



MidAmerica
Region



The MidAmerica Messenger

Volume 4, Issue 1 | August 2016

MidAmerica Region is building a new era in Unitarian Universalism, where UUs visibly live our faith, create connections, grow our membership, and welcome all persons who share our UU values.

In This Issue

Ministerial Transitions in MidAmerica Region
August and September Webinars
Chalice Lighters

We Are Better Together!
MidAmerica at GA

It's August, and many congregations are gearing up for the new year. For some congregations, that means a new minister or religious educator. In this issue you'll find information on some of those ministerial transitions, as well as a webinar opportunity for new religious educators. And as Lisa Presley notes in her article, this is an on-going process. Future issues of the MidAmerica Messenger will include more information on ministerial transitions as well as additional learning opportunities for religious educators and lay leaders.



And remember, your MidAmerica Region field staff is here to serve you! Please feel free to call or email any one of us and let us know how we can help you and your congregation.

We appreciate your comments and suggestions for the newsletter. Send us a message.

Yours in Faith,
Phillip Lund
Congregational Life Consultant
plund@uua.org * 612-875-0959

Ministerial Transitions in MidAmerica Region

By Lisa Presley, Congregational Life Consultant

Summer is the time when ministers play "musical chairs" in our association -- when ministries end, and new ministries begin. Please make sure to welcome these ministers to our MidAmerica Region, or to new positions within the Region, when you come across them! (And, since ministerial transitions are always a moving and on-going work in progress, our apologies to anyone whom we failed to mention!)



Called Ministers:

Eric David Carlson, Bradford Community Church UU, Kenosha WI

Scott McNeill, Associate, UU Church of Bloomington, IN

Jennifer Nordstrom, First Unitarian Society, Milwaukee WI

Rose Schwab, Shawnee Mission UU Church, Lenexa KS

Laura Smidzik, Michael Servetus UU Congregation, Fridley MN

Contract Ministers (Part Time):

Armida Alexander, UU Church of Stockton IL

David Kraemer, United UU Congregation, Waukesha WI

Krista Taves, UU Fellowship of LaCrosse WI (second position)

Developmental Ministers:

Rebecca Hinds, The Peoples Church UU, Cedar Rapids IA
Cyndi Simpson, Second Unitarian Church, Omaha NE

Interim Ministers:

Dawn Fortune, First Unitarian Church, Alton IL (second position)
Lillie Mae Henley, Third Unitarian Church, Chicago IL
Gary James, First Unitarian Church, St Louis MO
Benjamin Maucere, First Unitarian Church, Cincinnati OH
Theresa Soto, UU Congregation of Flint MI
Douglas Wadkins, Senior, First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor MI

We Are Better Together!

By Nancy Combs-Morgan - Congregational Life Consultant

As the summer winds down to a close, I am hearing from many of our congregations that they are excited and focused. Many are experiencing transitions with their religious professionals and lay leaders. With that in mind, our MidAmerica regional team want to extend hands of practical support. This goal is shared by our national Association, as expressed recently by President Peter Morales and our UUA Leadership Councilwe seek to provide our congregations with practical support through excellence in all the services we offer.



Our best chance to achieve excellence is in collaboration. Such as when a cluster of MA congregations come together to offer such trainings as Spirit Play (an innovative religious education training in the Montessori model). The talented leaders at the UU Congregation of Lawrence, Kansas and the UU Fellowship of Topeka, Kansas are doing just that! On Saturday, August 27th, there will be a Spirit Play training offered.

For more information contact Bonnie Blosser, the Director of Lifespan Learning at the UU Congregation of Lawrence, ufl.dll@gmail.com, or REGISTER NOW.

In the mode of further practical support, I will be offering a webinar for "New Directors of Religious Education." On Thursday, 9/1 in the evening, and on the following Thursday, 9/8, in the afternoon, this will be a super opportunity for new, or relatively new, DRE's to connect and to begin a supportive conversation on the trainings, resources, and connections in our region. Save the dates and more information will be posted soon on our website.

August and September Webinars

In addition to the New DRE webinars Nancy Combs-Morgan will be hosting in September, there are two more late-summer webinars coming up in MidAmerica.

The first is Pathways to Renewal, a webinar on membership retention, featuring Tina Lewis of Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois, and Dori Thexton of the MidAmerica-UUA Region. It will be on Tuesday, August 30, 2016, from 7:45 pm to 9:00 pm Eastern, 6:45 pm to 8:00 pm Central.

The second webinar is Being a Soul Friend Leader, featuring Phillip Lund of the MidAmerica-UUA Region. This webinar will introduce participants to some of the ways spiritual direction can nurture a soulful and heartfelt way of leading congregations. It will be on Thursday, September 15, 2016, from 7:45pm to 9:00pm Eastern, 6:45pm to 8:00pm Central.

For more information on these and future webinars, visit <https://uua.org/midamerica/events/webinars>

MidAmerica at GA

Over 800 MidAmerica Unitarian Universalists joined thousands of other UUs from around the country for this year's General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, June 22-26, 2016. Highlights included the MidAmerica Ingathering on late Wednesday afternoon, where attendees from almost every state in the region were greeted by members of the



board and staff. Later that evening, the Rev. Dawn Cooley, minister of the First Unitarian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, and MidAmerica Region board member, delivered the sermon for the opening ceremony. And the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan was

recognized as the first congregation in the UUA to be certified in the Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) Program during the EqUUal Access Celebration at General Assembly.

For complete coverage of this year's GA, visit <https://www.uuworld.org/ga>

Chalice Lighters

The first of three Chalice Lighter grant-giving cycles begins this month with the application deadline for Fall 2016 grants. A Chalice Lighter Grant can be used to start a new congregation, acquire a meeting space, secure a minister, religious educator, or other professional staff, or provide for an outreach or public relations program. Any congregation may apply. If you'd like to apply for a Chalice Lighters Grant, your congregation's application must be in by Aug 15th.



For more information, visit MidAmerica Region Chalice Lighters web page (<https://www.uua.org/midamerica/giving/chalice-lighters>)



Calendar

PLEASE SEE OUR FULL CALENDAR