

## **April 2023 President's Report**

The saying is “better late than never.” So, with that said here is my tardy April President's Report. Why am I late getting it out you may ask? That's a good question. All I can say is that I have been very busy—and I really have been with a whole range of activities and responsibilities on top of physical therapy twice a week for my knee. Still, sometimes at the end of the day I ask myself what the heck I did today and there are times when it's hard to answer that question—it's just a blur. Did I do anything? Do you ever feel that way?

One thing I have worked on that's just for fun has been binding journals for the Oak Street Art Fair on April 29 in Murphysboro. With everything else going on, I really enjoy the process of constructing a book from paper, book board, and cloth.

### **Recognition:**

- March was the time for CUF's annual Generosity Campaign. The theme for this year's campaign was “Sustaining Our Vision.” The Generosity Team led by Miriam Link-Mullison included Kathy O'Laughlin, Janet Harris, Laura Basanta, Linda Linson, and Laraine Wright. Throughout the month we heard and read testimonials from an array of CUF folks. Thanks for all the dedicated work by the Generosity Team and to all those who provided their thoughtful testimonials.
- To celebrate our Generosity Campaign and the arrival of spring, CUF members, friends, and guests join in our Spring Frolic on March 25. What a great time we all had. The Frolic included treasure hunts, art displays, food, and a great sing along music session with CUF musicians including Candy Davis, Marty Merrill, Warren Bush, Elana Floyd-Kennett, and Joyce Shephard.
- Along with the Generosity Campaign, March included extensive work in planning the FY 2024 CUF budget. The Ad hoc Finance Committee, including Roy Sumner, Martha Shum, Amy Weber, and Jerry Molumby worked with CUF's Fiscal Specialist Bill Sasso and me to begin to develop the budget for next year. This included soliciting budget information from all committees and teams, as well as an open Budget Conversation on March 28. Thanks to everyone for participating and helping in this process.
- CHF has been actively involved with the Bethel AME Feed My Sheep Community Kitchen for many years. When the soup kitchen closed due to Covid, under the leadership of Jerry Molumby, CUF started cooking weekly meals for the Warming Center on Thursdays and has been doing this since April 2020. Now things have changed, but CUF continues its support for Feed My Sheep. Still coordinated by Jerry,

CUF members have been preparing at Bethel AME two Warming Center meals and the lunch time soup kitchen on three Thursdays a month. This requires a good number of volunteers. If you are willing to help out, contact Jerry at [jmolumby@frontier.com](mailto:jmolumby@frontier.com)

- On March 30 CUF hosted a Zoom presentation, “Local Elections Matter--Why You Should Vote on April 4” by SIU Law Professor Emeritus Tom Britton. He discussed local governmental bodies in Illinois, what they do, and why it matters to vote in local elections. Thanks to Professor Britton and to the CUF Voter Empowerment team for this presentation.

- After our Sunday services in March the CUF Voter Empowerment Team maintained and staffed a table in the Commons where members, friends, and visitors could pick up sample ballots, early voting schedules, and other helpful information for the local elections on April 4.

- CUF seeks to offer a vibrant Religious Education program for all ages. The pandemic forced us to adjust our programs and RE activities for middle school aged young people were curtailed. But beginning in March this program returned to CUF on the third Sunday of each month. Thanks to Tasha Youngblood and the RE Team for all the work put into reviving our program. And, if any adults would like to help out and facilitate a session or two, a useful curriculum is provided. Contact [Tasha for more information](mailto:tasha@tashayoungblood.com) at [tasha@tashayoungblood.com](mailto:tasha@tashayoungblood.com)

- Long-time member Joyce Webb died March 23 in Springfield, surrounded by loved ones. Joyce's granddaughter, Megan Moore, is collecting emails and cards and sharing them with the family. Contact her at [megankmjd@gmail.com](mailto:megankmjd@gmail.com) to share your memories and sympathies.

### **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.

**March Services and Attendance:**

In March, consistent with the theme of our Generosity Campaign, our services focused on our Vision Statement—to be “a vibrant, diverse, loving community which fosters freedom of thought, spiritual growth, social justice and ethical living for all.” The Sunday services throughout the month explored our Vision, what it means to us and how we live it both as a congregation and individually. In an interactive service on March 19, we shared how our Vision Statement resonates with each of us and with our community. From this service, Bethann Seibold and Miriam Link-Mullison created a colorful Vision board in the CUF Commons. Be sure to check it out.

Attendance at our Sunday services continued to be strong in March, both in person and online.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Adults in Person</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Mar. 5	38	13	12
Mar. 12	50	--	--
Mar. 19	44	10	--
Mar. 26	30	6	13

**Things to Look Forward To:**

- On Sunday, April 23 CUF will host its “**Spring into Action Eco Fair**” and is part of Carbondale's 2023 Earth Month celebration: <https://www.explorecarbondale.com/DocumentCenter/View/8542/EARTH-MONTH-2023---FINAL?bidId=>

The Fair will include local environmental speakers, vendors, and groups, as well as activities for youth, live music, and more. Speakers include Amy McMorrow Hunter from the Illinois Humanities Road Scholar Bureau, Rev. Wade Halva from Faith in Place, and Professor Jeb Asirvatham from the SIU Department of Agricultural Economics. The Fair is co-sponsored by the Illinois Humanities Road Scholar

Bureau, the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship, Faith in Place, and Climate Economy Education, Inc. All4.Earth. For more information about the Fair go to: <https://all4.earth/event/spring-into-action-ecofair/>.

- Our annual Congregational Meeting will be after the service on Sunday, May 21. Plan to attend this important meeting.
- On Thursday, May 25 at 7 PM CUF will host the opening concert of the 19th annual Southern Illinois Music Festival with some very special guests! Emily Hughes is returning from the East coast and will perform a recital along with her father, Randy Hughes. The concert will also include SIU Cello professor Bill Cernota, and pianist Jace Kim. The concert will benefit the Carbondale Warming Center.