

WORSHIP ASSOCIATES ANNUAL REPORT 2009-10

Steve Edington
Kathy Fletcher
Burns Fisher
Laurie Goodman
Roy Goodman
Loretta Hubley
Lee Page
Harry Purkhiser
David Robbins
John Sanders
Bruce Taylor
Anya Zakiewicz

The Worship and Service Committee and Worship Associates continue to act as a unified group.

Worship Associates meet on the first Monday evening of each month during the Church year. Our discussions focus on the elements involved in Sunday morning services. A great many discussions revolve around spiritual concerns and what we feel may be the needs of our congregation as a whole. We look at the order of all elements in our Sunday services and determine their effectiveness in the overall outcome of each service.

This year we did a study based on the book titled: "Worship That Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists" written by Wayne Arnason and Kathleen Rolenz. "*Worship That Works*" provides practical, specific advice to improve the key elements of service and increase the spiritual resonance of worship through symbols, music, cultural sensitivity, inclusion, and more. We found some of the book's focus was compatible with our own and gained some new insight and helpful direction we can incorporate into our own quest to progressively grow in our service offerings.

As Worship Associates, we are not only evaluating Sunday service quality; we participate by taking active roles in the service as needed by our minister Rev. Steve Edington. When Steve needs to be away, we take over any role necessary: hosting a guest minister, helping out with any service elements necessary, doing the whole service if needed. The Associates take turns at offering Words for Reflection. Our participation fits in with the belief that having members of the congregation in visible roles during the service helps to create a unified and comfortable ambience to each service.

We have re-instituted engaging congregants to light our Chalice; hearing the words chosen from a variety of different individuals enriches our service and may encourage others to want to participate.

Volunteers have been found to lead our summer services. Some past leaders will be returning with new offerings as well as some new additions. We are looking forward to a great line up of offerings beginning on June 13th.

We are taking another look at our Water Service in September. Through our own experience as well as feedback from our congregation, last year's service was lacking in traditional elements. We missed the energy of our children as well as our adult members offering their water and personal words. In our effort to emphasize the spirit and meaning of returning to worship together and the mixing of our summer water, we will bring back our traditional approach with a defined emphasis on spirit and meaning over focus on detailed vacation experience.

Bruce Taylor and Loretta Hubley will not be involved next year due to Bruce's new position as Minister at the Billerica Unitarian Universalist Church. We wish the best for Bruce and Loretta on their journey and we will miss their drive and energy in our group as well as in our congregation.

We remain sensitive to the needs and desires of our Church community. All Associates are available to church members if there are any suggestions or concerns surrounding our current services.