



MidAmerica
Region



MidAmerica Messenger

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

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Welcome

Lisa Presley, Congregational Life Consultant

Summer flies by, doesn't it? I remember it as a child as vast expanses of open time and space-days of doing nothing but day dreaming, running, biking, and the like. And yet, summer isn't like that for everyone. I was lucky to have a carefree time that seemed to stretch to infinity. From that, I've based all my assumptions about what summer "should" be.

So what is your concept of summer? When does it begin - when the weather heats up, and when does that happen where you are? When does school stop, and then begin again? What different habits does

your congregation have during the summer? Switching from multiple services to one, meeting earlier, meeting less frequently, meeting more and more? And when does homecoming begin for you? August, September, October - the time when everything is "back to normal"?



We all have different answers to these questions. But I can tell you one thing: our congregations seem to come alive in rhythm to the schools in their areas. We hear more from you in August and September as you gear up, less from you in December when your focus is on the winter holidays. Based on this pattern, we know you're possibly still enjoying your lazy days, but you know that the time to reconnect with the world of congregational life is just around the corner. May the information in this newsletter, and our presence in your lives, provide you the encouragement to become ever better at your mission and vision.

For the team,
Lisa Presley

As always, be in touch. We know congregational life continues during all seasons and we are here for you. Visit <https://midamericauua.net/about-us/contact-us> for more information.



CommUUnity@Heart - Be there!

Nancy Combs-Morgan, Congregational Life Consultant

September 29 - October 1, 2017, Countryside Church UU, Palatine, IL

I hope that you save the date for CommUUnity@Heart, Sept. 29-Oct 1 at Countryside Church UU, in Palatine, IL. This unique event is a youth ministry revival where teams of youth, youth advisors, DRE's, ministers, and social justice leaders from your congregation can connect with national leaders from the Youth Ministry Roundtable; the UU College of Social Justice; the Boston Sanctuaries Movement, and the InterFaith Youth Corps (the Chicago based organization started by Beacon Press "Acts of Faith" author, Eboo Patel).



The entire experience will emphasize how we need to keep CommUUnity@Heart as a core paradigm for building beloved community, through group spiritual direction/education; thoughtful direct action (with interfaith partners), and building long lasting community based partnerships with progressive social change groups. You can find out more and register on our website.



Ministerial Transitions in MidAmerica

This summer has been a busy time for ministerial musical chairs - with many ministers arriving to begin called or interim/contract ministerial positions. Below is a summary - and if we missed your transition, please be in touch! Lisa Presley, lpresley@uua.org (<mailto:lpresley@uua.org>)

Newly Settled Ministers:

Colleen Vahey, Third Unitarian Church, Chicago IL
Lucas Hergert, North Shore Unitarian Church, Deerfield IL
Florence Caplow, UU Church of Urbana Champaign IL
Nic Cable, UU Congregation of Columbus IN
Luke Stevens-Royer, First UU Church, Rochester MN
(moved from White Bear UU Church in Mahtomedi)
Oscar Sinclair, Unitarian Church, Lincoln NE
Christina Leone Tracy, Fox Valley UU Fellowship, Appleton WI
Brian Mason, First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau WI

New Interim/Contract Ministers:

David Schwartz, Beverly Unitarian Church, Chicago IL
(part-time in addition to his service at First Unitarian Church, Chicago)
Jennie Barrington, Second Unitarian Church, Chicago IL
Jennifer Brooks, First Unitarian Church of Des Moines IA
Roger Mohr, UU Church of Bowling Green KY
Kathy Hurt, First Unitarian Church, Louisville KY
Daniel Budd and Patricia Shelden, Birmingham Unitarian Church, Bloomfield Hills MI
John Marsh, UU Church of Greater Lansing MI
Connie Grant, UU Fellowship of Midland MI
Holly Horn, Miami Valley UU Fellowship, Dayton OH

Correction:

After we published our list of new ministries, we learned some new things. Key among what we learned was that Colleen Vahey is a ¾ time contract minister at Third Unitarian, in Chicago, not full-time called. She continues on the staff at Unity Temple in Oak Park as their part-time Faith In Action Coordinator.

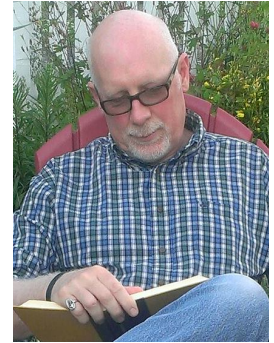
It was also pointed out that we don't celebrate new ministries for community ministers. If you are an ordained minister in fellowship with the UUA, and have recently begun a new ministry, let me know and we can celebrate that as well. We don't have access to that information unless you tell us, so make sure to email me about that! Lisa Presley (lpresley@uua.org (<mailto:lpresley@uua.org?subject=New%20Ministry>)).



General Assembly Wrap-Up

Eric Huffer, MidAmerica Region Board President

Another General Assembly has come and gone, and like those before it, we were able to experience the joy of gathering with thousands of our fellow Unitarian Universalists, catch up with old friends, and get energized for the work ahead of us. Much of that work was laid out for us by our interim Co-Presidents, who shared with us their thoughts on their short terms, their hopes of where we might go, and the work we must engage in to address a culture of white supremacy.



For the first time in the history of our denomination, we elected a female president of the UUA, Rev. Susan Frederick Gray. I look forward to seeing where her leadership and vision will help us go. READ MORE... (https://www.midamericauua.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2709:general-assembly-wrap-up&catid=188:board)

From One Admin to Another...

Dear UU Church Administrators,

I know your to-do list is 13 pages long, the phone is ringing off the hook, and the financial report is due - I have been in your shoes! I was the Congregational Administrator at the UU Society of Geneva (IL) for 10 years and am now an Administrative Assistant at the MidAmerica Region.



One of my jobs is to update our records of congregational leadership. I know from being in your seat for years that this task is likely at the bottom of your to-do list, but we're going to make this very easy for you this year.

Why?

To make sure your leadership receives information about webinars and other ongoing instruction to help them be the best leaders they can be. We do not share a database with the UUA, so the only way for us to get the information is from you.

When?

Anytime your leadership (Board members) or staffing (Minister, DRE, Administrator) changes. Send the information to me kphillips@uua.org however it is easiest for you.

Your latest directory lists the new Board? Send it to me! Just updated your website? Shoot me a link.

Katie Phillips, UUA MidAmerica Region Administrative Assistant



Time is running out! Apply Now to be a NEW Breakthrough Congregation!



Have you found a new revenue stream for your congregation, or have you done something different in worship? Or maybe you have a ministry in your community that has become the hallmark of your congregation? Whether you made this change on your own or got some help along the way, we want to hear about it!

Breakthrough Congregations is returning with a focus that seeks to celebrate and share innovative ways congregations are adapting to the challenges faced in an evolving religious landscape. This is not based on numerical growth or whole congregation health, though we will consider other benchmarks of health in your congregation. We are looking for bold one time initiatives as well as on-going sustainable efforts.

For more information and application materials, *go to the UUA website* (<http://www.uua.org/growth/breakthrough>). Congregations and covenanting communities can apply - the application deadline is September 1, 2017.



Apply for a Chalice Lighter Grant

DEADLINE: August 15

The MidAmerica Region, UUA Growth and Support Committee is seeking applications for Chalice Lighter 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 August 15th. **APPLY NOW**



Courage for Racial Justice, Courage for Collective Liberation

WILL BE RESCHEDULED 2018

Courage for Racial Justice, Courage for Collective Liberation workshop with Chris Crass co-hosted by MidAmerica and Southern Regions of the UUA

When: Saturday, February 17, 2018, 9am-5pm

Where: Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church, Louisville, KY



More information on Chris Crass: <http://www.chriscrass.org>

Bring a team if possible. Childcare available. Registration opens September 2017.



Brilliant Bits from Boston: Outreach

Sharon Dittmar, Congregational Life Consultant

Not feeling the love? Sign up for a monthly care package, "Outreach Revolution," with social media suggestions, material, and updates from the UUA Outreach Team! At the beginning of every month, you'll get a virtual outreach care package for your congregation with:

- An original blog post from GrowingUU with tools and tips for congregational leaders
- Recommended stories, posts and links from our favorite partners and sites
- Social media shareable graphics to customize for your congregation



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.