

Greetings and welcome to springtime! My name is Nan Sorrels and I am writing to you as a current member of the Board of Trustees and would like to share a bit more about myself and my journey with CUF.

My connection with CUF started about 15 years ago when my son was invited to attend the summer RE program with his friends. A religious community (Baptist) had been a part of my life while growing up in Southern Illinois. Like many, that connection ended after high school and was not a good fit for me in adulthood. Fast forward a few decades and I now had a family and my son was invited to the summer RE program. The theme that year was Harry Potter and he was excited about the opportunity. There was a lot of controversy at the time, as some viewed the wizardry and magic of Harry Potter as a negative influence on children. At some point in the summer program, Bill Sasso shared a writing he had done, reflecting on Harry Potter (and the controversy) from a Unitarian perspective. It was a refreshing break from all the negativity and something I could relate to. My son enjoyed the RE summer program and became a regular attendee through high school. Through these experiences (and many others) it became obvious that the CUF community was in alignment with our family's idea of a spiritual community, hence our journey with CUF had begun. Not only was CUF a spiritual community for us, but a social one, as we shared experiences and fun times with friends new and old.

Professionally, I worked as a social worker (mostly in health care) and found strength and guidance in the seven principles.

They were helpful in keeping me focused and positive during times of stress and challenge when working with clients and the system. This happened organically, without expectation or planning.

Initially my focus at CUF was involvement with the RE program. As time went on, I became involved in several different areas -- hospitality, generosity campaign, pastoral friends, fundraisers, etc. Some I enjoyed more than others but, with encouragement, I've tried to contribute as I felt my time would allow. Agreeing to serve on the board was one of those times and I'm glad I agreed to "give it a go."

I feel privileged to be able to serve on the board of trustees and to be a part of a diverse community of such giving, caring, action focused, thinking people. My knowledge of the many facets of CUF and all of the moving parts that make it rich have increased tremendously through this role. Becoming a part of the CUF community has allowed me to meet so many wonderful people, develop new friendships, express opinions and take action on issues that are important to me and others, give and get support when needed, gain and share knowledge, laugh, feel enriched, and the list goes on.

I was unsure what the experience would bring but it has truly been a positive one. I would encourage everyone to explore opportunities in the CUF community -- there are many, and not only can one give, but also receive positive and rewarding experiences.