

Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Annual Meeting, May 31, 2015

Year in Review

The 2014-2015 Church year is winding down and it's time to look back and say thanks to everyone, and to feel strong and grateful for all we've experienced and accomplished.

First, I want to thank everyone who took a leadership role, whether by servicing on the Board of Trustees as did Mary Maki and Teri Rockwood, who will be leaving the board this year, and Chris Wagner and Tim VanderVeen who will be continuing. The Sullivans, Nancy and Tom, for chairing the Community Development and Sunday Service committees. Shaun Devlin, continues to chair our Facilities committee yet another year. Jill Mielcarek chairs our Religious Education committee and worked to make a smooth transition from our former RE coordinator, Laura Nagle, to our new coordinator, Lisa McKenzie. Megan Foulks, not only delivered baby Corwyn this year, she continued to chair our Social Action Committee! Mike White served as Stewardship chair for a second year. Jeanne Trost chairs our Music Committee. gg gordon left the Board last year but stayed on in her volunteer position as Treasurer. Thank you all.

One activity in our congregation that happens behind the scene is our TLC, or Tender Loving Care, efforts on behalf our members and friends in physical or emotional need. CDC coordinates these activities for which we're all grateful.

In addition to all our volunteers, we have four paid positions for the congregations: Heidi Gould, as our Administrative Assistant; Lisa McKenzie, RE coordinator; Laura Lancour our janitor and the newest position, Barb Michael, as Music Coordinator. Thanks to all, volunteer and paid, who make it possible for us to come on Sunday mornings and share in our spiritual and religious community.

Thanks to all those who volunteer to lead services, make the coffee, wash the dishes, water the plants, mow the grass, shovel the snow, clean up after the kids, stack the hymnals and all those other little things that make our Sunday services work.

In thinking about all those to thank this morning, a new category emerged — the Super UUs. These are folks who lead, who volunteer, who initiate, who inspire, who follow through. Thank you Tim VanderVeen, Barb Michael, gg gordon, Heidi Gould, Tom and Nancy Sullivan, Sarah Johnson and Teri Rockwood. Thank you Super UUs for all you do.

New life came to the congregation with baby Corwyn and life left us with the passing of Nell Gaball and two founding members since moved away, Marilyn Gorski and Jon McLean. Memorial trees will be planted to commemorate their lives and services will be held this summer.

New members also came to our congregation this year as we welcome Wade Jackson, Dea Kowalczyk and Jon Trapp.

Now a recap of activities: First Friday Potluck dinners with films and discussions; Full Moon celebrations and addition of UU Pagans; chair yoga; Buddhism meditation group; community garden preparation; community solar presentation and exploration of a solar installation; four members attending Regional assembly; painting of kitchen, hallway and entryway; Coming of Age curriculum and service for older youth; Selma film night; Men's group; Baby Blessing for Megan Foulks, Shared Pulpit training; and our New UU classes. Rev. Ian Evison, from the MidAmerica District spoke at our Stewardship service. Four members will be attending our UUA General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, next month with Tim VanderVeen and Heidi Gould as delegates and gg gordon as our alternate.

Our presence in the wider community increased this year in many ways. Our two weeks of Room at the Inn, chaired by Sarah Johnson, Michelle Halley with help from Barb Michael, involved a great deal of energy and time by many in the congregation. The Board had debated whether our small congregation would be able to staff RATI but we took the leap of faith. Our members worked for an LGBT anti-discrimination city ordinance related to employment and housing and took a leadership role in Marquette's first UP Rainbow Pride Festival. Israel-Palestinian study series in conjunction with Presbyterians and Episcopalians. Our youth and adults made 30 fleece blankets for the children of incarcerated parents attending Camp New Day. We participated with Chocoy police department in the Road Clean Up project. Our members marched in the recent pro-choice march.

Our Shared Plate effort has given half of our weekly, non-pledge collection to a different charity each month. Since we started in Jan. of 2014, we've donated \$2,244 to various charities selected by our Social Action Committee based on recommendations from church members. Our congregation has held a fund raiser for the Women's Center in the past but this year thanks to Anne Starks help, Susan Werner performed to a standing room only crowd raising \$1,572 for the WC

We build, we try new things, we recycle old ideas, we strive to be a community of caring for one another, we seek our individual and combined religious truths, we reach out into the wider community to make our world a better place. Are we all in agreement on all things? Of course not, Unitarian Universalists are a religious representative of the good old American melting pot, our 7 Principles give us a base, our diversity gives us the spice.

Hats off to all those who make our congregation work, hats off to those who reach out to those in need, hats off to those who keep bringing new ideas and ways for us to try. Our Annual Meeting is a celebration of who we are and where we're going, so with that.... let's move forward as we vote on our nominees for Board of Trustees: Anne Stark, Dharmini Robertson and Dea Kowalczyk.

Submitted by

Sarah Redmond

Board President 2014-15