

Director of Religious Education  
BUUF Annual Report for June 4, 2017  
Dave Sarra

This year we had a very successful religious education program for our youngest students, all under the age of 10 years. Our success can be attributed to our highly dedicated volunteer teaching staff of Gloria Weberg, Lisa Fuller, Ellen Higdon, Joanne Krettek and Terry Sundstrom – a staff which has many decades of combined teaching experience. Our teachers chose to follow the *In Our Hands: A Peace and Social Justice Program* which is designed for school grades K-5, adjusting the lessons for our younger students. As part of BUUF's effort to become designated a Green Sanctuary, our students had many nature lessons and planted and potted many flowers as well as sowing seeds for an eventual "pizza garden." On more than one occasion we had as many as six students attend class and as many as nine children under the age of nine in both class and child care. Our staff has agreed to meet during the summer to plan for our next school season.

By the last couple months of this year our high school class dwindled down to one student. All of our students are working and the seniors are also preparing for college. We began the year attempting to finish the *Building Bridges* curriculum from last year and ended the year with one student, my daughter Eliza, helping to prepare our "three sisters" vegetable garden and giving the religious education sermon on May 21 which she titled *Privilege: It's just not white!* While UUs generally don't proselytize, I'm planning on spending time this summer to work on ways to raise awareness of our RE program to high school students.

During the year we changed the name of Senior Brunch, to which "seniors of all ages" were invited, to BUUF Brunch. The brunch is still attended by seniors as, apparently, they are the only age group available at that time of day. Our discussions included topics such as "older people are happier" and "green (or environmentally responsible) burials." Our Creative Conversations get-togethers have also been well-attended this year. We covered some religious topics, such as the authenticity of Biblical authors, a call for liberals to reclaim religion, and the importance of listening (from one of the daughters who left the Westboro Baptist Church). We also discussed the concept of the "modern" world, America's forgotten working class, and followed up on the UU-wide teach-in on white supremacy (as we also did during one of our brunches). Since we now have a robust summer attendance at BUUF we hope to continue with these gatherings throughout the summer. Gretchen Ohmann and Nan Lundeen have continued our Womyn's Group and Red Tent gatherings throughout the year.

As required by our Safe Congregations Policy, I conducted six background checks on new teachers and child care providers – all passed successfully.

Finally, it is with great sadness to write that I have edited the last of Viola's pastoral letters. Viola Moore, Minister Emeritus of BUUF, died on April 5. She served BUUF for many years and faithfully submitted monthly pastoral letters on nearly every subject imaginable. A memorial service will be held in Ann Arbor on June 24.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Sarra