A View from My Window

Rev. Roger Bertschausen, UUPCC Executive Director

As I spend my last few days at work as the UUPCC’s Executive Director, I am reflecting not only on my 4+ years in this position but also my seven years of service before that on the UUPCC Board. I find myself also thinking of the sixteen years I was involved with the Fox Valley UU Fellowship’s partnerships with U/U churches in Déva, Transylvania, and Banaybanay in the Philippines. I’m realizing that I’ve been deeply involved in Partnership for more than 21 years. It has been a major part of my ministry at the Fox Valley UU Fellowship and my service to the wider U/U community. For these past four years, Partnership has been the primary focus of my work life.

It has changed my ministry, my life, and my soul. As I reflect on all this, I am especially grateful to partners here and overseas who bring Partnership to life. I love our annual Steward of Partnership Awards (featured in this newsletter issue) because these are all people who have made quiet and extraordinary contributions to their congregations’ partnerships.

I want also to give a shout out to all of you who so generously support the UUPCC with your financial gifts. I know that you also support your congregations and partnerships. The UUPCC is a behind-the-scenes organization quietly doing its work. I’m so grateful to those of you who, recognizing how important this work supporting partnerships is, have added the UUPCC to your list of organizations you support. I am especially grateful this year to all of you who jumped at the opportunity to help the UUPCC keep on doing its mission in the midst of a pandemic. I had hoped to write each of you a thank you note but have run out of time. I know this isn’t the same as a personal message to each of you, but I nevertheless hope you will know how grateful the UUPCC and I are and how much your faith and generosity have helped us tangibly and spiritually in a challenging moment.

I am thrilled that Rev. Fred Muir has agreed to become the UUPCC’s interim Executive Director. The organization is in great hands with Fred, our talented and dedicated Board led by Rev. Morgan McLean, and our wonderful staff members Katrina Priese and Rev. Andrew Weber.

I charge all of you to keep on doing the life-changing work of building mutual partnerships! I look forward to continuing to support Partnership in my new position as interim Senior Minister at First Unitarian Society in Madison, Wisconsin—the longtime partner church of Nagyajta, Transylvania.

Blessings on all of you and Partnership!
Greetings from the Incoming Interim Executive Director
By Rev. Fred Muir, Interim UUPCC Executive Director

Dear UUPCC Friends,

I am thrilled to have this opportunity to be your Interim Executive Director! I was honored when asked and deeply grateful that the UUPCC Board approved our agreement. It was their vote of confidence and Roger’s ringing endorsement that made saying “yes” much easier. Following Roger will not be easy—as you know, his leadership, expertise, commitment, and encouragement have been remarkable. Not only will his passion for the UUPCC’s mission and vision create a void, but his friendship leaves an empty space in our collective hearts. Thank you, Roger, for helping us make the UUPCC what it is today! It’s my intention to sustain Roger’s innovation, compassion, and bold leadership.

On our website’s home page, it reminds us that “The most radical thing we can do is introduce people to one another.” The UUPCC has always done more than just “introduce.” We have created, facilitated, and sustained mutual partnerships that even in the best of circumstances can be challenging. I’m sure that each of you could tell a story of these challenges. But now and with no end in sight, we live in a COVID-19 era that has made introductions and partnering, which are at the core of what we do best, difficult and with unique hardships.

In the United States, the virus has shed light on disparities between communities and painful disruptions for the marginalized. We have learned again that our commitments and sensitivities to our neighbors cannot be ignored or taken for granted. In a parallel and analogous way, the stress and turmoil that international communities are experiencing bring clarity to our UUPCC commitments. In war-torn and/or virus ravaged nations, the realities of colonialism, elitism, and traditions of hostilities make progress and recovery much harder. It might make our partnering feel next to impossible. You might wonder, as I have, how on earth we can sustain the relationships we have nurtured and enjoyed. One of the questions so many are asking is: Will we ever be able to return to “normal?”

The likelihood is that the next year (and beyond) will be an interim year in several ways, one involving setting aside our usual expectations and imagining a new normal. Together, we will wonder and pursue answers to the question: “What might be new ways of partnering with our global siblings?”

And so, I ask that you think of the coming year not as one of loss, but as a year of opportunity in which we imagine and sustain relationships in new, fresh contexts that could be bursting with revelation and meaning. It’s a chance to re-engage with our partners who are also trying to address many of the same challenges we are facing. Just maybe the next year is an opportunity to recommit and relearn why we love our Unitarian Universalist faith, and why partnering is an important path on our faith journey.

Thank you to Roger, Morgan, and the Board. I look forward to partnership with you in this year of opportunity.

Take care and stay safe!
UUPCC (Virtual) Annual Meeting Overview

By Rev. Morgan McLean, UUPCC Board Chair

It was wonderful to have so many supporters at this year's virtual Annual Meeting. Around 100 people joined us to celebrate our outstanding award recipients and to learn about the business of the organization. It was a joy to present the Louis C. Cornish “Living the Mission” Award to Richard Van Duizend, and the 2020 Steward of Partnership Awards to eleven dedicated volunteers around the country.

Highlights of our business meeting included electing Joel Schrag as our newest board member and Carol Cook, who will be returning for another term. Board member Gwyn Reid was elected to the Nominating Committee. This means we say goodbye to two Board members, Michelle Leebens-Mack and Melody Moberg, and Nominating Committee member Dick Van Duizend, all of whom have offered insightful leadership. We approved our budget, which looks quite different this year as we plan for a year without travel expenses or income. We said a final goodbye to outgoing Executive Director Roger Bertschausen and welcomed our interim Executive Director Fred Muir.

The year ahead is full of many unknowns, yet we know that with the support of the UUPCC staff and board, as well as YOU, our partners, our transformational partnership experiences will continue!

If you missed the virtual UUPCC Annual Meeting, you have an opportunity to access it through this link: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/68N7EZr690FOf43l8k_ec_EHL5b_X6a8hyhPqKJcyEtVAEcDqOuTw5XHkR5_4XPs. The password is: 5X^W&.3%.

You especially won't want to miss the Steward of Partnership Awards Presentations near the beginning of the video!

Consider supporting the UUPCC with your donation!
2020 ‘STEWARD OF PARTNERSHIP’ Award Recipients

Each year, the UUPCC is pleased to present its Steward of Partnership Award to people who provide exceptional care for their own congregation’s partnerships. Long-term partnerships do not automatically sustain themselves. They take time, attention, and loving care to maintain long distance connections and nurture friendships. Often these efforts are not publicly recognized even though this is the crucial grassroots work that keeps the partnership thriving and the congregations involved.

These Stewards are recognized stalwarts in their congregations for fostering good communication, organizing worship services, keeping congregations engaged, making friends, and sharing stories—and their lives—with their partners in other countries. They have cooked, served, and cleaned up at countless fundraising events. They have visited their partners and helped their partners come here. Each of them is a hero of partnership.

The UUPCC is proud to honor the following 2020 Steward of Partnership winners:

Lillian Anderson, First Parish in Concord, MA

Lillian dove into her church’s partnership with Székelykeresztúr, Transylvania, in 2001 when she headed a planning committee for a church choir trip. She was hooked. She has organized other trips to and from Keresztúr, dinners, programs, and fundraisers. She is a consummate planner. Nowhere was this more evident than in the Fall 2019 visit of a group of young folk dancers and musicians from Kerezstúr to Concord. The 25-member troupe performed in Vermont, Maine, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Lillian also led the effort to raise $36,000 for the project, including a successful Faithify campaign.

That Lillian was nominated for a Steward award not only by her own church but also one of the churches the dance troupe visited is a testament to the trip’s impact.
Tom Getz, First Unitarian Church of Providence, RI

Tom fills many roles in his congregation’s partnership with Szentegyháza, Transylvania, including Partnership Committee co-chair and liaison to Szentegyháza’s minister. To date, Tom has organized four trips to Transylvania.

Through church events, such as video screenings on trips, Tom educates his congregation about the partnership, Szentegyháza, and Unitarian history in Transylvania. His dedicated, steady, and kind leadership continues to help the partnership impact both congregations.

Bob Goodman, Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, PA

Bob has been involved in Main Line Unitarian Church’s (MLUC) partnership with Várfalva, Transylvania, since his first life-changing trip in 2000. He has served as Partner Church Committee chair, kept vital communication going with Várfalva friends, nurtured strong bonds between the congregations, and worked to keep MLUC folks engaged with Várfalva. He helped bring eight Várfalva members to MLUC in 2014. His dedicated work has inspired others to get involved.
Emily Hodges, St. John’s Unitarian Church in Cincinnati, OH

Emily (seated left, and on the right below) has been active in St. John’s partnership with Nyárádszentlászló, Transylvania, for over twenty-five years. She first traveled to Szentlászló in 1998. She returned several times, including twice on St. John’s choir trips. In addition, she has been a key organizer of St. John’s annual partner church dinners and other activities. She has also hosted several Szentlászló visitors. Through these back-and-forth visits, Emily has many close friends in the Szentlászló church.

Bruce and Jane King, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens, GA

Bruce and Jane (Jane is center on the right and in the checked jacket below) have been actively involved in UUFA’s partnership with Oklánd, Transylvania, from its very beginning thirty years ago. They have been a key link to communication and connection through frequent business trips to Transylvania, to which they would add a visit to Oklánd and build on Bruce’s proficiency at Hungarian. Over the years, Bruce has translated many letters and messages. Together Bruce and Jane have participated in annual worship services, partnership activities, and hosting visitors from Oklánd. They have generously supported the partnership and, most recently, a UUFA youth’s participation in the youth pilgrimage to Transylvania by donating frequent flyer miles.
Karen McManus, East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue, WA

Karen has been a hard-working, innovative, resilient, and compassionate member of the Khasi Hills Ministry Team at East Shore since 2013. She has visited East Shore’s partners at the Unitarian churches in Smit and Kharang and the Friendship School in NE India three times.

Karen’s experience and skills as a now retired public school teacher have been put to good use in the Friendship School, including supporting teachers learning computer skills in her most recent trip. She has been a leader of an annual garage sale that supports the school.

Even though Karen and her husband now live on the East coast, she remains involved in East Shore’s NE Indian partnerships by Skyping into meetings and continued visits to NE India.

Elaine Mittell and Doug Poutasse, Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills in Wellesley, MA

Elaine and Doug are enthusiastic promoters of their church’s partnership with the Unitarian church in Torockó, Transylvania. They have connected deeply with their partners through trips and frequent communication. They arranged for Torockó’s minister to visit Wellesley Hills and preach in the Wellesley pulpit.

Both Doug and Elaine are generous, curious, and tireless in their work supporting Wellesley Hills’ partnership as well as the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, efforts to support Burundian Unitarian refugees, and the UU Service Committee.
Claire Robertson, Eliot Unitarian Chapel in Kirkwood, MO

Claire (flowered sweater) has long been active in Eliot Chapel’s partner church committee. She traveled with an Eliot Chapel group to visit their partner in Nyárádszentmárton in 2002 and returned with ideas for deepening connections between the partner churches through a pen pal program and teaching Eliot’s children about the partnership in RE classes. She unfailingly volunteers for Eliot’s partnership events and always seeks to raise awareness of the partnership connection.

Phyllis Valentine, First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, MI

Phyllis (second from left) has been a cheerful and energetic advocate of First UUAA’s partner church program for over 12 years. She got hooked when she went on UUAA’s trip visit to their partner church in Kézdivásárhely, Transylvania, in 2008. She worked with her church’s partnership chair, Gretchen Jackson, until three years ago when Gretchen became ill and Phyllis took over. She and Gretchen organized Kezdi women, including the minister and spouses, coming to Ann Arbor and the International Women’s Convocation gathering in Texas.

She led trips to Kezdi in 2011, 2014, and 2018. She works hard to keep the partners connected and the partnership in the hearts and minds of UUAA.
## UU PARTNER CHURCH COUNCIL
### 2020 - 2021

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<th>Board of Directors</th>
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| **Rev. Morgan McLean, Chair**  
2016 - term to 2022  
Davis, CA | **Rev. Howard Dana**  
2018 - term to 2021  
Concord, MA | **Rev. Fred Muir (Aug 1, 2020)**  
Executive Director  
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fred@uupcc.org |
| **Anne Greenwood, Vice Chair**  
2016 - term to 2022  
San Pablo, CA | **Joel Schrag**  
2020 - term to 2023  
Washington, DC | **Trina Priese**  
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| **Rev. Eric Meter, Secretary**  
2015 - term to 2021  
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2018 - term to 2021  
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Travel Program Director  
travel@uupcc.org |
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2018 - term to 2021  
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Accountant  
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| **Rev. Alicia Forde (UUA Appointee)**  
UUA International Office  
Boston, MA | **Rev. Debra Faulk**  
2020 - term to 2022  
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Newsletter assistant |
| | | **Pat Rodgers**  
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