

## THE PARISH CO-MINISTER'S SABBATICAL PLANS FOR THE CHURCH YEAR 2005-2006

FROM THE SABBATICAL  
COORDINATING COMMITTEE

During 2005-2006, West Shore's Parish Co-Ministers, Kathleen Rolenz and Wayne Arnason, will be using their contracted sabbatical leave time. This brochure describes the plans and the meaning of the sabbatical for our congregational life in the year ahead.

### ***What is a sabbatical?***

A sabbatical is a very old concept that relates to a period of rest or change, usually after six years. The root is from the word "Sabbath", the biblical term, meaning the day of rest after 6 days of labor. Unitarian Universalist congregations frequently grant their ministers a sabbatical period with full pay in recognition of their difficult and consuming work. The result is a renewal of the ministers' outlook, new directions of thought and growth of vision. The plan for the sabbatical at West Shore is developed by the ministers according to the following from our Congregation's Letter of Agreement with our Ministers :

"The Co-Ministers shall use sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation and other forms of professional religious growth. Sabbatical leave accrues at the rate of one month per year of service, with leave to be taken after five but before seven years of service. No more than six months of sabbatical leave may be used within any twelve month period, and sabbatical leave may not be used in conjunction with vacation. *The sabbatical plan must be approved by the Board of Trustees and the congregation at least one year in advance.* "

At the June 2004 Annual Meeting, the congregation approved a sabbatical leave of 5.5 months or 23 weeks for our parish co-ministers as recommended by the Board. In the year since, the plan has been revised based on available funding.

### ***Will there be a Resident Minister during this time?***

Yes, Tamara L., West Shore's 04-05 Intern Minister, has been hired by the Board to serve as Summer Minister and Sabbatical Minister during the two 2005 sabbatical leave periods. Tamara has passed the UUA Fellowship Committee, and will formally graduate from Meadville Lombard Theological School next year. She plans to be in search for her own settlement during the winter of 2006. Tamara's Sabbatical Ministry will be recognized as a Meadville Lombard field placement supervised by the Rev. Midge S., our Minister Emerita.

During the Spring 2006 sabbatical leave period of six weeks, there will be no resident minister. The Sunday services will be offered by a combination of our Minister Emerita, guest ministers, and Worship Associates.

### ***What is the Sabbatical Coordinating Committee?***

The Sabbatical Coordinating Committee will serve as a resource to the Congregation, the Board and the Sabbatical Minister. The members of the Sabbatical Coordinating Committee are

George B., Chair,  
Kathy S. (Director of Lifespan  
Faith Development),  
Tamara L. (Sabbatical Minister),  
Gary K. and Phil R. (Board),  
Roxanne W. (Worship Associates)  
Monika H-R. (Pastoral Associates).

The main functions will be to provide information to the Congregation about sabbatical planning, organization and issues on a regular basis. The Committee will meet on a regular basis to hear reports from each member regarding his or her area of responsibility and discuss issues that arise and recommend support that is needed.



### ***Isn't the construction period a bad time for the ministers to be away?***

Actually, it's a good time. The Board was convinced that this year when our usual program and worship schedule will be disrupted anyway is a better time for the sabbatical leave than the following year when we will be in the new building and excited about renewing our regular schedule of programs and worship. Starting 06-07 with a new building and refreshed ministers is the best plan.

### ***What are the times when the ministers will be away?***

The ministers sabbatical periods are spread out over the year to minimize the impact. They will both be here during the winter months when we have our heaviest program schedule, when we have our Christmas and Easter Services, when we do the canvass and budget building process, and when we look forward to finishing construction, dedicating the new building and celebrating our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Their planned times away are:

June 30-July 18, 2005

September 12- December 21, 2005

April 26 – June 5, 2006

### ***What are the Sabbatical Goals and Plans for our Ministers?***

Kathleen and Wayne tell us: "*Our major goal for our sabbatical is to explore the landscape of worship both within and outside of Unitarian Universalist congregations. We will:*

- Travel to six different parts of the U.S. in the first two sabbatical periods visiting both UU & non-UU congregations that seat 250-600.
- Study liturgy, preaching & music, especially ones nationally known for great worship or preaching.
- Write weekly reflections as we travel around the country in a "blog" found via the church website.
- Encourage the congregation to visit other churches during our sabbatical and document their experiences.

