

President's Message – June 2015

Well, it's the new church year and that means the first order of business for the Board was to finalize the Budget for 2015 – 2016. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our members, both old and new, the Board was able to add much that was needed back into the budget we reviewed together at the annual congregational meeting. Some of the most notable restorations include:

- Restoration of all staff positions and hours, with cost of living increases.
- A raise for Rachel Wathen to continue her work on adult religious education programs.
- Additional funds for Our Whole Lives (OWLs) training in hopes expand the program.
- Addition of a children's choir director to work with Dave Simmons.
- Payment to the UUA and MAR for about 25% of our annual dues.

Before the budget meeting, however, the Board met to go through an orientation to set the foundation of our working relationship over the next year. I would again like to thank our new Board members; Marjorie Rice, Adam Koehler and Brian Nelson, for their willingness to take on the business of the church. Also, we welcomed Randy Burdge onto the Board as Treasurer as Vickie Trott has stepped down to pursue other interests in the church. I thank Vickie for her service, and am sure Randy will fill the role nicely.

We were missing one member of the Board at the Orientation, however. Michael Monthey has chosen to step down from his position as Board Secretary. Mike was a wonderful addition to the Board and I thank him for his service. This now leaves the position of Secretary open to interested members looking for a new way to serve the church. Anyone who would be interested in joining the Board in this role can discuss it with myself, or any Board member. The sooner we fill this role, the more smoothly it will allow the Board to operate and focus on the work of the church, so please don't hesitate to communicate your interest.

As we enter into the summer months, we will see the annual lull in activity around the church as members, friends and visitors travel and take some time to enjoy weather on weekends and evenings. This often presents us with a paradox over the summer months where we need to maintain church programming and facilities with fewer participants and able bodied volunteers. As you enjoy your summer, please also remember that SMUUCH remains open, and needs you and your generosity of time to continue offering the programs and services we all cherish in this faith community. In July Jim Crist, consulting with Fern Aaron, will be delivering a sermon about making connections in terms of work and fellowship at SMUUCH. I look forward to their message and the conversations it will bring. The Board is also working on a project to make identifying the various opportunities to serve just a little easier, stay tuned.

I'm excited about this church year, and what it has in store.

Zach Irwin
Board President