



# CROSSROADS

## NEWS OF UU COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

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### **Member Spotlight** ***The Community Ministry of*** ***The Rev. Rick Klimowicz*** ***Ministry to the Homeless and Mentally Ill***

Once, I worked with a black woman in her late 20's. She was depressed, anxious, irritable and suicidal. She described what may have been hallucinations, but were more likely a West Indian cultural description of what

was behind her mental health symptoms. She had a 10th grade education and had been unemployed for over a year. She relied on her "fiancé" to work, manage money, provide transportation, and help raise four young children. They were arguing. She had stopped taking medications altogether. She was not eating, sleeping, or exercising well. She may have had asthma. She paid poor attention to safety. She lacked self expression and esteem, concentration, recall, initiative, perseverance, insight and judgment. She had few, if any, social and pleasurable interests and did not use community resources.

After a behavioral health occupational therapy (OT) evaluation, she agreed upon an OT Plan of Care and identified an OT Goal of better relieving depression, asserting feelings, obtaining assistance, and pursuing educational and leisure resources with minimum assistance and encouragement. Upon discharge, in five days, we had worked one on one on depression, assertiveness, food assistance, childcare options, the local adult ed office, and local leisure resources. I hesitated to give her materials also on money management and transportation options, but I did anyway, because I suspect the conflict she was having with her fiancé may be related to her heavy dependence upon him. In the Life Skills Group, she expressed appreciation for these materials, and she asked for greater help with grocery shopping, emergency food resources, spending habits, and household management. I also saw her in other OT groups, helping her with setting vocational training and other goals, "spazzing less," and handling stress. And she had opportunities to socialize and perform on the unit too. She improved cognitively and social-emotionally and met some objectives, despite the length of stay. She will receive after-care services in the community.

Of course, I am not just a registered, licensed Occupational Therapist, helping behavioral health patients "live their lives to the fullest." I have ministerial education, training, and experience to draw upon. I have learned that being in relationship with God, humanity, and the natural world can be one of the most joyful experiences imaginable. These relationships can be the best--and the most challenging-- part of a person's life. They may even play a critical role in a person's health, happiness, and well-being. Because interested patients may get better, in part, through integrating spirituality into their everyday life, I help them through grief issues, identify their spiritual gifts, use faith based resources, and deal with class and cultural issues throughout the OT Process. Moreover, I informally work with interested unit staff who are often emotionally and spiritually exhausted from the intense service we provide on the inpatient behavioral health floor. Finally, I meet with and help the Protestant chaplain with hospital-wide holiday worship services. I want us all to find greater meaning and purpose in our life work and relations.

I also have an unpaid ministry to the homeless and/or mentally ill through the UU Church, in Meriden, CT where I affiliate. I write or speak about my role in the community, about social and economic justice, and about mental health and addiction recovery issues in our church newsletter, on our church e-mail chats, and from our church pulpit. And I co-lead the Youth Group there. Working with the Social Responsibility Committee, I helped our high schoolers collect and wrap winter holiday gifts for 26 homeless men at a nearby shelter.

My ministry at the church extends to lifespan RE and worship as well as community outreach. I consult with the Children's RE Committee and the Adult RE Focus Group. I participate in and sometimes lead a Spiritual Sharing Circle. And I moderate a new Spiritual Direction Group for UU's who identify with reform Judaism, liberal Christianity, universal Theism or a similar theological orientation. Ministerial education, training and experience has enriched my life work and relations, too!

Peace,  
**Rick**



## Deep Chair Conversations

By UUSCM President, The Rev. Deborah Holder

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

*Gal 5:22-24*

Among the joys and spiritual benefits of serving on the UUSCM board is the opportunity to engage together in what former Board member, Marie Oakberg, calls "deep chair conversations." Your board has had several of these deeply theological conversations since last Fall when we began collaborating on "framing the future" of our Unitarian Universalist community ministry movement. As the professional organization for Unitarian Universalist fellowshiped and lay community-based ministry, we often feel as one with Jacob wrestling the angel. Around and around we go necessarily engaging too narrowly defined understandings of congregational polity and ministry. And like Jacob and his spiritual struggle, the outcome of these deep chair conversations is increased hope, compassion, and a deeper understanding of purpose.

This month's Board meeting generated some affirmations I joyously share with you:

"Ministry is mutual, among persons in community. It is not owned by any person, or contained by any institution. Persons may be consciously engaged in ministry, and institutional structures may be set up to encourage and support ministry, but both are there to help make efficacious ministry happen, and to the extent that they do not, they are to be encouraged/inspired to a higher calling.

"The ultimate knowing of ministry is the knowing not of theology, arts, history, science, oratory, or any other "third person" knowledge. The ultimate knowing of ministry

is between persons (like the "I see you" of the Na'vi language in the movie, Avatar). We can learn much from seminaries, workshops, and schools of all sorts, and we should, indeed, equip ourselves as well as we can. But we are all called into a ministry of knowing ourselves and others, persons as persons."

So writes Bob Miess, the Chair of our Lay Ministry Working Group. Bob concludes: "It is time (it is always time!) to ask, "how is Spirit best allowed in this time, in this place, among these people, to be like the wind – breathing life where it will?"

UUSCM affirms a vision of UU Community Ministry that James Luther Adams spoke of as the "love that will not let us go." Your Board has completed its planning process and in the weeks to come, will be releasing details and recruiting additional Board members willing to serve a vision of the future that supports deepening not only our individual and collective community ministries, but also our understanding of the mission of the church in this complex and broken world.

UUSCM exists to recognize, affirm and support UU Community Ministry, "grounded in a sense of mission that serves the creative, sustaining and transforming powers, not ultimately of our making, that recognizes our need to be responsible in our relationships with one another and the earth, and that has established institutional practices and patterns that liberate a larger ministry." (Rebecca Parker, *A Hand is Laid Upon Us: The Theological Challenge of Community Ministry*).

For those among you contemplating serving the mission of UUSCM by joining the elected leadership, be forewarned: You will be transformed by the fruits of the Spirit.

*Love, Deb*

### 2010 GA Preview - June 23-27, 2010 - Minneapolis

**Workshop:** Community-based Ministries: Out of the Box-Into the World

**Annual Breakfast Meeting:** Share the vision of a liberated larger ministry!

**Networking:** Expanded opportunities to network with your Community Ministry colleagues throughout GA

**Booth:** Display your ministry and come learn about what other Community Ministers are doing

**UUSCM Chapter Organizers Training:** Come learn how you can organize to support and affirm your community ministries in your local area

**Community Ministry Award**



## **A Report On CONVO 2009** *By The Rev. Michelle Walsh, Membership Director*

There was a little something for everyone at our CONVO gathering in Ottawa in November, under an overarching theme of storytelling. Mini-stories gave ministers, including community ministers, opportunities to share the stories of their ministries,

while the keynote speaker, Thomas Moore, shared humorous and challenging insights into liberal religious leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> century through storytelling. Even worship was woven around themes of personal experiences and stories. One of the most powerful I was privileged to hear was Rev. Dr. Patrick O'Neill's sharing of his own broken and healing experiences in ministry.

For those who wanted an in-depth learning experience with the same group of colleagues across our six days together, there were chapter meetings on topics such as spiritual direction, trauma ministry, preaching, conflict transformation, worship, etc. Others, such as myself, preferred to dabble in a range of workshops over our days together through what were called Short Stories, grouped by three categories: developing ministerial agility, deepening emotional understanding, and stretching our boundaries. I attended several workshops on anti-oppression education themes, including exploring

appropriate cultural engagement and one that introduced a new anti-racism DVD called "Making Whiteness Visible" – both were highly valuable. The range of workshops included clergy ethics, church finances, mental health issues in our ministries, sexuality and the ministry, mindfulness in ministry, one on Rebecca Parker's new book *Saving Paradise*.

There were also opportunities for formal and informal collegial dialogues, including with our new UUA President, Peter Morales, who introduced himself as a community minister at CONVO (and we're very excited that both Peter and Don Southworth have joined UUSCM, the first time ever a UUA president has done so!). Feedback was also sought on the proposed new UUMA Guidelines, which do include new sections on community ministry, though the bulk of the feedback given at CONVO centered on the guidelines against ministerial sexual conduct. I encourage community ministers to read the proposed new guidelines carefully and participate fully in your chapter discussions to provide feedback before our annual General Assembly UUMA business meeting.

Mark your calendars now for the new CENTER Institute for Excellence in Ministry retreat in Pacific Grove, CA, Feb. 7-11, 2011. Registration packets will come out in Spring 2010 and anticipated costs for registration and housing will be \$700-\$1,000, though scholarships and grants will also be available. It's important that the voices and experiences and visions of possibilities of community ministers be heard among our colleagues!

### **Membership Moments** *by The Rev. Michelle Walsh, Membership Director*

As of January 1, I assumed responsibility for the Membership Director board position of UUSCM. In the coming weeks, I will be developing the UUSCM Chapter strategy with board member Connie Yost and our current chapter coordinators. I will also be in touch directly with chapter coordinators over the next few weeks to check in on the community ministry status in your area and determine what your needs may be. Feel free to be in touch by email sooner if you like! [walsh\\_michelle@msn.com](mailto:walsh_michelle@msn.com)

### **Join UUSCM Today!**

Join with your UU Community Ministry colleagues as we network and learn from each other, and educate and advocate for Community Ministry. Just follow the easy instructions for joining on our website [www.uuscm.org](http://www.uuscm.org). Questions? Contact UUSCM Membership Director Rev. Michelle Walsh.

### **Seven New Members Join UUSCM** *We extend our hearty welcome to our new members*

**Mark De Courval, Elizabeth Gish, Kimberly Cloutier Green, Doug Jones, Rev. Peter Morales, Teresa Schwartz, Rev. Don Southworth**

**Membership Total: 141 includes 6 Aspirants, 19 Candidates, 18 Lay, 98 Clergy**

## UUSCM FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN -- DONATE NOW

Thank you to all who donated to the UUSCM Fundraising Campaign in 2009. It's not too late to send in your charitable contribution to UUSCM for tax year 2009 -- just date your check 12/31/2009! Your **tax-deductible contribution** will be **matched** dollar for dollar by the UU Funding Panel Grant, which means your gift will be effectively doubled! Your gift will help UUSCM continue its mission of education, advocacy and support of UU community ministry. You can **donate** at any time on our website at [www.uuscm.org](http://www.uuscm.org), or mail your check to UUSCM Administrator Rev. Connie Yost (address on page 8). Consider having your **Ordination Collection** designated for UUSCM. It will also be **matched** dollar for dollar!

## From the UUMA Treasurer: Concerning Issues of Dues Restructuring

*Reprinted from the UUMA News, Winter 2009/10*

Specific concerns raised so far fall mainly into two categories: questions regarding what professional organizations can be deducted from the dues amount and general questions of fairness in the structure itself. The proposal that you passed included the wording that "Any UUMA member who pays dues to another professional organization necessary to their work in ministry may apply for the minimum." Our intent with that wording was especially to respond to the needs of community ministers who may be paying a substantial dues amount to another professional organization, membership in which is either required or expected for their employment/service.

While we had hoped individuals would be capable of determining whether a particular membership was necessary to their work, yet a great number of questions have arisen regarding outside memberships. The wording will stand for 2009 and members may select to pay the minimum if they belong to any other organization (including LREDA and SCM.) However, we would like to also suggest that members consider subtracting the amount of these 'other' dues from their total UUMA dues rather than defaulting to the minimum of \$144. Please note that in 2010, to make this clearer in the future, we are considering either a flat rate deduction from the dues amount or requesting that individuals list dues amounts and membership documentation for any subtractions from the proposed UUMA dues.

Needless to say, members continue to make special requests for their unique situations. And, needless

to say, it is virtually impossible for any dues structure to attend to and be completely fair to every possible situation among our 1600 members. We understand that it is not going to be perfectly equitable to every member in every possible situation. In addition to the large category of community ministers (with widely varying compensation and needs), we are attempting to respond to those in part-time ministry or not working for a particular year. Most particularly, we want to respond to a concern about those whose compensation is at the lower end. We will be offering a dues structure next year that will be as clear and fair as possible to all our members. To that end, we are considering in 2010 inviting those making less than \$25,000 to elect either the minimum of \$144 or .75%.

We understand that \$144 may be more than some members feel they can pay and have granted full waivers in cases of clear financial hardship. It is also important to say that we feel that \$144 is a reasonable amount of dues to pay to a professional organization that is in the process of making major strides in its ability to offer continuing education.

Please remember that the re-structuring is a three year process, building over time. We know it takes time both to get used to the change as well as to see the increased capacity of your professional organization to better respond to your needs. (Sneak preview: We've just established a UUMA Scholarship Fund for Continuing Education!

- Marni Harmony, Treasurer [treasurer@uuma.org](mailto:treasurer@uuma.org)

## UUA Continuing Education Grants for Ministers in Fellowship

Grants are available through the Ministerial Development Office to help ministers in fellowship fund their continuing education (CE) efforts. CE grants are awarded for 1/3 of the total program cost to a maximum of \$500 per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). Applications will be accepted beginning each June 1st and will be evaluated twice during the year—on July 15th and January 15th.

PLEASE NOTE: Although we are out of funds for the current church year (June 1, 2009 through July 31, 2010,) we will continue to accept applications as additional funding sometimes becomes available late in the year.

For more information, please go to <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leadership/ministerialdevelopment/continuingeducation/23119.shtml> or contact Jory Agate, [jagate@uua.org](mailto:jagate@uua.org)

# **Preliminary Fellowship Renewal Paperwork Tips From the Chair of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee by Wayne Arnason**

*Reprinted from The Religious Leader: News from the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group, Fall 2009*

In my column, I wanted to reflect on what the MFC members see in an area of our work that doesn't get as much attention as the decisions we make about admitting candidates to preliminary fellowship, i.e., the review of renewals of preliminary fellowship. To achieve final fellowship, each minister is asked to submit evaluations from self, Board or Supervisor, and a Committee on Ministry for three different years of service comprising at least half-time ministry.

These renewal evaluations present the new minister opportunities for engaging at some depth with those who have been trusted with the ministerial role. At their best, the renewals we read can be thoughtful and moving documents displaying the evolution of a minister's self-understanding and a growing appreciation on the part of those who receive ministry of the importance of this role in their lives. At their worst, the renewals we read are perfunctory and shallow, squandering the opportunity they present out of fear, confusion, or laziness. Happily, I can report to you that more and more renewals lean toward the best and not the worst.

In the years since I started my first term of service on the MFC in 2001, the Committee and the staff have significantly improved the documents that guide the renewals, and our own process for giving them the attention they deserve. The month of September is our most intense month for reading renewals because so many ministers complete them at the end of a church year of service. Because each renewal requires at least two different readers to reach a consensus on the response, each member of the MFC has to read between six and sixteen renewals prior to each meeting.

What can cause a renewal to be rejected for inclusion as one of the three required for final fellowship? Evidence that the effort put in by the minister or the lay leaders

involved has been minimal; evidence that there is a disconnect between the minister's self-evaluation and the lay leaders evaluation resulting in conflict; evidence that causes us to question whether to baseline competence we saw at the time of awarding preliminary fellowship is truly present; or an inadequate professional development plan without careful thought about the ongoing education that is so important in the early years of ministerial formation can cause rejections.

One use of the renewal process that I have not seen many ministers avail of since we started awarding preliminary fellowship without regard to specialty is ministers undertaking continuing education and evaluation in more than one specialty of ministry over the course of a career. Perhaps there is not enough incentive in the marketplace to encourage ministers to formally pursue and receive recognition in more than one specialty. The additional credentials that many ministers seek after final fellowship continue to be the traditional degrees (usually the D. Min.) and accreditations (usually for chaplaincy or spiritual direction). Ministers who find themselves starting a career in a parish-based role and moving into a community-based role are not seeing their new focus of employment as an opportunity to undertake the demands of evaluation associated with a new round of renewals. I can understand the reluctance to submit yourself to the process another time, but at the same time I wonder how many ministers appreciate that the opportunity is available to them and the value that it can hold.

The Committee members and I personally would welcome your questions and conversation about the preliminary fellowship renewal process, whether you are a minister or a lay leader who participates in it. It is a vital part of ministerial formation, in its initial years and potentially later in the career, and we are proud of the importance that we place upon it.

## **More Tips From the MFC Regarding Ministerial Mentors**

The MFC requires those of you in preliminary fellowship to have a mentor. Some of you will by necessity have a parish minister as your mentor. You will need to file a mentor waiver form with the MFC to get approval for having a noncommunity minister mentor. The MFC further advises that you seek counsel from other community ministers and UUSCM regarding current fellowship requirements for community ministers that your parish minister mentor may not be aware of since s/he is fellowshipped as a parish minister.

# ***The Essential Nonprofit Fundraising Handbook: Getting the Money You Need from Government Agencies, Businesses, Foundations, and Individuals***

By Michael A. Sand and Linda Lysakowski

*Reviewed by James L. Cavanaugh, UUSCM Treasurer*



Until I began reading this book I did not appreciate how much my experience in nonprofit fundraising would lead me to appreciate it – the authors took me back to some painful learning experiences, and showed how the reader can avoid similar situations. It makes some important points about having a thoughtful and organized approach to raising funds – ones that are too often disregarded, with unfortunate results. If there is one difficulty it struggles with, it is in addressing the incredible range of size (both in budget and in staff) in the nonprofit organizations that are trying to raise money. I have served nonprofits with no paid staff, with only part-time staff, and with significant staff. The nonprofit with staff devoted solely to development/fundraising may not need this book, but the staff people who do fundraising as an ‘additional duty’ will benefit from it. The resources these organizations have to address the goal of fundraising vary widely, but they all – like any nonprofit readers of this review may know – need to raise funds to operate and grow.

The book has some valuable ideas, and many are ones I wish I’d had years ago:

- How to avoid ‘event fever’ by matching scarce resources with priorities.
- Avoiding burnout; when and how to train or restructure the board.
- Knowing what staff should and should not do, and what the CEO should do.

- Understanding the best jobs for volunteers. The authors point out that “it is important for a nonprofit to prove its credibility by showing the ability to recruit volunteer fundraisers.”
- Four reasons businesses may not support your organization, and how to counter them.
- Seven steps to raising major gifts.
- Four kinds of direct mail you may want to use in fundraising, and their uses.
- Three good reasons to use a special event to raise funds, and four negative concerns to consider before taking the plunge. (Where was this book when my group was convincing itself a ‘roast’ was the right way to raise money?)

You get the idea – this book avoids abstract high-level wordsmithing in favor of practical and understandable step-by-step guidance. It offers no easy and painless solutions, but lays out the benefits of doing the homework, dotting the I’s and crossing the T’s. I recommend it for any nonprofit that wants to improve its fundraising.

*James L. Cavanaugh has served as board member and treasurer in two nonprofits (one multi-county, one national), committee member (of a faith-based nonprofit), and administrative intern for yet another nonprofit -- one that is beginning to undertake fundraising. He has written two grant proposals to funders, with a 50% success rate.*

## **A Poem to Celebrate You and Your Community Ministry**

Life is so full of meaning and purpose, so full of beauty beneath its covering,  
that you will find earth but cloaks your heaven. Courage then to claim it; that is all!  
But courage you have, and the knowledge that we are pilgrims together,  
wending through unknown country home.

And so, at this time, I greet you, not quite as the world sends greetings,  
but with profound esteem and with the prayer that for you, now and  
forever, the day breaks and shadows flee away.

~ Fra Giovanni ~

## Member Milestones

**The Rev. Jade Angelica's** Healing Moments Alzheimer's Ministry has won an award from the National Interfaith Council on Aging. The award is for Best Practices in Spirituality and Aging - Older Adult Ministry. In March, she will be going to the Aging in America conference in Chicago to receive this award. She writes, "I want to thank the UUSCM for bringing Healing Moments to the attention of the Rev. Esther Hurlburt who contacted me and informed me about the award application. It's wonderful that we can support each other in our ministries. I will be sure to send a photo of the award presentation for the next Crossroads."

**The Rev. J.D. Benson** serves as the Acting Assistant Minister at Eno River UU Fellowship in Durham, NC.

**Angela Cesa** found herself unemployed at Hospice Care Network on November 19<sup>th</sup> as her job as the Interfaith Outreach Coordinator was eliminated – at least temporarily. The hospice would like to reinstate the position if they can find a grant to support it, which is being investigated. Meanwhile, she is considering finishing her master's degree at Union Theological Seminary with a thesis on the topic: improving hospice utilization in the black community through religion. If any has any information on the topic or anecdotes to share, or specific grant ideas, please contact Angela at [angelacesa@optonline.net](mailto:angelacesa@optonline.net).

**Peggy Clarke** is the co-founder of *InterGenerate*, which was launched in 2009 as an initiative for environmental and social sustainability. Their mission is to provide food that's good, clean and fair to all residents. They were given several acres on a local sanctuary and two plots on some state property to farm and build sustainable community across racial, cultural and economic boundaries.

**Dr. Carol Flake** reports that she has recently completed a two year training program in Dreamwork, and another two year program in Spiritual Direction at the Haden Institute in Flat Rock, NC. Carol lives in Brevard, NC and is the Coordinator of the Covenant Circle Ministry at the UU of Transylvania County. This year the Covenant Circles are using the book "Heart to Heart" by Rev. Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins. Carol gave a recent sermon on "Conscious Elderhood" at UUTC and is focusing her energies on her giveaway as an early elder. She enjoys the soulcentric dreamwork and other programs planned by Bill Plotkin whose two books "Soulcraft" and "Nature and the Human Soul" are pivotal in her current understanding of the way things are. Check out Plotkin's work at [www.animas.org](http://www.animas.org). Another exciting milestone occurs in April when her forty-year-old daughter is expected to birth her first grandchild! Carol will lead workshops on "soulcentric dreamwork" and "sandplay as spiritual practice" at the annual dream conference at the Haden Institute in late May and also attend the International Association for the Study of Dreams in July.

**The Rev. Florence Gelo's** film *The Heart of*

*Empathy: Using the Visual Arts in Medical Education* was accepted as a finalist for the **pARTners for HEALTH**, Society for the Arts in Healthcare's International Conference film festival to be held in Minneapolis, April 2010.

**The Rev. Jackie Kelly** was certified as an ACPE Associate Supervisor on November 6, 2009.

**The Rev. Kurt A. Kuhwald** serves on the Boards of Clue-CA (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice -- for the State of California) and UULMCA (the UU legislative ministry--California). He is also one of the initiators and planners for an event in the Pacific Central District called the New Century Summit. Gini Courter and Mike Durell will be in dialogue on a Friday night which leads into a Saturday workshop focusing on questions of relevance and sustainability for UUism for the 21st Century. He reports that they will be using a relatively new OD process called Theory U, developed at MIT. So far over, 150 PCD congregants and misters have signed up! UUSCM member, **The Rev. Jeanelyse Adams** is also on the planning team and brought Theory U to their attention.

Kurt also reports that the UUSCM PCD chapter has reformed with great energy and is initiating a training with the UU Trauma Team to create a trauma team for PCD. He writes, "The enthusiasm is high for the CMs to lead the way on this!"

**The Rev. Suzanne M. Marsh** was ordained at First Unitarian Church of San Jose on December 6, 2009. San Jose is her home church. She serves the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, PA.

**The Rev. Carol McKinley** was granted final fellowship by the MFC in October, 2009.

**The Rev. Nayer Taheri's** article "Use of Positive Images as a Spiritual Intervention" was published in Pediatric Palliative Care Newsletter, Issue #17; November 2009, accessible at [http://www.nhpc.org/files/public/ChiPPS/ChiPPS\\_November\\_2009.pdf](http://www.nhpc.org/files/public/ChiPPS/ChiPPS_November_2009.pdf).

**Julia McKay** was granted preliminary fellowship by the MFC on December 4, 2009. She writes, "It feels great to join such a fabulous cadre of ministers!"

**The Rev. Michelle Walsh** was granted her second year of preliminary fellowship by the MFC in September 2009. In December 2009, she passed all of her qualifying comprehensive exams for her doctoral program in practical theology at Boston University's School of Theology.

**The Rev. Connie Yost** was granted final fellowship by the MFC in December, 2009. In September, 2009, she was hired as part-time chaplain at Salem Hospital, her third part-time job! As UUSCM Chapter Coordinator for PNWD, she is working with **The Rev. Marcia Schekel** to plan the 4th PNW CM retreat scheduled for March 27 in Olympia, WA.

## **CROSSROADS**

The UU Society for Community Ministries, Inc.  
c/o The Rev. Connie Yost, Administrator  
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### **From Your UUSCM Good Officer by The Rev. Patricia Shelden, M.Div.**

I have served in ministry in a variety of sites and arrangements. I served as one UU of several in a hospital Pastoral Care department. I served as a staff member in a large UU congregation. Next I served briefly in tiny congregations. I opened and served solo in the Community Ministry I created, in shared office space, with no UU ministers. I saw clients in my home – still alone. Finally, I was given an office by the congregation with which I am affiliated. I am back serving in a UU setting with other UUs around. I feel as though I can breathe again. I feel I belong. When I served in places without other UUs and UU ministries, I felt alone and isolated. On the rough days I felt unimportant and forgotten by our professional organizations and the UUA in general.

When we feel sorry for ourselves it is difficult to be self-reflective enough to see our part in creating or continuing situations where we feel so pitiful. When I served in isolating locations I realized it was my responsibility to correct what was causing loneliness. Without this effort from us the loneliness, isolation, the pain of feeling forgotten and ignored settles in to stay. I am one Good Officer for all of UUSCM. I hope you continue to reach out to me via email and phone calls.

However, there is a responsibility of yours to seek out to more than a Good Officer when you are in need. You need to seek out and form relationships with your UU colleagues, regardless of their specializations. No other CMs around? Contact Parish colleagues. Colleagues too far for you to meet regularly? Schedule regular phone meetings or learn to use SKYPE. Make sure you are connected to a congregation. Be proactive. Look your isolation in the eye and be in charge of it. I, as one with a perfect Introvert score, know how hard reaching out can be. However, remember your ministry is too important to all; our Association, our colleagues, our members and far beyond. Accept the responsibility that comes with Community Ministry. Acknowledge that it may be up to you to create relationships that help you to feel nurtured and supported. Nurture your connection to our wider movement. Take care of yourself and your ministry. It would be sad to see any of our ministries wilt before they have fully bloomed because our isolation and independence have exhausted us. Without each other our ministries could become too hard and limited for us to survive in them. Reach out. Name the isolation you feel and find relief from it. And, remember that I am here, too.