



First Universalist Society in Franklin

A Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation

Dear Members and Friends of First Universalist Society in Franklin,

Hope Lives Here! I cannot imagine a truer or more appropriate theme for this year's stewardship campaign. As I said in my "Briefly with Bev" column early in December, "Hope, finding it, feeling it, spreading it, is not something we do in isolation. Hope is the gift we give to ourselves and one another."

Over the past three and a half years, you and I have expressed our hopes and dreams for the future of FUSF. We spoke about growing our Religious Education program including re-invigorating opportunities for youth. We imagined what it would be like if fundraising could emphasize the first syllable, FUN. We wondered about ways to expand our already wonderful music program to include our children more, as well as bringing in more guest musicians. And we shared visions of growing our membership and filling our sanctuary on Sunday mornings.

We did all that and more! Sunday mornings are bustling; the sanctuary is filling up and the conversations at the Fellowship Café are lively. Our programs for children and youth are flourishing. It has grown enough that we needed to hire a youth advisor as Sara, our Director of Religious Education (DRE), did not have enough time in her schedule to lead the middle and senior youth groups. Fundraising, such as the cookie walk, the puzzle competition and sale, and the country dance has accomplished both meeting financial goals and creating an atmosphere of fun for both volunteers and participants. The children's choir has renewed interest and energy, thanks to the efforts of our Music Director, Michele, and DRE, Sara. And who can forget the students from Dean College singing "Seasons of Love" last December? Combined with the amazing music from our choir, these additions make our music program one of the best around.

And none of this was done in isolation. You all did this. You dreamed it. You hoped for it. You made it happen. All this and more were the gifts you gave to yourselves and to one another.

As we approach the end of my ministry with you, I want to inspire you to keep it up. All I ask of you is to keep on dreaming, keep on hoping, and keep on working together to make all your hopes and dreams come true.

I have been bragging to my colleagues that you are the best congregation around, and they would be lucky to be your Search Committee's choice for your next contract minister. So, I have one more thing to ask of you. Continue pledging at a level that shows your love and commitment to FUSF. I encourage you to read the enclosed brochure carefully. Ask questions if you have them. And as you consider the enclosed pledge card, please help us all keep FUSF a place where anyone who walks through our doors realizes that hope lives here.

With Love and Peace,

Rev. Bev Waring
January 2026