



MidAmerica Region



MidAmerica Messenger

Volume 4 Issue 8 | March 2017

The MidAmerica Region is where UUs visibly live our faith, create connections, grow our membership, and welcome all persons who share our UU values.

In This Issue

Admin Job Announcement

Women's March

Youth Observer Election Season

Brilliant Bits

Contact Us

Regional Assembly Details

I Give My Heart

MidWest Leadership School

Calendar



Welcome

Dori Thexton, Congregational Life Consultant

With Regional Assembly less than two months away, we wanted to fill you in on all the details. If you're planning on attending, don't forget you can register at the early bird rate until April 5!



And remember, your MidAmerica regional staff is here for you, so don't hesitate to contact us if you need any resources, consultations, or coaching. Visit <https://midamericauua.net/about-us/contact-us> (<https://midamericauua.net/about-us/contact-us>) for more information.

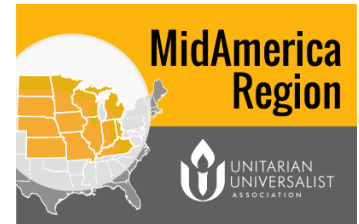
As always, we appreciate your comments and suggestions for the newsletter.



Position Opening for MidAmerica Region Staff

MidAmerica Region Staff

The MidAmerica Region is looking for a full-time Regional Administrator. This person is responsible for communications, event registrations, logistics for meetings, and assists with financial matters. This person also takes on projects for the Region, and works in collaboration with other administrative staff across the Regions and the UUA. The Administrator works on a team with other regional administrative staff, under the supervision of one of our program staff. Ability to work in a technological and online environment, ability to handle multiple deadlines, manage projects, and work with numbers is essential. They also supervise part-time casual employees, when appropriate.



This person, like the rest of our staff, works from a home office, and must be able to function well in the virtual world, and be self-starting and motivating. There is occasional travel, both local and to Regional Assembly and semi-annual staff meetings. The job description will be posted on our web site no later than March 15. Applications will be taken until the job is filled. The interview process will begin early in April, so applicants are encouraged to submit their resumes early. The position begins sometime after May 1, with the date to be determined by mutual consent. The Region strives to be a great place to work, and we are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Our staff work from their homes. Computer equipment is provided. Stipends are given for cell phone service and internet service, but not for other expenses for working from home.

Send applications via email to Lisa Presley at lpresley@uua.org.

Questions? Email or call Lisa, 248-514-5458.



MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2017 Finding Our Partners: Faith in Action Register Now!

Unitarian Universalists have been at the forefront of every significant social change in our nation's history, in spite of our small numbers in the national religious scene. Now, more than ever, we need to work with partners to have an impact in our cities, states and country. At this year's MidAmerica Regional Assembly, we will explore just what that means.





Our Keynote Speaker on Saturday morning will be the Rev. Dr. Lee Barker, President and Professor of Ministry at Meadville Lombard Theological School. Rev. Dr. Barker's topic will be: "To Multi-faith: A Verb."

We'll also have a Friday night forum with the UUA Presidential candidates, the Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, the Rev. Alison Miller, and the Rev. Jeanne Pupke.

Workshops

The conversation will continue with some of the great workshop options at the assembly, including:

- Building Bridges across Class and Race
- Post-Traumatic Stress: Inclusion and Community Integration of Trauma Survivors
- Standing with Standing Rock
- With Passion and Purpose: Partnering to Serve Families
- Conversations Against Racism: Using Talk to Strengthen our Walk in our Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Struggles
- Welcoming the Other: Two Churches Experience with Refugee Sponsorship
- Wonder as a Justice Making Practice
- Interfaith Partnerships for Justice

Worship: The three Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Chapters in the MidAmerica Region will each be presenting one of the worship services at this year's Regional Assembly. The Central Midwest UUMA chapter will be handling the worship on Friday evening. The Prairie Star UUMA Chapter will be leading the worship on Saturday afternoon. And the Heartland UUMA chapter will be offering the multigenerational Sunday morning worship.

Location and Registration: So join us at the Chicago Oak Brook Marriott, in Oak Brook, Illinois, April 28-30, for an exciting weekend celebrating our Unitarian Universalist faith in action. Register for the 2017 MidAmerica Regional Assembly before April 5, 2017, and receive the early bird rate.



What is a MidAmerica UU Role in the Era of President Trump?

Sharon Dittmar, Congregational Life Consultant

On Saturday, January 21, 2017 at 8 a.m., I got on the Washington D.C. Metro with my brother-in-law and husband to attend the Women's March on Washington. I had been working with MidAmerica UU congregations in Minnesota, Michigan, and Missouri who were sending buses to the march. (Can you say driving overnight!!) We had all agreed to meet at a "UU Meet Up" prior to the march. It was so crowded we never found each other. However, I did find other MidAmerica Unitarian Universalists from First Unitarian Church in Cincinnati and Heritage Universalist Unitarian (Cincinnati), as well as a variety of UUs from Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. I have been attending marches for over 25 years. I have never been to one so big. And certainly, never to one so energized, friendly, and creative. I met people from all over the United States. And even though we were at times packed in like sardines, people were



relentlessly helpful and friendly, from the protesters, to the police, to the National Guard.

I went to this march to assist our MidAmerica congregations, and stay involved in issues that are of importance to our congregations. However, I am also well aware that not all Unitarian Universalists agreed with the march. As someone pointed out to me long ago, our Principles can contradict one another. It is not always easy to balance a "free and responsible search for meaning" and "acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth." We don't all

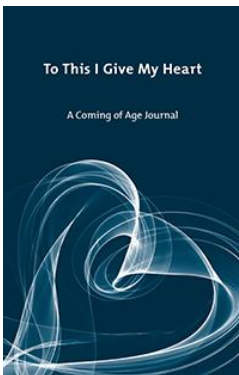
see the same things the same way. There are Unitarian Universalists who voted for Donald Trump, Hilary Clinton, Gary Johnson, and Jill Stein. And knowing us, we probably wrote in a few candidates as well.

The march was deeply moving. I came back energized and hopeful. I also returned with questions: "What is the unique way each congregation will respond?" "What are the theologies that support us in our work?" "What do we have to learn from people who do not agree with us?" "In an anxious political climate, how can our congregations remain loving, pro-active, and well-differentiated?"

Our journey is just beginning. I look forward to joining all of you in learning along the way.



To This I Give My Heart...



Nancy Combs-Morgan, Congregational Life Consultant

This is the title of a wonderful new resource for congregations with Coming of Age (CoA) programs for our teens. This CoA journal, an absolute must for your teens, provides them an opportunity to go deeper in their faith. To order copies for your CoA teens and mentors, go to our UUA.org bookstore. Thanks to Bart Frost, the Director of our UUA Youth and Young Adult office, for faithfully creating this faith-deepening youth ministry resource. Here in MidAmerica, I want to thank the many regional participants of the national Youth Ministry Webinar series. This series is a labor of love

for those of us who serve on the national Youth Ministry Roundtable. A special "shout out" to Lauren Wyeth, the Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries at First Universalist Church in Minneapolis, MN who gathered together 10 of her adult youth leaders to take part in our most recent Inclusive Youth Ministry webinar. All of these webinars are free and archived. For more information: <https://www.uua.org/re/youth/adults-ministry/webinars>

Are you planning to join us for our Regional Assembly? There will be special **opportunity for religious educators to participate in a session with Eboo Patel on Thursday, April 27, from 3:00 to 5:30 at the Hinsdale UU Congregation.** The UUMA chapters are hosting this pre-RA event, which will be an inspiring

collegial opportunity. The fee is \$15. Please R.S.V.P. with me to confirm that you will be taking part. ncombsmorgan@uua.org. After this session, stick around for our amazing RA!

Youth Observer Election Season

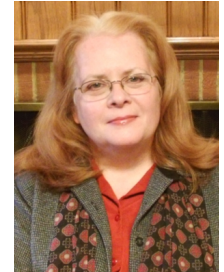
Nancy Combs-Morgan, Congregational Life Consultant

It's that time of year again!

We are currently looking for youth to apply to run for the 2-year position on the UUA Board of Trustees. They will be joining Bailey Saddlemire, who will be finishing out her term. Please share this application with youth you've worked with, graduates of leadership schools, and congregational leaders. Please let them know that after they apply, if accepted, there is a short campaign season (two weeks) and then they will know in time to register for General Assembly. Youth Observers have all of the rights and responsibilities of UUA Board members including having to be a member of a congregation, but do not get to vote on UUA business according to current rules. The youth observers do have a voice at the table. In case it comes up, my current understanding is that other by-laws pertaining to Board membership do not apply to the youth observers, because the YOs are not mentioned in the by-laws.

Details: <http://www.uua.org/re/youth/leading/observer>

Application: <https://uua.wufoo.com/forms/z1k478u314d5f10>



MidWest Leadership School

Dori Thexton, Congregational Life Consultant

MidWest Leadership School - for Youth and Adults

Every summer, about 75 adults and high-school youth come together for a week-long experience of leadership development grounded in our Unitarian Universalist faith. MidWest Leadership School has been an inspiration to a lifetime of service for many of the participants over the past 30 years. It is an intense and exciting week for all who participate-a week where spiritual growth is nurtured and lifelong friendships are formed.

While the adult school and the youth school have separate curriculum and staff, both groups come together every day to plan and participate in worship services. As a result of these intergenerational planning opportunities, all the participants go home to their congregations with a commitment to bringing youth and adults together to serve their faith communities. This summer, MidWest Leadership School moves from its long-time Beloit College home to a new location - Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. The Luther campus is modern, accessible, and beautiful.



July 9 - 15, 2017

Learn more:

www.mwls.org



Brilliant Bits from Boston: (Your Need to Know UUA Update)

Sharon Dittmar, Congregational Life Consultant

Hello folks! If you are geographically isolated, or your congregation does not offer a small group ministry, you might enjoy these facilitated, UU covenant groups with other like-minded folks with Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF). 8 sessions, Free for CLF members, \$25 fee for non CLF members. Check it out!

<https://www.questformeaning.org/programs/learning-center/covenant-groups>



Church of the
Larger Fellowship

We are seeking to covenant with each other to find new ways of partnering and standing together on the side of love for the flourishing of our world, our communities, our congregations and our members.