



# OBITUARIES

Professional Religious Leaders  
2022–2023

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**MULTIPLATFORM | PITTSBURGH  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
JUNE 2023**

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# JOHN W. BAROS-JOHNSON

(1948-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. John W. Baros-Johnson, who died on November 10, 2022, at the age of 74.

John Wingood Johnson was born in Jasper, AL on April 28, 1948. He grew up in and around Charlestown, SC, until the age of 10, where his father was a printer. After his father died, John moved to Jasper, Alabama, and lived with his grandparents while his mother attended college to become a music director at the Methodist church and at Walker County High School. He did well in school, wrote poems, joined the library club, and acted in plays. While working, a librarian said he sounded like a Unitarian. Thereafter, he took the Greyhound Bus to Birmingham for Sunday services. At least once, the door was locked because of a KKK bomb threat in the integration era. In 1972, he received his Bachelor of Arts in Religion Studies from the University of Alabama. During the Vietnam era, he served in the U.S. Navy for ten months, so when John attended Woodstock, he had a buzz haircut. At Woodstock, John talked people down from bad LSD trips.

After being taught by Murray Bookchin in New York City, he attended Drew Theological School in Madison, NJ. He took courses in theology and philosophy and participated in student governance. After serving as youth adviser to the Liberal Religious Youth group at Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, he married Irene Patricia Baros and moved to Syracuse, NY. For the next ten years, he worked as Office Manager of the Syracuse Interreligious Council, as the intern minister/custodian of the May Memorial Unitarian Society, as a psychiatric counselor, and as a computer consultant. Throughout these years, he met frequently with area Unitarian ministers. In 1987, he went to Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. He completed



the requirements for a Master of Divinity degree in 1990 and earned his D. Min in 1991. His dissertation is titled: *Faith's Body: A Hermeneutic Examination of Recent UU Theology*. Later he wrote a *Philosophical Autobiography*. The poetic *Faith is a Thinking* was revised and became *Meditations II: Liturgical Elements for a Thoughtful Faith* (1997).

Rev. Dr. Baros-Johnson was ordained by the May Memorial Unitarian Society of Syracuse, NY on September 16, 1990. As intern minister in Portland, Oregon, he traveled to Atlanta, Georgia to deliver the eulogy for his brother Richard Stoneyton-Reed Johnson who died in a motorcycle accident. Richard was press adviser to Coretta Scott King and the eulogy was delivered at the Ebenezer Baptist Church.

From 1991 to 1992, he served as a part-time minister to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fredericksburg, VA, and the Jenkins Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, VA. For the Fredericksburg congregation, he conducted Sunday worship services, organized adult education groups on UU History, initiated Long Range Planning Committee, and conducted the congregational goal-setting workshop. He led a workshop on "Raising UU Children" and supported and encouraged a new choir. Similarly, at Jenkins Fellowship, he worked to explore improvements in race relations.

Rev. Dr. Baros-Johnson was an interim minister for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta, GA for two years (1992-1994). During his tenure, he worked to strengthen Adult Education programs on World Religion, Christian Scriptures, Ethics, and Comparative Religion. He produced the *Unitarian Universalist Radio Hour* for local broadcast and encouraged Long Range Planning Committee, initiated the Children's Choir, worked with the pledge campaign, performed at pledge campaign dinners, and

# JOHN W. BAROS-JOHNSON

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supported LGBTQ+ organizations. He met with Baptist ministers, encouraging interracial discussions. During interim ministry in Yakima, Washington state (1996-1997), he reoriented the Worship committee to try out alternative services and encouraged innovation and experimentation in other church committees. He also revitalized adult education and youth programs. With his encouragement for the expansion of lay leadership and alternative styles of lay leadership, the church showed very healthy dynamics and a good balance of listening and doing.

In 1997, he accepted a call from the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada where he would serve until 2006. His tenure included introducing the annual Thanksgiving meal, topical programs, and helping start the Afterchoir band, which plays at some church services and memorials.

Rev. Dr. Baros-Johnson encouraged the spiritual growth and sensitivity of each of the members of the congregation that he served. He strongly supported denominational activities both through personal participation and by encouraging church members to attend. He served on the Meadville Lombard Philosophical Committee (1990-1991) and was a member of the St. Lawrence District UUMA and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada.

John delivered the 2003 Confluence Lecture at the Canadian Unitarian Council's Annual Meeting in Winnipeg Manitoba, titled *A Thoughtful Faith; Understanding UUism as a Faith Tradition*.

In community, John served as Chairman of the Parents' Advisory Committee of Bright Horizons Learning Center, Williamsburg, VA, (1991-1992); as an associate chaplain at the Eastern State Hospital, VA (1991) and as a board member and secretary of the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Society of Augusta (1993-1994). As a Fellow of the Medical College of Georgia, he was one of the authors of a medical ethics book. In Halifax, he was a member of the South End Clergy and gained respect as Coordinator of the Interfaith Council.

In his spare time, he enjoyed chess, Go, table tennis, pool, guitar, electric bass, drumming, and computers.

He retired because of early onset dementia.

John is survived by his wife Irene and son Nicholas.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, December 10, 2022, at the UU Church of Halifax, 5500 Inglis Street, Halifax, NS, Canada, B3H 1J8.

Donations in John's memory can be sent to the endowment fund of the UU Church of Halifax, 5500 Inglis Street, Halifax, NS, Canada, B3H 1J8, or sent by e-transfer to [treasurer@uuch.ca](mailto:treasurer@uuch.ca).

Notes of condolence can be sent to Irene Baros-Johnson, 985-2313 Gottingen Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3K 3B8, or phone at 902-422-8641.

# H. CHRISTINE BROWNLIE

(1947-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Helen Christine “Chris” Brownlie, who died on September 15, 2022, at the age of 75.

Chris was born on August 24, 1947, in Dearborn, MI to Robert Lesman and Helen Chervinsky. She attended Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches during childhood and early adolescence. Church had always been an important influence and source of solace in her life. Over time, Chris felt uncomfortable with many of the doctrines and creeds. Once she attended college, she discovered a Unitarian Church. This discovery was a wonderful relief for her as she found a place where she could feel both comfortable and challenged by the teachings, she encountered each week.

Chris received her Bachelor of Arts in 1970 from the New School for Social Research, NY. Thereafter, she worked full-time as a medical social worker and part-time as a Director of Religious Education (DRE) at the First Jefferson Church, Fort Worth, TX (1984-1997). While a DRE, she led a process resulting in the adoption of a congregational policy for staff and volunteers who worked with youth. In 1997, she graduated from Brite Divinity School, TX with her Master of Divinity.

Rev. Brownlie was ordained on October 25, 1998, by the First Jefferson Church in Fort Worth. From 1998 to 1999, she served the UU Fellowship of Montgomery, AL as an interim minister. The fellowship was in the early stages of the canvass and Rev. Brownlie took an active part in the planning process with the Finance Committee. She worked closely with the Ministerial Search Committee and prepared the fellowship to welcome a full-time minister. Furthermore, she encouraged children’s participation in worship services



and was very effective in counseling those in distress, ill, and the aged.

In 1999, Rev. Brownlie accepted a call from the UU Congregation, Blacksburg, VA where she served until 2011. She guided and supported the work of the board and committees and helped the congregation develop a sense of vision and purpose. The congregation showed great improvement under her leadership, particularly in the areas of welcoming, sense of community, and integrating new members. Under her leadership, the RE program grew tremendously; she was very dedicated to the children and presented meaningful adult RE offerings. In 2011, the congregation honored her minister emerita.

Rev. Brownlie’s denominational work included serving as a chaplain for the Southwest District YRUU camp (1996). She facilitated numerous workshops for the Southwest District R.E conference and the R.E development program at the district Summer Institute. Moreover, she was a member of the Southwest District RE Committee (1990-1995), UUMA, and LREDA.

Through her sermons, Rev. Brownlie encouraged, challenged, and guided both the congregation and individuals to be active seekers of truth, goodness, and understanding. She was a friend to the congregants, whatever their age and circumstance, she stood with them in times of grief, celebrated in times of joy, and provided a steady source of care and encouragement throughout. She knew the congregation well and addressed people with relevance to their lives, was very attentive to being available, and created a welcoming environment.

Additionally, Chris’ involvement in the community and her leadership in addressing social justice

# H. CHRISTINE BROWNLIE

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concerns were remarkable. She served on the advisory council of Planned Parenthood of Blue Ridge, VA, sat on the board of Court Appointed Special Advocated (CASA), and was active with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She volunteered for Hospice West, Tuscaloosa, AL (1997-1998) and delivered meals for Meals on Wheels, Tuscaloosa, AL (1997-1998). In her spare time, she enjoyed reading, gardening, sewing, walking, music, and various crafts.

Her son Colin shared, "I remember in high school, when my mom was driving my friends and I somewhere, listening to the radio when a Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young song came on the radio. My mom and I sang along together, not caring that anyone else was listening to us."

Her son Matthew noted, "Some parents make unconditional love look easy. My mom did. Her love for her two sons was as predictable and consistent as air or sky. What I really learned from my mom is that this steadfast, predictable, unconditional love is not to be reserved for your children, or your family, or friends, or immediate community. This kind of love becomes a practice, and this practice can and should be applied to everything. Whatever you encounter: you don't have to like it, but you can try to love it".

Her sister Diane shared: "Chris was the first of four daughters, and we would all agree that even as a young child she was serious, an avid reader, and purpose-driven; as her sisters, we didn't understand that part until we were older. When she announced her decision to become a member of the clergy, this seemed a fit. Attending her ordination was a moment in time when she was truly joyous".

Christine is survived by her husband Russell Flack of Radford, VA; sons: Matthew Brownlie of Houston, TX and Colin Brownlie of Hanoi, Vietnam; and sisters: Diane Lesman of Rougemont, NC, Claudia Boysen of Eden Prairie, MN, and Vicki Estrem of Edina, MN.

A memorial service was held on October 8, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Blacksburg, VA.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to a charity of one's own choosing.

Notes of condolences can be written to Russell Flack at 1307 Tyler Avenue, Radford, VA 24141.

# BRUCE C. CLEAR

(1950-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Clear, who died on October 9, 2022, at the age of 72.

Bruce was born on June 9, 1950, in Anderson, Indiana to Dr. Val B. Clear and Evelyn R. Clear. He was raised in a devoutly Christian family which regularly attended the Church of God (Anderson, IN). As a youth, Bruce felt at home in the church and fully expected that the church would become a major part of his life. He was always interested in religion and missionaries. Over time, he grew apart intellectually and doctrinally from the church he was raised. When he went to college, he discovered a Unitarian Universalist church. This discovery made him feel that he could reclaim his childhood and youthful devotion feeling religiously and intellectually at home.

In 1972, Bruce graduated from Anderson College, IN with a double major in political science and history following which he received his Master of Arts in Political Science (1974) from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. From 1974 to 1979, he worked for the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, doing research for the Congregational Research Service and then as a Public Information Specialist for the U.S. Copyright Office. After his work at the Library of Congress, Bruce developed a desire to work closely with people in a religious setting and decided to devote his life to liberal religion in the form of the Unitarian Universalist ministry. Following this call, he earned his Master of Arts in Religion from the University of Chicago in 1981 and a Doctor of Ministry from Meadville Lombard Theological School in 1983.

Rev. Dr. Clear was ordained jointly, by the Michael Servetus Fellowship of Vancouver (now the UU



Church of Vancouver), WA, and the Eastrose Fellowship of Portland, OR on November 26, 1983. He served as an extension minister to his ordaining congregations from 1983 to 1986. Neither Vancouver nor Eastrose ever had a minister in their 30 years histories. Rev. Clear served three-quarter time in Vancouver and a quarter time at Eastrose. He knew both congregations well, was caring and understanding, and remained

supportive of people in crisis. By the end of his three-year commitment, Vancouver nearly doubled in size, and Eastrose had a half-time minister. In 1986, Vancouver called him to a full-time ministry. Under his ministry, the congregation grew rapidly, eventually leading to a new church building. In 1993, he accepted a call from All Souls Unitarian Church, Indianapolis, IN where he served until 2011. During his tenure, he helped with the Welcoming Congregation process and Green Sanctuary certification. Likewise, he strongly supported the music program.

Rev. Dr. Clear was a highly motivated minister who had a natural leadership ability that could be felt. He established a feeling of at-homeness among members and prospective members of the congregation. He could relate well to a diversity of people. His sermons challenged the members, individually and collectively, to reflect consciously on their lives.

Rev. Dr. Bruce's denominational work included serving on the Executive Board of the UU Ministers' Association (1991-1993). He taught at the PNWD Leadership School, including two Advanced Schools (Worship, and Congregation as Family Systems) and three years of Basic School. He was Good Offices Person for the PNWD UU Ministers' Association and was charged as "minister to ministers" in difficult times. He was invited to preach at the 1991 PNWD Annual Meeting in Kelowna, B.C.

# BRUCE C. CLEAR

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He wrote on issues such as censorship in schools, religion, and state; Nicaragua; free speech; and reproductive rights. The UUA Department of Ministry published his essay on church conflict, “What I Have Learned about Churches and Ministers as Good Offices Person”.

In addition to his ministry and denominational services, Bruce was an outspoken community advocate for progressive and humanitarian causes. He served as a secretary of the Vancouver Association of Churches (1988-91) and as President of the Southwest Washington American Civil Liberties Union (1989-1991). In his leisure time, he enjoyed skiing, playing guitar, and learning about and listening to music. He also loved traveling and had a deep interest in other cultures.

Bruce is survived by his spouse Nancy Renner; brothers, Scott Clear and Todd Clear; son Cameron Clear; stepdaughter Carly Wise; and stepsons: Edward Kennedy, Gregory Kennedy, and Shane Kennedy. He was preceded in death by his stepdaughter Kelsey Kennedy.

A memorial service was held on October 15, 2022, at the Glacier Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1515 Trumble Creek Rd, Kalispell, MT 59901

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Trinity Haven.

Notes of condolences can be written to Cameron Clear: [cameronclear@yahoo.com](mailto:cameronclear@yahoo.com).



# DENNIS J. DANIEL

(1942-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dennis Jay Daniel, who died on April 23, 2022, at the age of 80.

Dennis was born on February 19, 1942, in Glendale, CA to Delmar Jay Daniel and Avis Brown Daniel. After graduating from Hollywood High School, he attended the California Institute of Technology (Cal-Tech) for a year and transferred to Stanford University, CA. At Stanford, he was admitted to the overseas program. He spent six months at the Stanford campus in Florence, Italy, and traveled for six months on his own. During those six months, he also studied German at the Goethe Institut in Bavaria. Dennis then returned to the United States and transferred to the University of California, LA where he received a Bachelor's (1964) and a Master's Degree (1967) in English. He worked for seventeen years in the film industry before deciding to enter seminary in 1980.

Dennis grew up with no religious training and no religious community. His family's dedication to the church did not extend beyond Easter Sunday services. His notion of what religion was all about was confined to pietistic prayers for help in times of crisis. He felt vaguely incomplete and at a loss to know what he was accomplishing. And then he found the Unitarian Community Church in Santa Monica. For the first time, he became aware that what he was going through was a common human experience, the idea of spiritual pilgrimage presented itself and he seized on it. He involved himself in the Religious Education program at the church; he found himself speaking out, leading groups, planning worship for children, and leading adults in worship at holiday celebrations. He started believing strongly in the interconnectedness of body, mind, and spirit, of person, community and world, church and civilization, and the UU denomination.



Finally, he got to the point where he knew his calling was to the UU ministry. He entered the Claremont School of Theology, CA graduating with a Master of Divinity in 1984.

Rev. Daniel was ordained on April 22, 1988. From 1987 to 1992, he served two yoked churches: the First Universalist Church, of Oakfield, ME, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Houlton, ME. In addition,

he served a quarter-time position with the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada (1988-1992). These were all small congregations and in serving them Rev. Daniel was able to help one of these fellowships start its way toward becoming an extension congregation. After 1992, Rev. Daniel and his wife Rev. Sydney Wilde served together as a co-ministry team working together to create one ministry. In 1992, they were called to the Central Unitarian Church, Paramus, NJ, and served until 1998. In those six years, they made a dramatic increase in the effectiveness of the Social Responsibility Committee, created the Adult RE program, redesigned the Affirmation Program for youth, created a Pastoral Visitors Committee, developed the Program Committee into a Worship Committee, and trained the worship associates. They also helped increase income from the Talent Auction threefold.

In 1998, Rev. Daniel and Rev. Wilde moved to the First Unitarian Society of Chicago, IL as interim ministers. They worked with the leadership team and restructured systems making them ready to work with the new minister. At the UU Society of Sacramento, CA (1999-2000), they worked to help the church heal from past conflicts. Thereafter, they served the UU Church in Reston, VA (2000-2009) and the UU Fellowship in Chico, CA (2009-2015).

Rev. Daniel's denominational services included serving as a secretary of the Northeast District Board (1990-

# DENNIS J. DANIEL

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1992) and as a secretary of the Northeast District UUMA Chapter (1991-1992). He was a member of the UUMA Continental Exec. (1994-1996), President of the Metro New York UUMA Chapter (1997-1998), and the Chesapeake UUMA Chapter Leader (2007-2009). Furthermore, he taught renaissance modules on Philosophy and Curriculum.

Dennis was a treasurer and board member of the Inter-Religious Fellowship for the Homeless in Bergen County, NJ (1993-1998). He spent his lifetime supporting affordable housing and shelter for the homeless, women's health, antiracism, LGBTQ rights, shelter for abused women, and education for the disadvantaged. Since 2009 he had been an active member of Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) in Chico, CA, where he taught as an OLLI Peer Leader in classes on Walden and Thoreau, Rabbinical commentaries on the Hebrew Bible, and Poetry for Insight. In his spare time, he enjoyed flower gardening, reading (both fiction and non-fiction of all kinds), jazz, classical music, opera, modern dance, theater, and natural history.

Dennis is survived by his wife of 31 years, the Rev. Dr. Sydney Wilde; his son, Andrew Daniel, his daughter-in-law, Alice Daniel; and his granddaughters: Corrina Stadler, Brianna Stadler, and Abigail Daniel. He also leaves behind his son-in-law, Randy Stadler, and ex-wife Phyllis Nygaard Daniel. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Sabrina Daniel Stadler, his brother Steven Daniel, and his first wife, the mother of his children, Annabelle Lee.

A memorial service was held on July 2, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Chico, 1289 Filbert Ave, Chico, CA 95926.

Donations can be made to the Dennis Daniel Memorial Fund; c/o UUFC, 1289 Filbert Ave., Chico, CA 95926.

Notes of condolences can be sent to Sydney Wilde, 2682 Fairfield Cmn, Chico, CA 95928, or [2skwilde@gmail.com](mailto:2skwilde@gmail.com).

# MARY LOUISE DEWOLF

(1931-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Mary Louise DeWolf, who died on April 26, 2022, at the age of 91.

Mary was born on April 4, 1931, in Crescent City, FL to Nettie Louise (Holley) DeWolf and Levant Prior DeWolf, Sr., she was the last of four children. A strong achiever since her early years, Mary was valedictorian of her class in high school and an outstanding athlete. She attended the Methodist church with her mother and her sisters while her brother, the oldest, traveled twenty-five miles to attend the nearest Christian Science church with her father.

Mary received her Bachelor of Science in Education (1952) and Master of Education in Science Education (1954) from the University of Florida. From 1953 to 1988, she worked in public and community school education and a denominational mid-judicatory position. In the second year of her high school science teaching (1955), she left the Methodist church for the Unitarian church, primarily because she needed a religion that did not conflict with science. Thereafter, the church became the focus of her religious and social life. Her religious and spiritual interests provided her with a source of meaning and purpose in life.

Mary's sense of ministry came into being after her marriage to her second husband, Rev. John DeWolf-Hurt. From 1988 to 1996, she served two terms as a Co-District Executive, in Florida & the Mid-South along with her husband. She undertook wide responsibilities that included administrative tasks and the facilitation of groups in decision-making and conflict management. Her awareness of issues and solutions related to growth, and her work with the district New Congregation Committee helped produce



growth in the congregations served and jump-start new ones, such as the UU Church in the Pines, FL.

In 1996, the unexpected death of Rev. DeWolf-Hurt from pancreatic cancer awakened Mary's desire to fulfill and serve in parish ministry. She decided to complete the ministerial preparation that she had begun in 1991. She increased her participation in the local congregation, most notably giving sermons and planning

and moderating congregational meetings. She pursued several professional and theological courses at Meadville Lombard Theological School equivalent to a Master of Divinity that would enable her to continue in her own right the work she had been doing with her husband. She wanted to gain a deeper understanding of both the work of ministry and the people of ministry. In 2001, she graduated with her Master of Arts in Religious Education from the University of South Florida.

Rev. DeWolf was ordained to the UU ministry on June 3, 2001, by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Marion County, FL. After ordination, she served in the parish at the Nature Coast Unitarian Universalist (NCUU), Lecanto, FL (2003-2009). She represented NCUU at the North Sun coast Ministers' Association and was elected as Vice President. She focused on using non-confrontational and consensus-building strategies in addressing problems among members and/or staff within the congregation. Her experience influenced her to help establish and conduct leadership development programs so that the trainees could help prevent, minimize, and resolve problems within congregations. She also offered classes to the newer members and soon-to-be members regarding UU History and made it a point to speak personally to visitors on Sundays. She valued diversity and encouraged members to espouse diversity. In 2009, Rev. DeWolf retired from her active ministry. Her considerable energies, skills, and presence

# MARY LOUISE DEWOLF

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contributed to a successful and productive ministry at the NCUU; in 2010 she was honored as their minister emerita.

Rev. DeWolf was a Field Advisor for the Meadville/Lombard Modified Residency Program and a member and elected secretary of the Florida Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (FUUMA) (2005-2008). She served as a Co-founder of the UU Fellowship of Valdosta, GA, and was invited to speak at their 40th Anniversary Celebration. Likewise, she was also a highly acclaimed speaker by congregations in many parts of Florida. Her presence in the pulpit was powerful and her sermons focused on social justice issues including family values, gay marriage, and freedom and morality. One of her sermons: "Love and Commitment" was posted on the Freedom to Marry website.

As a respected faith leader of the community, Mary served as Vice President of The Greater Ocala Ministerial Association and an elected Vice President of the North Suncoast Ministers Association. She was a member of

and was involved with the Florida District's Southwest Cluster and the Interfaith Council of Citrus County. Strongly interested in civility in political campaigns, she also served as a treasurer of the Northcentral Florida multi-racial Interfaith Alliance.

Mary is survived by her sister, Grace D. Trice of Ocala, FL; step-son Gifford Campbell, and wife Michele of Salem, MA; step-son Randy Hurt, and wife Kathy of Ellijay, GA; and nine nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband Bob in 2015.

A memorial service was held on June 4, 2022, at Roberts Downtown Chapel, 606 SW 2nd Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Hospice of Marion County, 3231 SW 34th Ave, Ocala, FL 34474, or to the Nature Coast Unitarian Universalist, 7633 N Florida Ave, Citrus Springs, FL 34434.

# NEAL W. FERRIS

(1935-2023)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Neal Ward Ferris, who died on February 4, 2023, at the age of 87.

Neal was born on February 11, 1935, in Richmond, VA to Paul Whyte Ferris and Elizabeth Gillette Ferris. He was raised and educated in Falls Church, VA; Winnetka, IL; and Beaumont, TX. In 1956, he received his Bachelor of Music from the University of Texas at Austin.

Neal played violin in the Austin Symphony for three years. While in Austin, he was introduced to Unitarianism. He was inspired by the UU churches' devotion to the wholeness of understanding and celebration of the unity of life, and promotion of mutual respect for the individual vision of truth, beauty, and goodness. Meanwhile, he was also influenced by the Rev. George W. Marshfield of the Austin Unitarian Church. Neal then became a Unitarian and was determined to pursue the ministry. He believed that the Unitarian Fellowship provided an atmosphere conducive to the development of a reasonable faith. He wanted to minister to a congregation of Unitarians, sustaining and enhancing the growth of individuals and their communities. With this call, Neal graduated with his Master of Divinity from Meadville Lombard Theological School (1959).

Rev. Ferris was ordained by the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh, PA on April 3, 1960, where he served as an assistant minister (1960-1961) performing youth activities and religious education. Following the Pittsburgh church, he served the UU Church of Meadville, PA (1962-1969); the First UU Church of Essex County, Orange, NJ (1969-1979); the First Parish UU Church of Fitchburg, MA (1979-1990) and the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter, NH



(1990-2000). In all the congregations he served, Rev. Ferris helped members learn to minister to each other and trust and respect each other. He considered person-to-person encounters as the most important part of his ministry and made himself available to his congregants. In 2000, after four decades of service to Unitarian Universalism, he retired from his ministry. Upon his retirement, the First Unitarian Society of Exeter honored him as their minister emeritus.

Rev. Ferris was equally active in the denomination. He served the Central Midwest District (CMD) under various positions, as a board member, as Good Offices representative, as a representative for clergy continuing education, and as president of CMD UUMA.

Neal was also active in community projects such as NAACP, anti-war events, and mental health organizations. He was a member of the Fitchburg Human Rights Commission and sat on the board of the Mental Health Association, NJ. He was certified by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and was a New Hampshire licensed marriage and family therapist. In Durham where he last lived, he was pleased when he convinced the town council to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

Neal was pleasant, friendly, unassuming, open, and natural in his dealing with people.

He was an accomplished violinist and musician. He enjoyed softball, tennis, swimming, cross-country skiing, and living in a cabin in the deep woods of Maine. He also practiced Aikido (a Japanese martial art). Later in life, he enjoyed natural landscape gardening and playing chamber music in a group named the Alzheimer's Prevention String Quartet. One of his published works which he wrote in his retirement

# NEAL W. FERRIS

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*Natural Religion Reconnecting to the Real World* was very well-liked.

Bill Schulz, former UUA president shared, “Neal was my minister in Pittsburgh when I was a child, and we stayed in touch over the years. I will never forget an occasion in Meadville when he was driving and stopped the car to aid an injured bird in the street. He cared for life in all its forms. Neal was a kind and gentle man. The world needs more like him.”

Neal is survived by his partner and wife of thirty years Sylvia Foster, son David and two grandchildren, daughter Tanya Ferris, and brother Norman. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Joyce Long (Ferris).

A celebration of life was held on February 18, 2023, at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter, 12 Elm St, Exeter, NH 03833.

Memorial gifts may be made to:

UU Service Committee of the UUA,  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),  
Union of Concerned Scientists.

Notes of condolence can be sent to Sylvia Foster, 24 Woodridge Road, Durham, NH 03824.

# EDWARD A. FROST

(1937-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. Edward A. Frost, who died on April 9, 2022, at the age of 85.

Edward was born on March 2, 1937, in Brockton, MA to Charles Albert Frost and Irene Louise Frost. Shortly thereafter, his parents returned to England, his father's birthplace, where he lived and attended elementary school until 1949. His family were members of the Church of England. However, after coming to America Edward's religious life became lax because of the adjustment to a new life and association with new friends in a predominantly Roman Catholic city. It was not until he was approached by the Methodist Pastor and invited to join the youth fellowship of his church that he resumed religious nurture.

In 1961, Edward graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English from Barrington College, R.I. While attending Barrington College, on the weekends he served as an Assistant to the Minister of a Methodist Church. He served in this position for two years, superintending the church school, preaching, and assisting in visitation. This experience confirmed his choice of ministry. He then applied and was accepted by Bangor Theological Seminary in Maine, graduating in 1964 with his Bachelor of Divinity. His studies at Bangor Seminary broadened his philosophy and theology causing him to reexamine his choice of affiliation. He could no longer rationalize or justify the doctrines of the traditional Christian church and made the decision to seek a change in denominational affiliation. He decided to enter the ministry of the UUA; his choice sparked out of a desire to be associated with a growing, vital religion that made itself relevant to the lives of modern men. He hoped that with Unitarian Universalism he could remain intellectually honest, and this change would



make a difference in the meaning and purpose of his life. In 1967, Edward received a Master of Sacred Theology degree from Boston University, MA, and subsequently graduated with his Doctorate in Ministry from Meadville Lombard Theological School, IL (1974).

Rev. Dr. Frost was ordained on June 5, 1964, by the All-Souls Universalist Church, Oakland, ME. In 1966, he was called to the Unitarian Church of Marlborough & Hudson, MA, where he ministered until 1968. Thereafter, he served at the First Parish in Waltham, MA (1968-1976) and at the UU Congregation of Princeton, NJ (1976-1989). In 1989, he was installed as a senior minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (UUCA), GA. Rev. Dr. Frost offered a long and stable ministry contributing his unique sixteen years to the thriving life of the UUCA. He enabled the congregation's health, liveliness, and vitality with different programs, procedures, and resources, such as the Lay Ministry program, the Hope School project, and the conflict management program. His sermons promoted a high quality of interaction among people with profound mutual understanding. He retired in 2005 and upon his retirement, the UUCA honored him as their minister emeritus.

Rev. Dr. Frost was an esteemed spiritual thinker, writer, and speaker. His gifts enlightened, challenged, and drew many seekers to Unitarian Universalism. He worked tirelessly on behalf of liberal religion and built spiritual communities. His sermons emphasized deeper personal relationships and his preaching revealed love and concern for all people. In addition to his forty-one years of dedicated service to the UU ministry, Rev. Dr. Frost served the denomination as President and co-founder of the UU Counseling Service (1976-1982); as a member of the Northeast Inter-district UUA board (1971-1973); and as a President of the Mass.

# EDWARD A. FROST

*continued*

Bay District, UUA. He was a Ministerial Settlement Representative, for the Metro NY District (1986), and a committee member for the UUA Independent Study Program (1986). He was also national vice-chairman of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee for Northern New England.

He provided his services as a Chair of Religious Ministries Comm, Princeton, NJ (1977-1981); as a President of Princeton Clergy Association (1978-1980; 1983-1985), and as a member of the Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament (1980). In his spare time, he enjoyed gardening (flowers, especially roses), wood-crafting, furniture building, and hiking. He also had several of his writings published, some of which include: “*The Administrator*,” and “*The Contexts of Counseling*,” in the Journal of the Liberal Ministry.

Edward is survived by his daughter Pamela A. Frost, and her sons: Bart and Nicholas; daughter Tammy F. Frost, her husband Scott, and their son Jack; and daughter Jennifer A. Frost, and her sons: Samuel, Alexander, and Timothy.

The celebration of life took place on June 4, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton, 50 Cherry Hill Road, Princeton, NJ 08540.

In honor of Rev. Dr. Frost’s love for his dogs, you may make a donation to your favorite local organization that cares for dogs. Donations can also be made to the Unitarian Service Pension Society; c/o Rev. Sheldon Bennett; 43 Merrymount Road Unit 11, Quincy, MA 02169.

Notes of condolences can be sent to Pamela A. Frost, 388 Harrier Dr. Monroe Township, NJ 08831.



# JOHN P. GAFFNEY

(1935-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. John Patrick Gaffney, who died on May 16, 2022, at the age of 86.

John was born on October 1, 1935, in Philadelphia, PA. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from St. Bonaventure University, Olean, NY in 1958 following which he earned his Master of Divinity in Theology from Holy Name College, Washington D.C (1962). Later in 1972, he graduated with his Master of Science in Education with a major in Pastoral Counseling from Iona College, New Rochelle, NY.

For the first thirty or more years of his life, John was a faithful Catholic layperson and a priest both in the United States and in South America. In 1971, he left the Catholic priesthood and pursued a second vocation in education because he could no longer preach from the pulpit while personally rejecting basic beliefs and the moral teaching of the Catholic church such as celibacy and opposing birth controls. Shortly after leaving the priesthood, he started attending the Unitarian Universalist church. The lack of dogma and the serious search for ethics drew him back Sunday after Sunday. He became a deeply committed UU layperson. Over twenty years of studying the UU denomination, he realized that it was the setting in which he would like to work. He wanted to enter the UU Ministry and touch every part of the community.

Rev. Gaffney was ordained to the Unitarian Universalist ministry on October 16, 1988. He served as a summer minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockford, IL (1993). He conducted Sunday services which included preaching, congregational response to the sermon, and a children's story; and organized workshops on "Religious Roots" and "Death and Dying".



In 1994, Rev. Gaffney accepted two half-time positions with the Bowie UU Fellowship, MD, and the UU Church of Hagerstown, MD. He served both congregations until 1996. At the Bowie Fellowship, he increased the meaningfulness of the worship services, implemented ideas and suggestions to enhance the worship experience, consistently encouraged the congregation members to participate, and acted as a resource for

them. He met with the Director of Religious Education weekly, supported all her efforts including recruitment, guided her with suggestions, visited classes, and met periodically with the teens. He encouraged overall community spirit and included children and young adults in the whole UU experience. His ongoing discussion groups provided additional opportunities for spiritual growth discovery and involvement of newcomers and members. Furthermore, he represented the congregation at CUUMA, the ministerial group, UUA District (Joseph Priestly), and local (Greater Washington Association) meetings, as a member of the Bowie Ministers Association. Likewise, for the Hagerstown congregation, he was a catalyst moving the congregation to intellectual and spiritual growth and a sense of community from within. From 1996 to 2002, Rev. Gaffney served in the parish at the Goodloe Memorial Congregation, Bowie, MD engaging the congregation in a spiritual quest. He served the people, inspired, guided, and enriched their lives through his presence and services to them. His responses to the needs of the parishioner were immediate, supportive, and appropriate. His presence was a warm, empathetic one, his words, prayers, and meditations brought peace and a sense of comfort, and fostered an atmosphere where difficult decisions could be carefully and thoughtfully made. Upon his retirement in 2002, the congregation honored him as their minister emeritus.

For the Rockville Unitarian Church, MD Rev. Gaffney provided his services as a Junior High R.E. teacher

# JOHN P. GAFFNEY

*continued*

(1983-1987). He served on the board and chaired the internship committee. In addition, he was a church administrator (1999-2004) for Goodloe Memorial Congregation, Bowie, MD.

Rev. Gaffney was vitally involved in the problems of the social community in which he lived. With his help and leadership, the ministerial community in Cumberland, MD grew in its sensitivity to various interfaith issues. In 1993, he was a visiting professor for Frostburg State University, MD where he taught a course in “Contemporary Ethical Problems” which included subjects such as Abortion, the Death Penalty, and Euthanasia.

In his spare time, he enjoyed jogging, camping, gardening, reading, theatre, travel, politics, and storytelling. He enjoyed family time with his wife and

two daughters. His daughter Rachel recalls that John always liked to end his sermons by saying “Live simply, so that others may simply live.”

John is survived by his wife Beverly Gaffney nee Mitchell, two daughters, Juliette Dame of Ohio, and Rachel Bragg of Longwood, Florida, along with five grandchildren, Adam, Ryan, Patrick, Madeline, and Laurene. He is preceded in death by his parents, Mary Ruth and Joseph Gaffney, his brother, Joseph Gaffney, and sister Margaret Kelly.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Sierra Club, your local public broadcasting station, or the National Association for Mental Illness (NAMI); or John would encourage everyone to travel and enjoy the great outdoors.

# GLEND A R. GRAY

(1942-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. Glenda Ruth Gray, who died on December 27, 2022, at the age of 80.

Glenda was born on March 6, 1942, in Meade, Kansas to Marguerite and Roger Gray. She lived the first eighteen years of her life in Meade attending Meade Grade School and Meade High School. She had two older sisters, Charlene Ordaz and Barbara Herazo who went to college and married while Glenda was still a very young child. Glenda's mother had the most direct influence on her. She encouraged Glenda's voracious reading, expected her to attend college, and taught her to take risks and survive and to abide by certain values — work hard, keep promises, follow through, be honest, and care for others.

Glenda received her Bachelor of Arts in English from Wichita State University in 1964, following which she earned her Master of Arts in Speech from the University of New Mexico in 1965. Thereafter, she began her full-time teaching at the University of Albuquerque (1967-1986) while also completing her Ph.D. in Speech Communication from the University of Oregon (1976-1981). From 1986 to 1987, Glenda worked as an adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico and the University of Phoenix extension and then as a training director at the State of New Mexico, Human Services Department (1987-1994).

Until about 1960 Glenda was a Baptist, she remained unchurched for eight years and became a Unitarian in 1968. Ever since, she attended UU churches in Albuquerque, NM (where she served as Board President); Eugene, OR; Green Bay WI; Santa Fe, NM (also served as Board President); and chaired many committees in all the congregations. Her extensive institutional experience as a lay leader led to her



interest in ministry. Becoming a Unitarian Universalist minister was one of her stories since 1976, that she had not acted on it but often talked about. She wanted to contribute to individual and community growth and healing, exploring opportunities to refocus attention toward what grows connections clear and strong. Following this call, in 1994, she entered Starr King School for the Ministry graduating with a Master of

Divinity in 1997.

Rev. Dr. Gray was ordained on May 3, 1998, by the First Unitarian Church of Memphis, TN. Following ordination, she served the Emerson UU Congregation, Marietta, GA for ten years (1998-2008). She worked to expand the adult education programs, encouraged others to take more initiative, conducted her own class offerings, and instituted brief discussion periods for local and national issues. During her tenure, the lay leadership developed and grew. She was instrumental in encouraging the formation of a denominational affairs committee to strengthen relationships with other UU congregations. Rev. Dr. Gray served the congregation as a teacher, a friend, a repartee, a dreamer, a confidant, a taskmaster, and a coach.

Her sermons were intentional, thought-provoking, spiritual, and often reflected Unitarian values and principles. She shared her spiritual path while making others think about their own. She had an unusual ability to meet people, talk with them, remember them, and make them comfortable.

Rev. Dr. Gray was also involved in denominational affairs serving on the Mid-South District Extension Growth Committee and was a member of the UUMA.

In Memphis, Glenda was active in Shelby County Interfaith, an affiliate of the Industrial Areas

# GLEND A R. GRAY

*continued*

Foundation, participating in actions and a subgroup on welfare reform. Likewise, she served on the board of the New Mexico Right to Choose and was a member of the Albuquerque Downtown Neighborhood Association. In her spare time, she enjoyed singing and dancing, and movement meditation. Furthermore, she had several of her writings published including “*Arguments Used Against Women’s Suffrage and Women’s Rights*.” Colloquium for Research on Women, April 1986.

Glenda is survived by her nieces: Shaila Ordaz and Marcy Weinberg; nephews: David Ordaz, Robert

Ordaz, Rafael Herazo, and Carlos Herazo; as well as six great nieces and nephews. She also leaves behind her beloved cat Chauncy.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be sent to the Animal Humane Society of New Mexico, 615 Virginia St, SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108, or The First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque, 3701 Carlisle Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110.

# BLAINE FRANCIS HARTFORD

(1931-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Blaine Francis Hartford, who died on December 16, 2022, at the age of 91.

Blaine was born on July 26, 1929, in Auburn, ME to Geraldine F. Kirves and Clarence Hartford. His mother later married Edward Kirves and the family moved to Connecticut.

Blaine went to Woodbury High School, CT graduating in 1948. Following graduation, he served in the US Navy for four years and then worked as an electrician, substation operator, and system load dispatcher for the Connecticut Light and Power Company.

Blaine received his Bachelor of Science in Psychology from St. Lawrence University, NY (1963) and a Master of Theology degree with a major in pastoral psychology from St. Lawrence Theological School, NY in 1965. That same year, he earned a Certificate in Religious Education also from St. Lawrence Theological School.

Rev. Hartford was ordained by All Souls UU Church, Watertown, NY on September 19, 1965, where he carried out his ministry, first as an assistant to Rev. John Wood (1964) and then as a settled minister upon Rev. Wood's retirement (1965). During his five years of ministry at All Souls, Rev. Hartford was always a tireless and ready resource to the Board, to the staff, and to the individual members of the congregation. In 1969, he accepted a call from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst in Williamsville, NY, where he would serve until 1971. After serving two churches, he began his private practice in psychotherapy and later worked as a professional human resource consultant to many secular and religious organizations, most of the latter being Unitarian Universalist.



Though Rev. Hartford left his parish ministry, he was active in the UUA and District activities continuing his deep and abiding commitment to liberal religion and Unitarian Universalism. From 1997 to 1999, he was a ministerial consultant for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock. He helped the Shelter Rock congregation find a new vision and identify strategic goals to support that vision. Furthermore, he

developed a model for the congregation's governance and interpersonal relations and designed a framework for congregational culture change by substituting collaboration for competition. His analytical skills as a professional consultant were vital to assess and advise on matters of group process and congregational dynamics.

In community, Blaine provided his services as a trustee of the National Board of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, as president of the Planned Parenthood of Northern New York, and as an assistant chairman for the Red Cross Blood Recruitment Program. He was a member of the Sex Education Curriculum Committee for the Watertown Public School System and worked as a part-time instructor of psychology and sociology at Jefferson Community College, NY.

He served as a teacher, as a leader, and as a counselor representing the denomination and realizing his responsibility within the community. Blaine had an unparalleled ability to listen and hear people and an ability to support those in pain. In his spare time, he enjoyed reading especially non-fiction, religion and philosophy, history, archeology, and anthropology. He liked painting and sculpture, and model building and woodworking.

# BLAINE FRANCIS HARTFORD

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Blaine is survived by his wife, Marie Gorman; daughters, Sally Kirby, Jennifer Hendry, and Deborah Williamson; stepbrother C. Robert Hartford; as well as five grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents; former spouses: Lorraine Fagerholm, Sharon Hartford, and Clarinda

Hartford; brother Joshua Hartford; stepbrother Stewart Hartford; and daughter Tamara McFall Eddy.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to a charity of one's own choosing.

# RONALD A. HERSOM

(1950-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Ronald “Ron” A. Hersom, who died on April 22, 2022, at the age of 71.

Ron was born on October 13, 1959, in Kittery, ME to Eugene F. and Marie J. Hart Hersom. After graduating from high school in 1968, he attended the University of Southern Maine and received his Bachelor of Science in Education with a major in Theatre/Speech & Math (1972). He then worked as an engineering assistant for a construction company in Boston, MA (1972-1978), and as an engineer site coordinator for the United Engineering Corporation in New Hampshire (1978-1984). In 1989, Ron earned a Master’s degree in Science and Systems Management from the University of Southern California. He worked for twenty years as a management consultant for the United States Air Force before following his call to ministry.

Ron was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition. Once he left home to attend college, he left the church; however, he always had a sense of the sacred. After a few years, he began exploring Protestant churches and eventually became a born-again Christian attending a Southern Baptist Church in New Hampshire. During this time, he was a gospel singer/songwriter with an acapella trio touring across New England singing and evangelizing. In 1985, Ron came out as a gay man; his search for truth and meaning continued. Knowing that he could not be accepted in a Christ-centered church, he left and quickly found (1985) Unitarian Universalism where acceptance was unconditional. Ron became active at the UU Society of Bangor, ME serving as a treasurer (1999-2000). From 2000 to 2003, he served on the planning committee of the Unitarian Universalist Northeast Leadership School. Working with UU churches



made him interested in becoming a Unitarian Universalist minister. He wanted to share his spiritual faith and nurture the spiritual growth of others in a ministerial capacity. In 2007, he received his M.Div. degree from Starr King School for the Ministry.

Rev. Hersom was ordained to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry on June 10, 2007, by the First Unitarian Church in Albuquerque, NM, where

he accepted the position as Acting Assistant Minister and served until 2010. The RE community bloomed under his attention to volunteers. He organized a massive project in Albuquerque leading up to a Pride Month Interfaith service which involved relationships with clergy and laypeople of several churches. He also helped reform the bylaws and started the multiracial family group at the church. From 2010 to 2013, he served the UU Church of Jacksonville, FL as a settled minister.

In addition to his parish ministry, Rev. Hersom was a Religious Education teacher for the First Unitarian Church, Oakland (2004). He served the Mountain Desert UUMA Chapter as Vice-President from 2008 to 2009 and as President from 2009 to 2010.

Ron was passionate about equality and did advocacy work in the struggle for civil rights for gay and lesbian Mainers. He led the civil rights march in Bangor, ME in October of 1997. He was a member of the Maine gay/lesbian alliance. From 1998 to 2000, he was the State Coordinator for the Maine Speakout Project in Bangor.

For fun, Ron liked to golf, play softball and racquetball, sing choral music, write music, listen to music, read, and practice yoga. He had a passion for water aerobics and enjoyed country/western 2-stepping and line dancing. He was also a life-long Red Sox fan.

# RONALD A. HERSOM

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Ronald's friend Rodney Staley shared: "I will never stop missing his loving and open spirit that he was always willing to share with me and others. My life is forever richer for every moment I got to spend with him. But there is an emptiness that I don't know will ever be filled in the same way."

Ron is survived by his daughter Tamara Young of Iowa, his brother Eugene F. Hersom Jr., his nephew Eugene F. "Fred" Hersom III, and a grandniece of Maine.

A memorial service was held on May 29, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Jacksonville, 7405 Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, FL 32211.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to any agency supporting people who have fled the violence in Ukraine or to the UUSC's Emergency Response Fund.



# MANUEL R. HOLLAND

(1930-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Manuel Robert Holland, who died on August 2, 2022, at the age of 92.

Manuel was born on May 9, 1930, in Hazleton, PA to Raleigh Lee Roy Holland and Pearl Shook Holland. He spent his early childhood in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and California. When he was nineteen, he received his local preacher's license from the Methodist church and later had a Methodist charge consisting of four small rural churches in western North Carolina. For a year and a half (1949-1951), Manuel assumed responsibility for the complete programs of these churches, preached an average of three times a Sunday, conducted funerals, marriages, and baptisms as needs arose among the parishioners, and at the same time carried a full course at college.

Subsequently, Manuel served as a Youth Counselor for six months at the Congregational Unitarian Church, Littleton, MA working with Rev. Palmer Clarke. Since then, his pulpit experience changed. Theologically, he could no longer agree with the Methodist Church; he had found a spirit of freedom, a dedication to truth, and a concern for the welfare of humankind in the Unitarian Church. He soon realized that the kind of ministry he wished to pursue would be most meaningful and successful among the Unitarians.

In 1951, Manuel left for the Army. After receiving an honorable discharge in 1954, he went to college graduating with two degrees in 1960: a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Sociology of Religion from Boston University, MA, and a Bachelor of Divinity from Tufts University, MA.



Rev. Holland was ordained by the First Parish Unitarian, Groton, MA on June 17, 1956. His tenure at First Parish (1955-1960) marked increased Sunday morning service attendance and growth in the religious programs. With the new facilities of the Youth Center and the installation of a library and bookstore, excellent education programs were developed. The new youth choir was added to the worship service. In 1960, Rev. Holland

accepted a call from the First Parish in Framingham, MA where he would serve until 1966. He played the most active role in the support, growth, proliferation, and maturation of the congregation. Under his leadership, a series of adult courses were offered, and the church school enrollment increased. People looked to the church for leadership in Education, Social Action, and Service.

From 1966 to 1970, Rev. Holland served as the first District Executive of the Thomas Jefferson District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. These years were formative in establishing the identity and functional character of the district of 47 churches and fellowships. His responsibilities included extension ministry, ministerial settlements, religious education, fundraising, communication media liaison, pulpit supply, and many others. Thereafter, Rev. Holland served the UU Church of Greensboro, Jamestown, NC (1971-1973); the UU Fellowship of Winston-Salem, NC (1973-1974); and the UU Congregation of the Lowcountry, SC (1981-1986). His ministry and endeavor made churches a dynamic force in the community, as he was passionate about social justice and strove to uplift the oppressed, impoverished, and voiceless. He helped strengthen the moral and spiritual needs of the members of the parish and community. His genuine and dynamic concern for the welfare and well-being of his fellow human beings made him one of the

# MANUEL R. HOLLAND

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truly outstanding ministers. In 1986, the Lowcountry congregation honored Rev. Holland as their minister emeritus. His last message to the congregation and the community asked that we love one another, for, in the end, that is all we have.

Rev. Holland's integrity, industry, loyalty, devotion, and dedication to the UU movement were of the highest caliber. He was the winner of the Clarence R. Skinner award (1958) for the best sermon that most expressed the social implications of Universalist principles. Furthermore, Rev. Holland took an active role in the Central Massachusetts District of Unitarian Universalist Churches serving as Vice President and Chairman of Denominational Affairs. He was a member of the UU Committee on Camps and Conferences and chaired the UUA Committee on Lay Leadership. Likewise, he served on the board of the Church of the Larger Fellowship (1958-1962); was Chairman of the Star Island Religious Education Institute (1961) and Southern N.E. Social Relations Committee (1961-1962). From 1962 to 1965, he provided his services as Vice President of the Central Massachusetts District, and as Chairman of the Southeast UU Summer Institute in 1968.

In Framingham, MA, Manuel served as Vice President of the Framingham Ministers' Association, as a founding

member and Director of the Framingham Fair Housing Practices Committee, and as a member of the Framingham Chapter. He was an executive committee member of the Framingham-Ashland United Fund (1962-1966).

He had a broad range of interests, some of which included woodworking, biking, camping, and graphic arts. He also had several of his works published including, "If We Had Given a Damn" Universalist Leader, Sept. 1959; and the UUA Pamphlet, "Salvation From What?".

Manuel is survived by his stepson David Lowe; his granddaughter, Jessica Lowe; and his three children from a previous marriage: Charles Holland, Elizabeth Holland, and Robert Holland. He was preceded in death by his wife of 51 years, Olive Holland.

A memorial service was held on Sunday, August 7, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Lowcountry, 110 Malphrus Rd, Bluffton, SC 29910.

Memorial donations can be made to The International Rescue Committee, P.O. Box 6068, Albert Lea, MN 56007-9847, or Feeding America.

# ROBERT L. ELLER-ISAACS

(1951-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Robert “Rob” L. Eller-Isaacs, who died on July 23, 2022, at the age of 70.

Rob was born on November 7, 1951, in Chicago, IL to Alexander J. Isaacs and Rosalia P. Issacs. His childhood was centered around the First Unitarian Society of Chicago, IL, first as a very active member of the Chicago Children’s Choir and then into Liberal Religious Youth (LRY). The church programs and camps, its church school, and the stillness of its sanctuary kept him moving and growing through his years of early adolescence. The church community helped him form and mold how he perceived the world. The choir instilled in him a lifelong love for choral music and a deep commitment to working toward multicultural harmony. His call to ministry also came in the context of Chicago Children’s Choir. He was inspired by the ministry of the Rev. Christopher Moore, founding director of the choir.

Rob attended grammar school and junior high in newly integrated Chicago schools. He spent three years at the Woodstock Country School in South Woodstock, Vermont where he majored in English literature. During his years at Woodstock and immediately thereafter he was deeply involved in the struggle to end the war in Vietnam. He served as Vermont Co-chair for S.D.S Vietnam in 1968 and was president of two local groups, treasurer of the Central Midwest Federation, and Continental President of Liberal Religious Youth (1969-1970). During this period, he was very clear that his future lay in professional religious leadership. He eventually left Woodstock and received his diploma from Britannica Academy in Chicago. In the fall of 1970, he entered Thomas Starr King School for Religious Leadership and graduated with his Master of



Divinity in 1975. In February of 1979, Rob married Janne Eller, and they became the Eller-Isaacs.

Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs was ordained by the Unitarian Society of Whittier, CA, on January 16, 1977, where he was installed as their fourth minister. During his tenure from 1976 to 1982, the Whittier church grew steadily with primary growth in terms of young families with children. He

helped develop an active, effective lifespan religious education program. The average Sunday attendance grew from twelve to eighty and for the first time in ten years, the church had a nursery. Likewise, the number of pledging units went up from seven to ninety-seven and there was a growing institutional enthusiasm.

In 1982, Rev. Eller-Isaacs was called to the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, CA as the first Urban Extension Minister. He served as a sole minister for the Oakland church until 1985 and then as a team with his wife, Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs (1986-2000). The Revs. Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs designed and implemented many programs creating worship associates, and strong pastoral care, teaching, and justice work which were replicated in many other churches. They helped restore a historic building and more importantly re-established a vital, effective congregation. They raised more than five million dollars and completed the first phase of a major renovation of the national landmark building. The church grew from twenty to three hundred and ten active pledging members. The budget grew from thirty-five thousand to three hundred sixty-eight thousand dollars. The congregation led the way in developing opportunities for shared ministry and formed a vibrant worship life, a strong nourishing sense of community, and an effective constellation of justice ministries.

# ROBERT L. ELLER-ISAACS

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After eighteen satisfying years at the Oakland congregation, the Eller-Isaacs moved to Unity Church-Unitarian of St. Paul, MN. There they modeled respectful collaboration and inspired the congregation to commit itself to genuinely shared ministry. Their ministry was unusually creative, and substantively marked by its thoughtful and religious character.

Rev. Eller-Isaacs enriched the church with his creativity and the breadth of his knowledge. He saw the church as a source of nourishment and inspiration for its people who then live out their values in their daily lives. He retired in 2021 and, the Unity Church-Unitarian honored the Eller-Isaacs as their minister emeritus.

Rev. Eller-Isaacs was very active within the denomination serving as a member of the Panel on Theological Education and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. From 1979 to 1981, he served as the Pacific Southwest District Trustee. He chaired the UUA Committee on Urban Concerns and Ministry from 1987 to 1991. He was a campaign manager for the “Buehrens for UUA President” committee (1991-1993) and served as a UUMA Executive Committee Member (1983-1985 and 2007-2010), and the UUA Board of Trustees (2013-2017). After the fall of the iron curtain, Rev. Eller-Isaacs was a co-founder of Project Harvest Hope.

Rob had a deep concern for people and greeted new people with enthusiastic warmth. He could relate to both old and young. His community activism focused on three primary areas: racial justice, housing and homelessness, and local community enhancement. He was involved in countless organizations and campaigns during his long years of ministry, with special attention to many initiatives in Oakland and St. Paul.

Rob is survived by his spouse, the Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs; children and their spouses: Jonah Eller-Isaacs; Jessie Eller-Isaacs, spouse Andy Anderson-Furgeson; Hannah and Tim Franco-Isaacs; and grandchildren: Lewis Eller-Furgeson, Mira Eller-Furgeson, and Levi Franco-Isaacs. He is also survived by his sister and brother-in-law: Jane and Alan Fantel. He also leaves behind a large chosen family within the Unitarian Universalist faith community.

Memorial gifts can be made to the Unity-Church Unitarian, 733 Portland Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104; the UUMA, 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210-1409; the Chicago’s Children’s Choir, 78 East Washington Street, 5th Floor Chicago, IL 60602; and The First Unitarian Church of Oakland, 685 14th Street Oakland, CA 94612.

Notes of condolences can be sent to Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs, 4770 NE Going Street, Portland, Oregon, 97218.

# charles g. kast

(1941-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Charles “Charlie” G. Kast, who died on July 18, 2022, at the age of 81.

Charlie was born on January 15, 1941, in Milton, MA to Frederick C. Kast and Alice (Williams) Kast. Raised in a family-centered and Baptist church-related childhood environment, Charlie was active in the youth group through junior high school, high school, and young adult groups. He played chess and participated in track and Boy Scouts. In 1963, he received his Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from Northeastern University, MA following which he held various positions with American Cyanamid (1963-1976). From 1966 to 1968, he served in the US Army and left as a Corporal. In 1973, he obtained a Master of Science in Industrial Management from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, NY.

During the above years, Charlie (he did not capitalize his name) was working through his sexual identity and career identity. Also, during that time he felt himself becoming resentful toward mainline Christianity and became an antiwar and Civil Rights activist. In 1975, he moved to Kalamazoo, MI; that same year, he attended a service on Easter Sunday at People’s Church in Kalamazoo. For the first time, he felt that he was welcomed into the community as a whole person and liked the fact that the Unitarian Universalist church was non-creedal and was accepting of everybody. He realized that as a UU, he would not have to conform to a certain belief and recognized his need to be a part of this religious community. He found a home with the theology and social activism of Unitarian Universalism. For the next two years, he was actively involved with many phases of the church and decided to live in a relationship with the church. In the process



of searching and creating individual and community meaning, he wanted to go into ministry. He felt that he might be able to minister in the UU Fellowship. The blend of his homosexuality, his concern for social issues, his sense of community and belonging in Unitarian Fellowship, and his goal of becoming a minister to a congregation strongly attracted him to Starr King School of Ministry. In 1981, he graduated with his Master

of Divinity.

Rev. Kast was ordained to the parish ministry by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, KY on November 15, 1981. He began his ministerial career at the Lexington church and served until 1985. In 1985, during the height of the AIDS crisis, he accepted a call from the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago, IL. The church served a lot of community members who were not members. If they needed to be ministered to, Rev. Kast would provide that. From 1994 to 2006, he served the Community Church of Chapel Hill, NC. He ministered to the spiritual and personal growth of the congregants and focused his energies on bringing the congregation’s children into the community in a truly meaningful way. He was instrumental in integrating the church into the greater Unitarian Universalist Association and in making the church a truly valuable resource for the community at large. Upon his retirement in 2006, the Community Church of Chapel Hill announced the conferment of the title of minister emeritus to him. He was the second minister emeritus since the founding of the church in 1953.

In addition to his ministry, Rev. Kast served on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, chaired the UUA Task Force on Community Ministry (1991), and was a member of the Board of Bayside UU camp (Lake Geneva, WI). He was President of the Chicago Area UU Council and served on the UUA Affirmative

# charles g. kast

*continued*

Action Task Force, and Starr King's intercontinental presidential search committee (two terms).

Encouraging and dealing with diversity was a strong focus of Rev. kast's ministry. Diversity to him meant being inclusive. He made the church a safe place and helped the church community to get their lives together. His sermons were provocative and inspiring. Likewise, he was caring, inspiring, and encouraged members to minister to each other. He also had quite an impact on a lot of people, including other ministers, and was always approachable and highly trusted as a fellow minister and as a friend.

In the community, charlie was highly visible as a leader. He was President of Chicago Area Liberal Ministers, a member of the Chicago Parliament of World Religions, and a volunteer at the AIDS pastoral care network. He

was a foster parent to 125 at risk-children over a 25-year period and was proud of the fact that he did know everyone's name. In his spare time, he enjoyed theatre, writing, jogging, and baseball in his spare time.

charlie is survived by his sisters and his loving friends and colleagues.

A celebration of charlie's life was held at the Community Church of Chapel Hill, Unitarian Universalist, 106 Purefoy Rd, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Memorial gifts may be made to the National LGBTQ Task Force, P.O. Box 96415, Washington, DC 20077-9763.

Notes of condolences can be sent to the Community Church of Chapel Hill, Unitarian Universalist (address above).

# DAVID P. KEYES

(1945-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. David P. Keyes, who died on September 13, 2022, at the age of 77.

David was born on January 21, 1945, in Kansas City, MO to G.J. Keyes and Carolyn Keyes Ellis. He spent his childhood years in Kansas City and Gallatin, MO mostly with his grandparents. His own Parish Minister, Dr. Jack Wilson (Baptist) was a strong role model for him. David led his high school church youth group but soon became alienated by small-mindedness and began wandering. He could no longer stand the Baptist literalism; in 1960, he joined All Souls Church in Kansas City. (Dr. Wilson later became an Episcopalian.) From the first Sunday at the Kansas City church, David felt that the Unitarians took him in and showed a larger world, one filled with tolerance, new ideas, and a love of knowledge, art, culture, and music. He felt a sense of gratitude and a sense of belonging.

Shortly after joining All Souls, he was off to the University of Missouri graduating with his Bachelor of Science in Education (1966) and earning a Master of Arts in Journalism (1971). He worked for fifteen years as a teacher, journalist, editor, and public relations executive before following his call to ministry. In 1985, he received his Master of Divinity from Starr King School for the Ministry. In 1997, he earned his Doctorate in Ministry from San Francisco Theological Seminary. His doctoral dissertation is titled: "Global Partnership: Mission and Identity for Congregations."

Rev. Dr. Keyes was ordained on May 5, 1985, by All Souls in New York. He served his first settled ministry at the First Parish Church in Taunton, MA (1986-1987). His ministry marked significant gains in membership, Sunday attendance, Church School enrollment, and pledge income. He organized a youth group and choir



and initiated a long-range planning process. From 1987 to 1988, Rev. Dr. Keyes was an interim minister at Boise UU Fellowship, ID. He developed a program that led to the construction of a new church building. Next, Rev. Dr. Keyes served his second settled ministry at the Skyline Community Church, Oakland, CA (1990-1994). He helped rebuild the Religious Education program and provided leadership for several community programs, including tutoring and violence prevention. All his subsequent ministries were interim, while he maintained his home in San Francisco.

At the Congregational Community Church in Sunnyvale, CA (1995-1997), Rev. Dr. Keyes helped the congregation to turn itself around and learn to trust. The pledging doubled in his first year and the congregation became a full-service church. The UU Fellowship of Santa Cruz County, CA (1997-1998) widely appreciated Rev. Dr. Keyes for his courage in naming conflictual congregational issues and creating the necessary congregational momentum and structures to address them.

Likewise, Rev. Dr. Keyes guided the UU Church Davis, CA (1998-2000) through the interim tasks. He was very diligent in pastoral care and reimagined church governance adopting a modified version of the John Carver Model. He provided valuable insight, advice, and necessary goading to All Souls Church Unitarian, Washington, DC (2000-2001). He reorganized lay leadership that had drifted, worked with lay leaders to reshape church governance, and tackled an array of programs including a declining church school. After that, he served the UU Fellowship of Redwood City, CA (2001-2002). Subsequently, he served the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY (2002-2003) and made significant progress in the exploration of new models of governance, initiation of a small group ministry program, and a major overhaul of the canvass.

# DAVID P. KEYES

*continued*

From 2003 to 2004, Rev. Dr. Keyes served the Neighborhood UU Church of Pasadena, CA and then the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, GA from 2005 to 2007. At the Atlanta congregation, he elevated the needs of Youth Religious Education (YRE), encouraged YRE to be more vocal about its needs, and advocated strongly for them during the search process for a new minister. He did it in a way that strengthened the connection between YRE and leadership. Thereafter, he provided his interim services to the following congregations: the First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor, MI (2007-2008); the First UU Church of Houston, TX (2008-2010); Eliot Unitarian Chapel, MO (2010-2012); the UU Church of Arlington, VA (2012-2014) and Foothills Unitarian Church, Fort Collins, CO (2014-2015). He retired in 2016.

Rev. Dr. Keyes' mission in ministry was to strengthen congregations in times of transition. In every interim ministry position he held, he made notable progress in raising awareness of the importance of R.E., recruiting teachers from a wider cross-section of the congregation, and having children and youth be more visible in worship. He encouraged and empowered new lay leadership. In 1998 he earned the Accredited Interim Minister (AIM) designation. He was also a marvelous preacher and brought a depth of faith rooted in the history and traditions of the church.

Rev. Dr. Keyes served as an associate faculty of Starr King School for the Ministry (1991-2002). In 1993, he spent his sabbatical leave among Unitarians of Hungary and Transylvania lecturing on UU history and theology at the seminary in Kolozsvár, Transylvania. He was also active in international church relations, visiting

congregations in Hungary, India, and the Philippines. In addition, he was the Founding President of Project Harvest Hope, a UUA-affiliated foundation for economic justice and development (1995-2001) and was President of the UUMA Pacific Central District Chapter (1997-1998). He was a trainer of interim ministers of the UUA (1999-2003) and chaired the UUA Interim Ministry Steering Committee (2001-2002). In 1997, he delivered the Minns Lecture titled "A Global Vision for Unitarian Universalism," out of which came his book "Most Like an Arch: Building Global Church Partnerships." In 2013, the UU Partner Church Council awarded Rev. Dr. Keyes the Louis C. Cornish "Living the Mission" Award for Outstanding Contribution to International Partnership.

In the community, David served as a Disaster Service Volunteer for the American Red Cross; a founder of the Oakland Coalition of Congregations Violence Prevention Project (1993). In his leisure time, he enjoyed baseball, opera, and hiking.

David is survived by his wife of 52 years, Judy Droz Keyes, their daughter Tracy Droz Tragos, son-in-law Christian Tragos, and grandchildren Charlotte and Sam Tragos; his daughter Tanya Mackenzie, son-in-law Ian Mackenzie, and grandchildren Ian and David Graham, and Leah Patrick; and his son Paul Keyes and daughter-in-law Christina Keyes.

A memorial service was held at Grace Cathedral, 1100 California St, San Francisco, CA 94108.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to WRAAP, 2633 Lincoln Blvd., #338, Santa Monica, CA 90405, or to a similar organization.



# BRIAN S. KOPKE

(1945-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Brian S. Kopke, who died on December 31, 2022, at the age of 77.

Brian was born on March 6, 1945, in Newton, MA to Walter F. Kopke Jr. and Blanche K. Kopke. He attended Duxbury High School, MA, and graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in Geology from Colby College, ME in 1964. While at Colby, he was president of the Inter-Faith Association. During his tenure, a coffee house was inaugurated. Following graduation, Brian felt called upon to make a decision that would have a bearing for the rest of his life. Back in childhood, he knew that the minister was a respected man with responsibility for the respect bestowed upon him. The cumulative experiences of life led him to believe that he could do the greater good by becoming a minister. With confidence in his sense of responsibility and sincerity, he entered Harvard Divinity School earning his Bachelor of Sacred Theology in 1970.

Rev. Kopke was ordained on June 21, 1970, by the church he grew up in, the First Parish Church at Duxbury, MA. He served the First Parish as a Religious Education Director for two years contributing to the development of the Church School Curriculum. He helped revise the curriculum for the upper grades, brought new enthusiasm to the programs, inspired the teachers to try out new methods, and conducted chapel services for the entire Church School every Sunday. He was very well-received by the children and had a great rapport with the youth. In 1972, he accepted a call from the First Universalist Church of Southold, NY where he would serve until 1977.

From 1977 to 1984, Rev. Kopke served as a settled minister for the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, PA. During his service of seven years, the deep financial deficits diminished, the sanctuary was restored, the



Parish Room was refurbished, the roof replaced, and staff rebuilt. The pledge rose by nearly 60 percent, and membership increased by 10 percent. The building became a true community center with the great commitment of the laypeople. Subsequently, in 1985 Rev. Kopke was called to the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, ON. He served the Ottawa congregation until 2007, introducing the congregation to the larger congregational thinking

that made headway in acceptance of the philosophy and design for growth. There was development in the church campus including U House, River Parkway Preschool, the congregation, and the meditation gardens as a center.

In addition to his parish ministry, Rev. Kopke was equally active in denominational affairs serving as a chairman of the Joseph Priestley District Religious Education Committee; as a secretary of the ABSUURD, UUMA cluster; and as a board member of the UU House Steering Committee. He was a member of the Canadian Unitarian Council and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada. He served on the nominating committee of the Canadian Unitarian Council (1989-1991) and was a group facilitator and participant in the UUA Theological Education Plenary (1989). Furthermore, he provided his services as a UUMA Chapter leader (2004-2009), and as a member of the UUMA Convo Committee (2005).

In community, Brian advocated for a fair police complaint procedure and fair promotion and hiring practices in the Police Department. He served on the board of the Horizon House, MA. He was a passionate voice for social justice, a leader with great social sensitivity and the highest ethical convictions who believed human relations as sacred and holy.

In his leisure time, he enjoyed watercolor, drawing, sailing, racketball, jogging, woodworking, campaigning, hiking, gardening, movie making, and reading.

# BRIAN S. KOPKE

*continued*

Brian is survived by his wife Margie Kopke; three children, Ben Kopke (Caddie), Sarah Kopke (Ben), and Sam Kopke; three brothers Cris Kopke (Jean), Kent Kopke (Colette), and Joel Kopke (Drew); one sister, Sara Harvey (John); two grandchildren Eleanor and Eamonn Kopke; and several nieces and nephews.

Two celebrations of life are being planned, one in the US and one in Canada (in the summer and fall respectively).

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to support rebuilding the First Universalist Church of Southold. Checks may be mailed to PO Box 221, Southold, NY 11971, with “Restoration Fund” in the memo line.

Notes of condolence can be sent to Margie Kopke at [m.saxon.kopke@gmail.com](mailto:m.saxon.kopke@gmail.com)

# RICHARD D. LEONARD

(1927-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Richard “Dick” D. Leonard, who died on November 25, 2022, at the age of 95.

Dick was born on September 24, 1927, in Detroit, MI to Richard H. Leonard and Frances J. Leonard. Since early childhood, he had a love for classical music. He began his violin classes at the age of nine, attended the National Music Camp at Interlochen at fourteen, and was appointed as assistant concertmaster of the National High School Orchestra at seventeen.

In 1949, Dick received his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Yale University following which he graduated with his Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary, NY in 1952. After graduation, Dick carried out his ministry within the Congregational-Christian framework (1951-1959). During these years, he found himself steering away from any creedal approach to religion. This made him explore Unitarianism. Soon he realized that he was more Unitarian in outlook than traditionally Christian. With this new direction, he aimed his ministry at teachers and church school families of the Community Church of New York UU and the wider fellowship in the Unitarian movement.

Rev. Leonard was called to serve the Community Church as a minister of religious education in 1959. His nine years of ministry at the Community Church marked the expansion of a church school and youth groups. He introduced new arts programs for Primaries and Juniors and added new curriculum materials. Furthermore, he was involved with the Social Action Committee and served as vice president of the Liberal Religious Education Directors’ Association. In 1965 he marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from Selma to Montgomery, AL.



From 1969 to 1977, Rev. Leonard served as a part-time minister of the Flatbush Unitarian Church, in Brooklyn, NY. During those years he conducted services, delivered sermons, officiated weddings and funerals, and performed a large amount of pastoral counseling. Subsequently, in 1979, he was called to the Unitarian Church of All Souls in Manhattan, NY where he would serve until 1997. At All Souls, he chaired

their Membership Committee, served as a fundraiser for their special music program, and taught church school. In 1997, he retired from his ministry; upon retirement, All Souls honored him as their minister emeritus.

Rev. Leonard was an inspirational leader who won a place in the hearts of the church members and the community at large. He was Development Director for the Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School, at Walden School, and at the Horace Mann School and provided his services as treasurer of the Metro NY Stevens Scholarship Committee.

He also had several of his writing published including Call to Selma, Ports of Call: Journeys in Ministry, and Wet Cement (3 volumes), a collection of vignettes from his personal and professional life. In 2016, he founded “Project 142” in his apartment near Lincoln Center, a unique concert series designed to support emerging musical talent of all sorts. Dick hosted 160 concerts during his leadership of Project 142, which continues today under the direction of a longtime associate.

Over his life, he learned to play ten musical instruments and was highly skilled in the violin and piano. In his spare time, Dick enjoyed travel and chess. He and his wife, Polly were avid world travelers and visited over eighty countries during their forty-six years together.

# RICHARD D. LEONARD

*continued*

Richard is survived by his daughters: Elizabeth Leonard, and Suzanne Sykora (Karl Walter Sykora); his step-son, Kenneth Mason (Mia Mason); step-daughter, Martha Mason (Bryce Sommerville); as well as grandchildren: Anthony Bellavia, Joseph Bellavia, Anna Mason Woodward, Lizzy Mason, Jennifer Thilo, Katherine Thilo, Pamela Thilo, and their partners, spouses, and children. He was predeceased by his wife Anna Mary “Polly” Leonard, and by his stepdaughter, Helen Louise Bigelow.

A commitment ceremony preceding his body’s cremation took place on Monday, November 28, 2022,

at Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn. The memorial service will take place at 11 am on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at the Unitarian Church of All Souls, 1157 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10075, with a reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations can go to the Unitarian Church of All Souls (address above).

Notes of condolence can be sent to Elizabeth Leonard, 3 Cedar Street, Waterville, ME 04901, and emails to [edleonar@colby.edu](mailto:edleonar@colby.edu).

# W. MASON OLDS

(1933-2022)

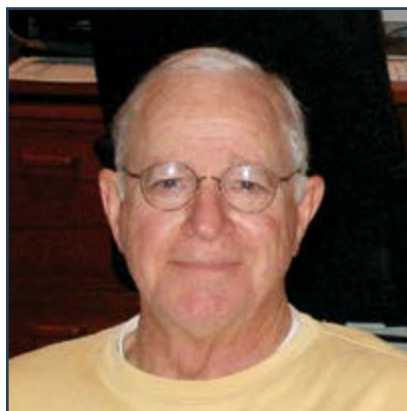
The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. W. Mason Olds, who died on March 11, 2022, at the age of 89.

Mason was born on January 23, 1933, to Ruth Snyder and Leslie M. Olds and grew up in Cordele, GA. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Mercer University, GA in 1956, his Bachelor of Divinity from Colgate Rochester Divinity School, NY (1959), and his doctorate from Brown University, RI in 1973. His Ph.D. dissertation is titled: *Three Pioneers of Religious Humanism: A Study of 'Religion Without God' in the Thought of John H. Dietrich, Curtis W. Reese, and Charles Francis Potter.*

Mason was both a UU minister as well as a college professor. While a young minister before he became a Unitarian, he served on the local Planned Parenthood Committee of Dauphin County in Pennsylvania, and on August 28, 1963, participated in the Civil Rights march on Washington, D.C. where Martin Luther King gave his "I have a Dream" speech.

Rev. Dr. Olds was ordained by the Unitarian Society of Amherst, MA on May 2, 1965 (now the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst) where he served in the parish from 1965 to 1966. While there he was the main speaker at a gathering on the town common protesting the beating death of the Rev. James Reeb following a civil rights march in Selma, Alabama. The first organized protest against the War in Vietnam on the east coast was held in the Unitarian Meeting House.

Under Rev. Dr. Olds' leadership, the Unitarian Society of Amherst began a week-day kindergarten. He was instrumental in extending the Society's program in several other areas including financing a weekly radio program strictly from public contributions. He



was chaplain to the UU students at Amherst College and served as a chaplain at the University of Massachusetts too. Thereafter, Mason worked as a Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Springfield College, MA, for 30 years (1966-1996).

Whether it be in the ministry, or the classroom Mason made positive contributions to the Unitarian Universalist movement. His services

to the denomination included serving as a member of the Board of Directors of the Unitarian Historical Society and he was a founding member of the Collegium for Studies in Liberal Religion. He gave the humanist lecture at several annual meetings of the UUA. At the June 1993 Assembly in Charlotte, he spoke about "God-Talk or No God-Talk—Is There a Difference?" and at the Minneapolis Meetings in 2010 his address was titled "John H. Dietrich: Preaching Humanism". He was often invited to speak at Unitarian churches in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and, later in South Carolina while he was living there.

During his tenure at Springfield College, Mason was a visiting associate professor of religion at Mount Holyoke College, MA, a lecturer in Religion at Smith College, MA, and a visiting professor of Philosophy at Richmond College in England (1986). He was the editor of the *Journal of Religious Humanism* for five years in the 1990s. He presented papers at international conferences at Oxford University, England (1988) and St Andrews University in Scotland (1993). After retirement, he taught courses at The Citadel and The College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina.

In addition to being an excellent teacher, Mason could express great warmth and care to those around him. He could relate to new people quite readily. He attended live theaters, enjoyed the opera, and read a great deal in his spare time. He also enjoyed tennis, swimming,

# W. MASON OLDS

*continued*

hiking, and travel. In his later years, he indulged in bike riding and a little beach walking and tried his hand at fiction writing. He published a great number of articles on ethical and religious subjects as well as three scholarly books with the most widely received, *American Religious Humanism* (Revised edition 2006).

Mason is survived by his wife of 63 years, Marjorie, daughter Catherine, son D. Mason and grandson

Cameron as well as two sisters, Kaye Tolbert, and Ann Matthews. He was preceded in death by his mother, Ruth Snyder, and brother, Warner Olds.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Mercer University, 1501 Mercer University Drive, Macon, GA 31207.

# RICHARDSON REID

(1931-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. Richardson “Dick” Reid, who died on December 20, 2022, at the age of 91.

Richardson was born on June 25, 1931, in Fall River, MA to Rev. William Richardson Reid and Ada Florance Baker. He was born and brought up a Unitarian. As expected of the son of a minister, Richardson was active in his church attending Sunday School, church services, and all church functions. He spent most of his boyhood accompanying his father on many of his pastoral duties.

In 1954, Richardson received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Colgate University, NY following which he served on the faculty of the Bristol County Agricultural High School, MA as an instructor in English (1956-1959). In 1959, he earned his Master of Education in History from Bridgewater State College, MA. During the latter part of his college years, he realized that he had a deep interest in dealing with people and their relationships with life. He saw the true value of the ministry profession, this time quite apart from the feelings which stemmed from admiration of his father. He then decided to devote his life to the preservation and advancement of the denomination. With this call, he graduated with his Master of Divinity from Crane Theological School, Tufts University (1965). Later in 1967, he received his Doctorate of Divinity from St. Lawrence Theological School, NY.

Rev. Reid served his first ministry at Dighton Community Church, MA (1955-1958). He brought the previously alienated persons into active church relationships and associated very well with the senior members of the church. His tenure of three years was characterized by increased membership and



firm confidence. Subsequently, he was settled minister for First Parish Church in Taunton, MA, for six years (1959-1965). He stabilized the church through participation and support for a church program including plans for a church school addition. His ministry also had a strong personal and pastoral component. Thereafter, Rev. Reid served in the parish at the First Parish in Malden Universalist, MA (1965-1974) and then he was a part-time minister at the UU Meeting House of Provincetown, MA (1976-

1980). In 1982, he returned to the First Parish Church in Taunton to serve in a temporary ministry for the next three years moving the church to a relatively strong position, ready to move forward toward a permanent ministry. In 1987, honoring Rev. Reid’s devoted service to the church over the years, the First Parish in Taunton honored him as their minister emeritus.

In addition to his parish ministry, Richardson was active in the Malden Council of Churches, and other ministerial and civic organizations. He served as a Probation Officer for fifteen years in the Orleans District Court. Throughout his career, he was devoted to the support and care of the mentally ill, serving as President of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health and on the National Board as Chairman of the Committee for the Prevention of Mental Illness, and on the State Department of Mental Committee for the de-institutionalization of the mentally ill.

In his leisure time, he enjoyed sailing and shell fishing and most recently his favorite pastime was walking his beloved dog, Missy.

Dick is survived by his wife, Nancy Thacher Reid; his four children: David (Carol), Matthew (Charissa), Katharine Peace, and Peter (Barbara); his eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He

# RICHARDSON REID

*continued*

was preceded in death by his sons: Steven and Mark, grandson Steven Jr, as well as his sister Betty Jane (Reid) Wheeler.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to a charity of one's own choosing.



# KENNETH W. SAWYER

(1944-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Kenneth “Ken” W. Sawyer, who died on April 24, 2022, at the age of 77.

Ken was born on July 5, 1944, in Summit New Jersey to Warren Folger Sawyer and Eleanor (Tomlinson) Sawyer. He graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in English from Amherst College, MA in 1966 following which he received his Bachelor of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School in 1970.

Rev. Sawyer was ordained on November 9, 1970, by the First Church of Houlton, ME (now the Unitarian Universalist Church of Houlton) where he served from 1970 to 1974. He helped the church create several working committees and then got the committees to play an active and creative role in church programming. During this time, he was also a regular supply preacher for the occasional services at the Universalist Church of Oakfield, ME. Thereafter, he served the First Parish in Wayland, MA (1974-2012). His 38 years of ministry at First Parish marked many changes, including congregational growth, more committees, building additions, etc. The church’s growth was reflected everywhere. In 1983, the Sunday school moved from a converted home across the street to a new Parish House outfitted with much-needed classrooms, offices, and meeting space. He nurtured the health of the church, fostered a spirit of warmth, acceptance, and an openness to diversity, and aided individuals in their religious quests through worship, religious education, and personal relationships. His insights strengthened the quality of ministry at First Parish and his talk sessions on Sunday evenings were well attended and brought more people to the church. Additionally, he mentored 18 ministerial interns during his tenure at First Parish. Upon his retirement in 2012,



the congregation unanimously voted to designate him as their minister emeritus.

Rev. Sawyer faithfully served the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee from 1975 to 1992 strengthening the quality of the UU ministry and its standards. He chaired the UUA Nominating Committee and served several times on the UUMA Mass Bay District Executive Board. In 1981, he

served as an exchange minister for the Unitarians in Edinburg, Scotland. In 1986, he was a faculty member for the UUA Preaching Seminar, Chicago. Likewise, he served on the board of the Church of Larger Fellowship, Boston, MA (2001-2004) and was Chapter Leader for the Mass Bay UUMA (2009-2022).

Ken was well accepted in the community and was active in various worthy civic projects as well as the local ministerial associations. In Maine, he was Co-chair for the Houlton Democratic Town Committee (1971-1974); and chair for the Southern Aroostook Community Coordinated Child Care Corp (1971-1974). He served as a part-time chaplain for Ricker College in Houlton (1973-1974).

In Massachusetts, he chaired the Wayland Clergy Association, and Wayland Youth Advisor Committee; and co-chaired the Wayland Democratic Town Committee. He also taught “Ministry through Preaching” at Harvard University for 10 years.

Ken was a second-generation Unitarian who brought an innate understanding of the UU movement. He was a person of grace, wit, and integrity and was passionate about helping people work out their problems; helping people listen to each other, hear each other, and understand each other. He enjoyed counseling, public speaking, social action, working with people, and doing weddings. His preaching inspired, transformed, and left people with a renewed sense of hope. One

# KENNETH W. SAWYER

*continued*

of his published works is *Perspectives: Sermons by Ken Sawyer*, Wayland, MA (1984). In his spare time, he liked gardening, reading, biking, canoeing, and snowshoeing.

Ken is survived by his wife Carol Sawyer; and daughters: Amy Washek and Rebecca Howard.

A memorial service centered on Ken's family, friends, and the First Parish in Wayland congregation was held on May 21, 2022.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the First Parish in Wayland, Ken Sawyer Unrestricted Endowment, PO BOX 397, Wayland, MA 01778. OR to the UU Urban Ministry, Attn. Annie Stubbs, 10 Putnam St, Roxbury, MA 10019.

# ROBERT E. SENGHAS

(1928-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Dr. Robert “Bob” E. Senghas, who died on June 26, 2022, at the age of 94.

Bob was born on June 30, 1928, in Cleveland, OH to Erwin William Senghas and Lydia Mueller Senghas. He grew up in the environs of Cleveland, not practicing any religion within an institutional framework. In 1950, he received his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Yale University following which he earned his Bachelor of Legislative Law from Harvard Law School (1953). From 1953 to 1955, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps, first on infantry duty and then on legal duty as defense counsel, general courts-material, and base legal assistance officer. Thereafter, from 1955 to 1960, he was an attorney of law, practicing with the firm of Chickering and Gregory, San Francisco, CA.

Beginning in 1952, Bob occasionally attended the Unitarian church in Concord, MA. After having established residence in San Francisco in 1957, he began to go to the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco at first sporadically and then regularly. His interest in Unitarianism developed rapidly and he became active in church affairs. He discovered that his real enthusiasm was reserved for religious and philosophical questions and church activities. Bob’s search became more and more concentrated on religion; eventually, he wanted to become a UU minister to participate in and represent the UU community before the world and bring its social conscience to reform within the larger community. Following this call, he studied for the ministry at Starr King School for the Ministry graduating with his Master of Divinity in 1963. Later in 1984, he received his Doctor of Sacred Theology also from Starr King.



Rev. Dr. Senghas was ordained on October 27, 1963, by the Unitarian Church of Davis, CA (now the UU Church of Davis) where he carried out his first ministry (1963-1971). In 1971, he was installed as a minister of the Unitarian Society of Wellesley Hills, MA (now the UU Society of Wellesley Hills). He ministered to the Wellesley congregation for three years. In 1974, Rev. Dr. Senghas was appointed as the UUA’s Executive

Vice President. While assuming this position (1974-1979), he worked closely with the Rev. Dr. Robert Nelson West and Rev. Dr. Paul N. Carnes. After five years of work at denominational headquarters, he again got back to the heart of the religious life in the parish and accepted a call from the First UU Society of Burlington, VT (1979). His ministry marked growth in the congregation’s spiritual life. He led a discussion group series on “Building Your Own Theology,” and the church was filled with activity and religious growth. Honoring his rich and exemplary ministry at the First UU Society of Burlington, the congregation bestowed him as their minister emeritus upon his retirement in 1989.

Rev. Dr. Senghas was an outstanding minister and a real leader in the denomination. He provided his services to Starr King School of Ministry as vice-chairman of its governing board and chairman of its faculty selection committee. Likewise, he served the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco as a lay member of the Planning Committee, as a chairman of the By-Laws Revision Committee (1960-1961), and as a member of the 9th grade R.E Curriculum Committee (1960). In 1965, Rev. Dr. Senghas participated in the march in Selma, Alabama at the invitation of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In the summer of that year, he again traveled to Selma as part of a concentrated Unitarian Universalist “presence” advocating desegregation without violence.

# ROBERT E. SENGHAS

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While in Davis, CA, Bob helped establish a Human Relations Council, a suicide prevention answering service, and was active in draft counseling. He was a Draft Counselor at the University of California at Davis during the Vietnamese War. Furthermore, he served on the board of the Sacramento Chapter, ACLU of North California (1966-1968). He joined the Coordinating Council of the Burlington Ecumenical Action Ministry (BEAM). He was involved in the training of volunteers for the Chittenden County Hospice Organization in Vermont. He was a contributor to the original reading for the marriage ceremony, included in the anthology entitled *Great Occasions*, edited by Carl Seaburg (Beacon Press, 1968) and he was the author of *Cycles of Reflection*.

Bob was a person of tremendous integrity with a warm and thoughtful approach to human relationships. He had high leadership ability and loved people deeply. In his spare time, he enjoyed music, both classical and jazz, as a listener and as a performer.

Bob's son Stuart mentioned, "my mother, Bob's wife, introduced him to the UU Church. She was a lifelong Unitarian and grew up in the UU Church of Concord. Bob and Dorrie were married there. She reviewed all

his sermons and at times provided content, editing expertise, and depth to his sermons. My parents wrote Hymn No. 349 'We Gather Together' found in UU hymn books."

Bob is survived by his three sons: in Florida, Frederick Christian Senghas; in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, Edward Caiger Senghas and his wife Maureen Cotter; and in Vermont, Stuart Bailey Senghas and his wife Alicia Wein Senghas. He is also survived by Frederick's children Matthew Senghas; Sarah Hall and her husband Brian Hall, and their daughter Emma. Stuart's children Nathan, Lydia, and Isaiah; his niece, Rev. Catherine Senghas as well as many nieces and nephews and their children. His identical twin brother Richard is a retired Catholic priest.

A memorial service was held at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 152 Pearl Street, Burlington, VT 05401.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to one's favorite charity.

Notes of condolences can be sent to Stuart Senghas, PO Box 36, Wolcott, VT 05680.

# TODD J. TAYLOR

(1929-2023)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Todd James Taylor, who died on February 15, 2023, at the age of 93.

Todd was born on February 23, 1929, to Wannie Lee Taylor and Clare Strong. A native of Johnstown, PA, he went to Johnstown Central High School, received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Allegheny College, PA in 1951, and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree from Boston University, MA in 1955. Thereafter, he pursued his career serving the Unitarian Universalist denomination.

Rev. Todd was ordained by the Channing Unitarian Church, Rockland, MA on November 6, 1955, where he served from 1954 to 1958, leading a fund drive that resulted in the new RE building. In 1958, he accepted a call from All Peoples Church UU, Fort Worth, TX. He ministered at the Fort Worth church for four and a half years, helped the church grow, built up strong bonds of confidence and association, and added an education building. Subsequently, from 1963 to 1967, he served the UUA Extension department as a Fellowship Consultant traveling much of the United States producing program materials for Fellowships, organizing new Fellowships, and leading workshops.

In 1967, Rev. Taylor was called to the UU Church of Sarasota, FL. He remarkably designed programs that attracted young families and gathered the largest youth group in the state. His effective ministerial leadership enabled the entire congregation to grow as a caring and concerned community. In 1970, Rev. Taylor responded to the UUA's request to consider an IDR (Interdistrict Representative) position for the Southeastern United States. He served for twelve years as a generalist in church and Fellowship life, conducted leadership training, fundraising seminars, adult programming, and mediating crisis situations.



From 1982 to 1987, he was a settled minister at the First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque, NM. His ministry added several new areas to the church's institutional life and ministry including a Social Concerns Committee, Care Committee, Ministerial Relations Committee, staff pension and medical coverage, and an endowment fund. In 1987, Rev. Taylor retired from his full-time ministry yet even after his

retirement, he continued his services as a consulting minister to the Lakeland Florida Fellowship (1991) and co-director at the Pines, a Unitarian Universalist Retreat Center in Brooksville, FL (1991-1992).

Throughout his ministerial career, Rev. Taylor provided spiritual leadership to his congregants. One of his outstanding virtues was his ability to maintain friendly relationships with every member of his congregation. He was also equally active in denominational affairs serving as UUA Staff Assistant to the UUA Committee on Congregational Polity (1965) and to the UUA Committee on Goals (1966-1967). In addition, he sat on the board of the Southeast District of the UUA (1968-1969).

Similarly, Todd participated in outreach organizations serving underprivileged populations around the world. He was co-chair of Citizens for Crime Prevention, Fort Worth, TX (1960) and a member of the NAACP bi-racial team to integrate department store lunch counters, in Fort Worth (1962). In Florida, he served as a board member of the Sarasota County Anti-Poverty Program and the American Civil Liberties Union. Likewise in New Mexico, he was a member of the Task Force on Refugees, New Mexico Conference of Churches, and a Member of the Ministerial Alliance, Albuquerque.

He had a deep passion for writing, especially poetry, and self-published two volumes of original poems in 2019 and 2022. His research paper "Locating Potential New Members in Metropolitan Areas (1965)" was

# TODD J. TAYLOR

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published by the UUA. In his leisure time, he enjoyed tennis, canoeing, hiking, reading, weaving, and choral singing.

Todd is survived by his wife and beloved companion, Caroline Fenderson, of Palm Harbor, FL, a retired Unitarian Universalist Minister of Religious Education. Todd is also survived by his three adult children, Wannie Lee (Sonny, d. 2022), Todd Eliot (Allison), and Jenai Ann (Alan), their mother, Rev. Carol Ann (Marine) Taylor, and two grandchildren, Katie Taylor, and Will Taylor. He also leaves three stepdaughters, Jenifer Valingo, Georgia Atkinson, and Michele Marcon, and

their partners and children. Todd was preceded in death by his parents, five siblings — Wannie, George, Richard, Natalie, and Frederick — and his loving and devoted wife of forty years, Carolyn Ford Taylor (d. 2014).

In lieu of flowers, memorials, and donations can be sent to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

Notes of condolence can be sent to Caroline Fenderson, 29 Freshwater Drive, Palm Harbor, FL 34684.

# KATHRYN DAVIS THOMAS

(1944-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Kathryn “Kathie” Davis Thomas, who died on October 14, 2022, at the age of 78.

Kathie was born on January 3, 1944, in Wilmington, DE to William (Bill) and Grace. She was the middle of three girls. The First Unitarian Church of Wilmington was the center of her family’s social life. Kathie grew up participating in the social action projects of the church, played her flute at services on Sundays, and attended Unitarian events at Rowe Camp, Star Island, and youth conferences. She often spoke at Youth Sundays.

Kathie was a passionate learner. She did well in school and was always given responsibilities, such as teaching classes for younger grades. In 1965, she graduated from Mount Holyoke College, MA with her Bachelor of Arts in Zoology following which she received her Master of Arts in Teaching (Biology, 1966) from Johns Hopkins University, MD. After completing her master’s degree, she worked as a high school biology teacher for three years, as a parenting instructor for fifteen years, and then as a classroom management instructor for four years. In 1987, she decided to become Director of Religious Education at the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington. Kathie had done intense work at the church over the years and wanted to deepen her spiritual journey. The lifetime of support, loving guidance, and experiences in that church led her to the decision to become an ordained minister. Following this call, she earned her Master of Divinity from Lancaster Theological Seminary, PA in 1996.

She served the Wilmington church as a DRE for six years and then became their student minister, still holding the RE portfolio and adding preaching, counseling, and leadership of special projects. She was



involved in policy discussions and other significant decisions in the life of the congregation.

Rev. Thomas was ordained on April 22, 1996, by the church in which she grew up, the First Unitarian Society of Wilmington, DE. She served her first ordained ministry at the UU Fellowship of Harford County, Churchville, MD (1996-1998). She worked to strengthen the Committee on Ministry and put clear policies in

place. During her tenure, the church grew from 100 adult members and 70 children/youth to 167 adult members and 100 children/youth. From 1998 to 1999, Rev. Thomas served the Cedar Lane UU Church, Bethesda, MD as an interim associate minister. At Cedar Lane, she supervised and trained the pastoral associates, provided ministerial pastoral care, and instituted a covenanting process for the ministers, the Board, and the committees.

At the Main Line Unitarian Church, Devon, PA (1999-2001), Rev. Thomas oversaw the Lifespan Religious Education program and worked to empower, train, and support the committees and teachers. Likewise, during her ministry at the First Unitarian Society of Plainfield, NJ (2001-2003), she helped with the structural changes to the organization of committees and provided insights on needed changes. She shared her knowledge of managing conflict with the congregation and helped develop healthy responses to conflict and crises. She also contributed significantly to the Adult RE program, RE committee, music program, and other program areas for members of all ages. The congregation grew in all aspects of church life.

Rev. Thomas’ talent, creativity, energy, and compassion helped congregations during a period of major transition. She was exceptional in her conflict management skills and elevated the congregations to

# KATHRYN DAVIS THOMAS

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a level of harmony and growth. She provided good sermons; her worship services were thematically diverse with music integrated effectively, a good balance between ritual and intellect, and emphasized meditation. Her deep sense of religious connection inspired children, youth, and adults.

Rev. Thomas was active in the denomination serving on the board of Murray Grove Camp and Conference Center. She was Vice President of the UUMA-PK Minister's Chapter (2000-2001).

In addition to her ministry and denominational work, she served the community as President of the Cherrington Civic Association, DE (1986-1990) and as a Program Chair of the Delaware Valley Religious Educators (1988-1994). She wrote and edited "A Prayer Book" a collection of prayers for children and was a contributor to REACH (Religious Education Clearing House). In her leisure time, she enjoyed music (playing flute, singing, and listening), nature and biology, walking, reading, swimming, beachcombing, sailing, sewing and needlework, travel, theatre, and movies.

Kathie's daughter Karin shared, "My mother was always surrounded by music and her love of telling children's stories".

Kathie is survived by her daughters, Dr. Karin E. Thomas, and Dr. Kristin T. Nagy; Kris' husband, Daniel; granddaughter, Elise; sister, Margaret D. Porter and husband James Porter; niece, Susan Smith; and nephew Richard Strand, Jr.; grand-nieces; grand-nephews; and a grand-grand-nephew. She was preceded in death by her sister, Virginia Davis Strand.

A memorial service was held at the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, 730 Halstead Rd, Wilmington, DE 19803.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington with "In Memory of Rev. Kathryn D. Thomas" in the memo. Contributions will go to the children and youth religious education program at the church.

Condolence cards may be sent to Schoenberg Memorial Chapel, 519 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, DE 19809.



# SUE M. TURNER

(1940-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Sue M. Turner, who died on October 31, 2022, at the age of 82.

Sue was born on May 18, 1940, in Jamestown, NY to Louis L. Turner and Ruby Turner. She was the second of three sisters. Her childhood experience included walking in the woods, planting trees with the Girls Scouts, and picking wild strawberries in the early morning with her mom. She attended the American Baptist church with her parents as a child and then a Methodist church as a teenager.

Sue received her Bachelor of Science in Home Economics in 1962 following which she taught Junior High School Home Economics until 1966. She then dedicated herself full-time as a homemaker and as a mother of her three daughters. During this time, she found the Jefferson Unitarian Church in Golden, CO, and involved herself in the religious education program, conducting children's worship, leading singing, and social action. She also continued her graduate degree and earned her Master of Education from Antioch College, OH, (1975). Following graduation, Sue worked as an instructor of political science at the Community College of Denver, CO. Soon after, she began to search for religious value and spiritual strength. Her involvement in the life of the Jefferson Church allowed her to begin a formal process of recognizing her emerging theology. She developed a deep abiding interest and passion for the Unitarian movement, served a term as President, and was a member of their Ministerial Search Committee. She also got involved with the churches in the district and realized that serving Unitarian Universalism as a professional leader would be the best opportunity to



live her life. With this call, she entered the Iliff School of Theology, CO, and earned her Master of Divinity in 1983.

Rev. Turner was ordained by her home congregation, the Jefferson Unitarian Church in CO, on December 4, 1983, where she served as minister-at-large from 1983 to 1987. Unique about her ministry at the Jefferson congregation was its project orientation. Rev. Turner associated herself with the Foundation

for Urban and Neighborhood Development, a non-profit organization with a history of structural social change and the mitigation of social impacts in the western United States and Pacific Basin. Her ministry dealt with the creation of structural social change which enhanced personal power enabling people to discover their options and strengths through the active process of dealing with their vulnerability. In addition to the benefits of projects of this at-large ministry, Rev. Turner supported the church's work by creating a network of people working together to support Unitarian and Universalist principles and purpose in the non-UU community.

Following Jefferson Unitarian Church, Rev. Turner served as a district executive for the Mountain Desert District, Boulder, CO (1987-1994), and a district consultant for the Ohio-Meadville District, Akron, OH (1994-1998). She was creative, collaborative, and a contributor to open and constructive communication developing healthy functioning Districts. After eleven years in denominational district work, Rev. Turner served as an interim minister to the following congregations: Woodinville UU Church, WA (1998-1999); Saltwater UU Church, WA (1999-2000); the UU Church of the Lehigh Valley, PA (2000-2002); the UU Congregation at Willamette Falls, OR (2002-2003); and the UU Congregation of Rockville, MD (2003-2005). Her interim works were a complementarity of

# SUE M. TURNER

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congregational goals and organizational structures. She brought into her ministry highly developed skills in organizational development. Subsequently, Rev. Turner provided her interim services to the First UU Church of Rochester, MN (2005-2006); the UU Church of Cheyenne, WY (2006-2007); and the UU Metro Atlanta North Congregation, Roswell, GA (2008-2009) before her retirement on August 1, 2009.

Rev. Turner's ministry was aimed at raising the dignity of people in communities which were made vulnerable by societal change. Her holistic, inclusive approach to life was healing and energizing to all those who experienced her. She could identify the spiritual dimensions of the grittiest and most political dimensions of social service and social justice work.

She was deeply involved denominationally participating at the Mountain Desert District (MDD) Leadership Weekend, serving as Vice President of the district UUMA chapter. She supported the UU Women's Federation; the UU Metro Denver Urban Coalition as well as MDD efforts.

In her spare time, Sue loved tending the garden, spending time with her family and friends, and being involved in her community. She was a frequent visitor to the saltwater pool at the Great Sand Dunes. She was a gifted musician and a singer.

Sue is survived by her two daughters, Teresa Kent Zink (Michael) and Mary Kent (Quince Rickard); five grandchildren, Skyler Clark, Henry Zink, Lilly Clark, Anna Zink, and Turner Rickard; and her two sisters, Anne Huffman, and Sally Furman. She was preceded in death by her youngest daughter, Jane Kent Clark.

A celebration of life was held at the Jefferson Unitarian Church in Golden, CO.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her name to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the World Wildlife Fund, or the Alzheimer's Association.

Notes of condolence can be sent to Teresa Zink, 115 Biddle Rd., Paoli, PA 19301 or emailed to this address: [teresa.zink@gmail.com](mailto:teresa.zink@gmail.com).

# MARK PETERS WARD

(1953-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Mark Peters Ward, who died on July 13, 2022, at the age of 68.

Mark was born on August 17, 1953, in Wilmington, DE to Cynthia and Jack Ward. The eldest of five children, he grew up in central New Jersey. Growing up, he discovered his dimension of spirituality at the Unitarian Church of Princeton, NJ. The church modeled for him the kind of things that a religious community was capable of, the church became a refuge, a place where he felt safe. He believed that he belonged there. He became president of the Liberal Religious Youth group in his senior year, and in 1971, a youth delegate to the General Assembly. As an adult, he was active serving as president of the board at the Kanawha Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Charleston, West Virginia.

Mark received his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from Earlham College, Richmond, IN in 1975 following which he was admitted to a graduate program at Bryn Mawr College, PA. He wrote his thesis on American philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce, completed his master's degree in philosophy (1976), and realized that academic life would not satisfy him. He started writing articles for newspapers and found journalism exhilarating. His journalist ambition carried him to the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, NY where he graduated with a Master of Science in Journalism in 1979. Also in 1979, he married Debbie, the woman he met at the Princeton church. Mark then worked as a journalist for twenty years for the Milwaukee Journal and Milwaukee Journal Sentinel winning both statewide and national reporting awards.

After many years of extensive lay ministry and reflection, Mark wanted to invest himself more



deeply in the UU movement. For twenty years, he held numerous positions of lay leadership at the Unitarian Universalist Church West in Brookfield, WI. He was president of the board for two terms during a half-million-dollar capital campaign as well as a chairman of two search committees, the committee on ministry and a long-range planning committee. He taught children's and adult education classes and led children's and

adult worship. This richly satisfying experience made him realize that ministry was his calling. Becoming a minister, he hoped to encourage the congregation to serve to name and live out its vision. In the wake of this call, in 2004, he graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School, IL with his Master of Divinity.

Rev. Ward was ordained by the UU Congregation of Asheville, NC on February 6, 2005, where he served in the parish from 2004 to 2021. His ministry was instrumental in moving the congregation in the direction of a richer, broader-based, and more inclusive social justice ministry. He made the congregation stronger in dealing with racism, gay rights, battered women, etc., and was strongly committed to welcoming newcomers. Rev. Ward supported the religious education program and intergenerational worship and activities offering RE classes, as well as adult education classes. He infused the congregation with freshness and revitalized it in a way that created a lot of growth, and his success was evidenced by the dramatic growth in membership. People felt good about being a part of the congregation. He also served the congregation as a Social Justice Chair (2018-2019) and Anti Racism/JTW chair (2018-2019). In 2021, he retired from his active ministry.

With his strong UU background and his UU connections, Rev. Ward was a walking denominational activity. He co-led a workshop on church publicity

# MARK PETERS WARD

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at the 1990 General Assembly in Milwaukee. He was a Chapter Leader for Southeast UUMA (2008-2010) and a member of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association and the Friends of Religious Humanism. Rev. Ward was a wonderful preacher and a strong and visionary leader who fostered lay leadership and made the church healthier. His powerful leadership combined with his compassion and desire for the spiritual growth of the church community showed his commitment to the larger UU movement.

Mark was also a strong advocate of efforts to build community. He became a voice for marriage equality in North Carolina and was involved with the community's Marriage Equality coalition. His strong, visible stand on marriage equality brought community attention. In addition, he worked with Habitat for Humanity. In his spare time, he loved music and played the piano and recorder. He was also an avid gardener, an intrepid cook, and enjoyed hiking, canoeing, and sailing.

Mark is survived by his spouse: Debbie; daughters: Anna, Erica, and Meredith; son-in-law: Langdon; grandchildren: Eliza and Lucille; and siblings: Keith, Terry, and the Rev. Lisa Ward.

A memorial service to celebrate his life was held on Friday, July 29, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville, 1 Edwin Pl., Asheville, NC, 28801.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Mark's name may be made to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville (address above) or Asheville Greenworks.

Notes of condolences can be sent to Debbie Ward, 60 Elk Mountain Scenic Highway, Asheville, NC 28804.

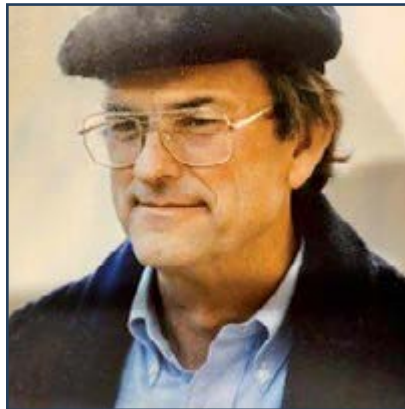
# JACK YOUNG

(1933-2022)

The Ministries and Faith Development staff offer our condolences to the family and colleagues of the Rev. Jack Young, who died on August 17, 2022, at the age of 89.

Jack was born on September 22, 1933, in Liberty, MO to Frank McKinley Young and Irene Louise Young. He spent his early years in a small-town, surrounded by woods, rivers, and lakes. From that memory he wrote one of his first sermons, remembering the warning from his mother as a child, “Not to go beyond the Sheriff’s chicken yard.” The sermon was about early boundaries that were set for us and how we move beyond them in life. As a teen in Kansas City, he questioned the limits and methods of organized religions. While at the University of Arkansas, he was introduced to a Unitarian Fellowship. Jack was comfortable with its approach and drawn to the intellectual and moral honesty of the denomination. Following graduation, he practiced law for 26 years in Little Rock, Arkansas. He joined the Little Rock Unitarian Church and was an active member, particularly interested in social justice. He lost his first job as an attorney for the city by disagreeing with then Gov. Faubus on the school integration issue, and later participated in the march supporting the integration of Central High.

Jack decided he no longer wanted to continue practicing law and had achieved all he wanted to in that arena. In 1981, Jack went on a solo motorcycle trip to Nantucket to research family genealogy on his mother’s side. He met up with distant relatives many of whom became good friends. During that trip, he decided to retire from his law practice and pursue a career where he could possibly “help someone keep their ox out of the ditch, rather than haul it out after the fact.” Back when he was introduced to a just-formed Unitarian Fellowship at the University of Arkansas, he had thought about



becoming a Unitarian minister. Jack found himself considering ministry again, but this time from a greater base of experience in life. Becoming a minister, he wanted to grow his own spiritual awareness and share the process with others. With this call, he graduated with his Master of Divinity from Starr King School for the Ministry in 1986.

Rev. Young was ordained in 1987 by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga, TN where he served his first settled ministry (1987-1992). At the Chattanooga congregation, he concentrated on inner structures and programs and laid the groundwork for a Wednesday evening program of meaningful dimension, which he called “Wonderful Wednesday.” His tenure marked improved programming for younger people, increased church membership, and Sunday Services attendance. He introduced and facilitated discussion groups and adult education programs that were well-liked and attended. He assisted in efforts to improve the organization and productivity of the congregation as well as introducing innovative fundraising activities. In this regard, he was particularly pleased to host religious studies scholar Huston Smith, whom he greatly admired, as a speaker and guest for the Church and community. Furthermore, he represented the church in several community forums, including television, and at regional and national denominational activities.

In 1992, Rev. Young was called to the UU Congregation of Rockville, MD where he would serve until 1998. His ministry at Rockville was also wonderfully productive. He was very involved with the teens at Rockville and helped youth understand the UU approach to religious life, empowerment, and self-confidence. In 1999 the Rockville congregation honored him as their minister emeritus. Subsequently, Rev. Young served the Bull Run UUs, in Manassas, VA as an interim minister

# JACK YOUNG

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(2003-2004) assisting the congregation through many opportunities. He was a nurturer, teacher, spiritualist, and activist. His services were thoughtfully put together and his sermons were stimulating and thought-provoking. He was excellent at conflict resolution and entreated and challenged congregants to look below the surface to deepen one's self-awareness.

In addition to his parish and interim ministry, Rev. Young served the denomination as president of the Chesapeake UUMA (1998).

In 1972, Jack was elected to the Little Rock Board of Directors (City Council). He was president of the Little Rock Racquet Club (1975). Likewise, in 1976, he served as President of Metroplan (Central Arkansas Council of Governments).

When he retired, he did woodworking. He made furniture, a name tag holder for UUCR, and a podium for BRUU (Bull Run Unitarian Universalist).

Jack is survived by his wife Diane Bates; his children: Sidney Young (Linda), Scott Young, and Anne Bates-Young; stepchildren: Jennifer Bates, and Nicholas Bates (Diana); grandchildren: Andrew, Meghan (Paul Finizio), Bryan (Alicia), Nicholas, Isabella, and Olivera Bates; as well as great-grandchildren: Maia and Otto Finizio, Kaylee, and Madison Young. He was predeceased by his parents Irene Louise McGill and Frank M. Young, and his sister Joanne Watkins.

A memorial service is being planned for April 1 at 2:00 pm at the Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Ct, Burke, VA 22015, where he is interred.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Parkinson's Association.

Notes of condolence can be sent to Diane Bates, 7105 White Ridge Lane, Fairfax Station, VA 22039.