joyce was one of the "Founding Mothers" of what was, until recently, called the "Women's Center." Martha recently retired as Assistant Director of the Center after 14 years of service. Thanks to these two CUF members who made a real difference in our community.

- As part of CUF's VoteLove 2023 effort, led by Bill Sasso, leading up to the April 4 local election there was a "brainstorming" meeting at CUF after the service on Sunday, February 19. Since then, information about the election has been offered at a table in the Commons. If you are curious about the election and would like more information, check out the table or contact Bill Sasso, [bsasso62901@gmail.com](mailto:bsasso62901@gmail.com).

- CUF hosted another Red Cross Blood Drive on February 20 cosponsored with the Rotary Club of Carbondale and the NAACP. Coordinated by Jerry Molumby, this regular activity represents an important CUF contribution to our wider community.

- After the "Coldest Night of the Year" fundraising walk on February 25, CUF hosted another "Game Night." Thanks again to Sage Banks and Laura Basanta for getting this fun activity off the ground.

### **Gift Proposal Form Now Available**

After extensive discussion, including several congregation-wide Listening Circles, we have now developed the form to be used by CUF members interested in submitting proposal to use the Rose/Hayward Gift Money. The form can be found at the Member page of [CUF's website here](#) . Those interested in making a proposal should complete the form online and submit it by **June 30, 2023**. We anticipate that this submission date will give people time to fully develop their proposals with thorough plans and well thought out budgets. We hope as well that those making proposals will take time to explore the availability of grants and other funding resources to support their project. All submitted proposals will be reviewed for completeness and clarity before going to the Congregation for voting. If there are questions, contact [Gene Basanta](#). This is an exciting chance for the CUF community to come together with creative ideas to help us sustain our vision and build our future. What a terrific opportunity for our Fellowship.

### **Board Member Sharing**

You may not have noticed, but something new has started during this congregational year--bimonthly Board Member Sharing messages. With these messages, members of CUF's Board of Trustees get to introduce themselves to CUF members and friends and share their thoughts and feelings about CUF. Check out the messages at the Congregation News tab at CUF's website:

<https://carbondaleuf.org/blog/congregation-news/>

### **February Services and Attendance:**

Our January service theme was "The Path of Love." The Sunday services during February explored "unconditional, universal love as a foundation and grounding for our actions in the world" as Unitarian Universalists. CUF's LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation Team led a service about finding love and understanding in these times of hostility toward trans and non-binary people. The February 26 service, "Generations of Love" had CUF members and friends share their thoughts and experiences on love between the generations: raising children, caring for elders, mentoring youth, and more.

For the record, here are the attendance figures for our February Sunday services.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Adults in Person</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Feb. 5	37	12	15

Feb. 12	46	17	10
Feb. 19	47	13	18
Feb. 26	51	15	15

**Things to Look Forward To:**

- **Spring Frolic.** To celebrate our ongoing Generosity Campaign, CUF will hold its Spring Frolic on March 25 from 2-4 PM. There will be fun and fellowship for the whole family including food, art, scavenger hunt, prizes, T-shirt sales, a youth-led project, and our own CUF musicians leading us through a sing-along. Mark your calendars and be sure to join in the fun!
- **Open CUF Budget Conversation.** If you would like to learn more about CUF’s current budget and help think about our budget for next year join CUF leaders for a budget conversation Tuesday, 3/28, at 7 pm (in the Fellowship Hall and online via Zoom).