



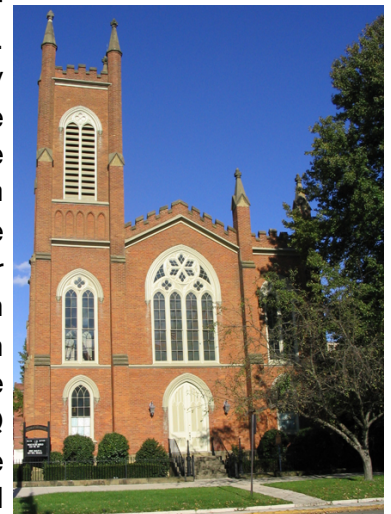
The Spark

The Newsletter of
the Chalice Lighters
Program Committee
Winter 2020

The Central East Region Chalice Lighters Program works to encourage new and existing congregations to grow, both in terms of numbers and in their efforts to increase justice, compassion, and spirituality. The grants support the growth of UU congregations of all sizes and clusters of congregations. This edition of The Spark highlights two approaches to this vision:

Chalice Lighters Grant Helps Air Condition Historic Sanctuary

The **First Unitarian Universalist Society of Marietta, Ohio** is a 115-member congregation. Its Sanctuary was built in 1858 and is on the U.S. register of historic sites. The Chalice Lighters Program Committee recently awarded Marietta a \$20,000 grant to support a portion of its comprehensive renovation program—the installation of air-conditioning in its Sanctuary. The Fellowship's grantwriters surveyed new and potential members and asked them what improvements would be of most value to them in attracting more people like them. The overwhelming response for physical improvements was to air condition the Sanctuary. The only air-conditioned space is the Fellowship Hall in the basement that only seats 75 and is used for services and special events in the summer. The Marietta Fellowship is the only religious organization in the area willing to conduct weddings for non-traditional couples, e.g., LGBTQ persons or persons of different faiths, several of whom have joined the congregation some time after the event. Air conditioning the Sanctuary will likely attract more visitors, some of whom might become members.



Chalice Lighters Grant Helps Hire Membership Coordinator



Washington Ethical Society (WES) is a 366-member congregation in Washington, DC. It is jointly affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association and the American Ethical Union. WES applied for a Chalice Lighters grant to grow its membership by hiring a part-time coordinator to be the point of contact for a variety of membership recruitment and retention activities. WES' minister (platform leader in Ethical Union terminology), Rev. Amanda Poppei, saw the grant as an opportunity to support volunteers who were already engaged in this work and to be strategic about building on the membership growth already being experienced. The \$20,000 award from the Chalice Lighters Program Committee has allowed WES to hire a part-time Membership Coordinator, Maceo Thomas, who began in November 2019.

Maceo Thomas is happy to be part of the WES team as the new Membership Coordinator. Maceo has experience serving communities from many different life experiences and is excited about bringing them all to WES. Maceo served as a health extension agent as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Senegal. Maceo has a master's in public health from the University of North Carolina where an entire two semesters was spent defining "community." He is brand new to both Unitarian Universalism and Ethical Culture and is excited to learn about both as part of his commitment to life-long learning.