

Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater
President's Report
May, 2010

The Church year began with three new staff members: Rev. Bill Welch, Dr. David Katz and Karen Roeder. The transitions went smoothly due to the fine caliber of the new employees. I thank the congregation members for their enthusiastic support of the new staff.

The Rev. Bill Welch brought a lot of experience in Religious Education, greatly enhancing our programming to children and youth. At Board meetings he became the conscience we sometimes forgot, especially in the throes of budget debates. Also, his constant mantra of 'Intergenerational Activities' spurred on the Intergenerational Carnival and the Spring Retreat. Hopefully, traditions have begun.

When music director Frank Wells resigned in June a search was begun for a qualified candidate who could work with our choir and our congregation. Dr. David Katz was selected and our music program did not miss a beat. Under his teaching and direction individual choir members as well as the entire chorale have shown wonderful growth. Knowing the congregation wanted to offer music to the children David started a children's choir. The choir has become a great addition to our worship services.

During the summer Yvonne Charneskey, Office Administrator, resigned to work in her own company. Karen Roeder, the bookkeeper, applied to fill the vacancy. The two positions were combined and Karen has greatly enhanced the quality of services to the congregation. Her efficient manner and caring attitude have been a great asset to church operations.

The Board of Trustees began the year by appointing a Task Force to consider alternative approaches to ministry within our congregation, and to provide a plan by December. As the Task Force began its work it realized that to responsibly do its job it was necessary to gain a clear vision of the congregation's ministry: its mission, goals, needs, governance and resources. Using input from the congregation it was determined a Strategic Planning committee needed to be established to determine our long-term needs. Tricia Weimer, chair, is meeting weekly with committee members Scott Milinder, Amanda Patenow, Peggy Tanney and Jefferson Taylor. Be ready to reply when the committee asks you for your vision for our community.

Our congregation was, of course, affected by the sluggish economy. I was hoping that wouldn't be so, but many folks experienced declining income from cutbacks in employment or from decreased value of investments. It is good that members continue to find comfort and support at UUC during these difficult times.

Because of this the Board chose in January not to extend Rev. Bills contract for another year. With the stewardship campaign and budgeting process not ending until April, the Board did not feel comfortable guaranteeing employment to Bill when we did not know if we would have the income to support the position.

The stewardship committee kicked off the annual campaign with the great intergenerational carnival. The committee was quite pleased that members who increase their pledges did so. Despite a great effort the budget for the coming year is \$13,000 less than last year. To continue the momentum spurred on by Rev. Bill and his inspiring work with in Religious Education, Christine Pensa's position will be expanded to a Religious Education Coordinator working 25 hours a week. This position will be expanded in the next few years into a credentialed RE Director.

This church year has been challenging, and at times a struggle. I want to thank the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees for their support in maintaining UUC's strong voice for liberal religion in the Tampa Bay area.

As this church year ends we look forward to the coming year with Terry Stapleton as President of the Board of Trustees. Our congregation will continue to thrive in new and better ways with Terry's "out of the box" thinking.

Shalom,

Sue

Sue Boone,
President, Board of Trustees