



The Spark

The Newsletter of
the Chalice Lighter
Program Committee
Fall 2022

Your support of the CER Chalice Lighter program is helping two congregations improve how they share the joy of Unitarian Universalism with their communities so that they can grow in their mission and membership. One is doing it by making their building safer and more welcoming, the other by trying new methods of programming and outreach.

The **UU Church of Annapolis**, in Annapolis, Maryland, is about to complete a major renovation of their



existing building that will make it more open and inviting with a new entrance, expanded main gathering space and re-configured kitchen. A \$20,000 Chalice Lighter grant will make it possible to add features that will announce the congregation's presence in the community and enhance the safety of their building's ventilation so that people can feel safe worshipping together. With the help of its grant, UUCA will commission and install a striking backlit, oxidized steel sign, approximately 6 ft x 8 ft, announcing the name of the congregation. Secondly, as the focal point of the new entrance, the congregation will purchase and install a large piece of original art created by a local artist of

color, with the message "You are welcome here." The grant will also create a healthy and virus-free environment in the Sanctuary by providing for a system of UV air purifiers to kill air-borne viruses and lower the risks of in-person participation at UUCA.

Located in southeastern Ohio, across the Ohio river from West Virginia, The **First UU Society of Marietta**, Marietta, Ohio, is also receiving a \$20,000 grant that it will use to enhance programming and hire consultants to help plan and implement a campaign of outreach to their region, which is increasingly conservative. It hopes to attract young families, the "Nones" who reject traditional religion but yearn for a spiritual community, LGBTQ+ individuals and families, and those who are concerned about the environment.

"Since there is minimal understanding about what Unitarian Universalism is in our region, we shall seek assistance from a professional branding and marketing organization about how to reach a broad audience in order to explain UU and how it differs from other religious organizations in an effort to engage people who are disenchanted with traditional religious organizations. But we still need help to obtain information and skills on developing other ideas to attract new members, especially younger people. Our initial thoughts are to promote and publicize environmental programs, which have been a demonstrated strength of our congregation."



Your continued generosity keeps the spark lit. Thank you, on behalf of the CER Chalice Lighter Program Committee and staff. If your congregation has a project that could benefit from a grant, you can get further information at <https://www.uua.org/central-east/programs/chalichelighter>.