

## **Minister's Report-2016/2017**

2016-2017 has been a very good year for BUUF. The new website continues to bring new visitors to our services. Many of these are attending somewhat regularly. We have an important message and people like the friendliness of our congregation. We are doing a pretty good job of welcoming people. Consequently, we have several new families with young children and various other folks that are attracted to our brand of religion.

Additionally, our solar panels keep making electricity from Sunshine while we work on becoming a green congregation. The solar panel installation is the result of a lot of hard work by many and was spear headed by Harvey. Meanwhile, the Green Sanctuary application is about ready to send to the UUA. We hope to be designated a green sanctuary soon.

Another thing we have initiated, that is working very well, is the involvement of more lay people in services. Lay contributions have been outstanding in terms of maturity, insight, and creativity. Many contributions have been out-of-this-world good.

I also want to give a shout out to the excellent leadership the board (lead for the 2nd year by Lisa Fuller), committee members, and Sunday school teachers have brought to us. We may be a small congregation but we are mighty in what we achieve.

I want to thank Hilary for her contributions to the personality of BUUF. Our Announces are top notch. Her enthusiasm is contagious.

I thank Dave for his dedication, hard work, and creativity. He has the toughest jobs in the fellowship, Director of RE and BUUF Program director.

As for myself, I am finishing my 8th year at BUUF. I am finding it very satisfying and sustaining. Globally speaking, it is my opinion that the centuries long purge of religion by science is waning. Intelligent sensitive folks realize that a scientific world view and a religious world view can be congruent. That being said, it seems apparent to me that the old religions have not evolved in consciousness with the mass of humanity. The old religions have not found a new footing in telling their ancient stories in meaningful ways. It is my belief that UUism and the recent movement linking science to spirituality show a great deal of promise. Our UU liberal religion has important contribution to make to the spiritual lives of modern minded people. Because we are not anchored in a creed, UUism has been able to evolve.

UUism and BUUF have important work to do. We humans continue to need religion in our lives to both ground us in the deep reality of existence and to give us wings to fly free and Be.

Finally, some of my actions surrounding sanctuary décor have created considerable emotional distress for some of us. For this I apologize. I am thankful for the wisdom of the board and the help of Emily, Jim, and Ellen who sit on the Committee on Ministry. It is my hope that wounds I had a part in opening are healing. Needless to say, I have changed my *modus operandi*.

All in all it has, however, been a very good year.

Peace and Thanks

Rev. Jim McConnell