

Weekly Update 4/17/19

President's Report:

We have had a busy several weeks! March 30 was our "April Fools" silent auction—complete with many people in foolish costumes. A good time was had by all, and in the process we raised \$6,000 for our church. Special thanks to Sue Chambers, who coordinated the entire event, and her foolish team—Kim & Barrie Evans, Colin Chambers & Keegan Chambers Anderson, Lee & Linda Ganske, Diane Dobitz, Ann Dickau, Laura Bealey, Greg Abbott, Sue Wiltgen, Jane Schostag, John Knox, Nancy & Dennis Cramblit, Linda Good--and the youth group that coordinated the "Walks".

And on April 14 we formally installed our first ever settled minister, the Rev. Dr. Rita Capezzi! It was a beautiful event, we filled the nave almost to capacity, there were 18 ministers who joined us to celebrate (6 from the Mankato area), and Rev. Lisa Doege from Nora Church served as the Marshal. Rita's internship supervisor (and her pastor in Buffalo when she joined the UU faith), Joel Miller, delivered the sermon; Rita's daughter, Helen, sang a solo ("Pure Imagination" from *Willy Wonka*) and she and Rita's husband, Jeff Lowry, joined our choir in singing *a cappella* an anthem, "You Are the New Day." For me, one of the highlights of the day was Carrie gathering the children in the front of the sanctuary to give their charge to Rita (including "make a suggestion box"—they are living the democratic process). The offering at the ceremony was dedicated to the Living Tradition Fund, which supports seminarians and ministers; we raised over \$1000. The building looked beautiful, upstairs & down (the chairs downstairs had even been steam-cleaned), and the food and fellowship at our gathering afterwards was, as is our practice, tasty and nourishing (we *do* like to eat well). Of course, all of this took a lot of planning and effort. Penny Herickhoff chaired the team, which included Sue Wiltgen, Connie & Jim Rovney, Kay VanBuskirk, Terryl Pietz, Jane Schostag, Karen Knox; Jason Toupenca designed and managed the invitation, and Linda Ganske designed the printed program; and helping hands were extended from Ken Davey & Cathi Fouchi, Bob & Gail Finley, Barry Evans, Dave Schostag, Becky Rossow, Jan Klages, Henry Panowitsch, David Rice, Ted Downey & Barbara Keating, Dick & Tricia Nienow, Nancy & Dennis Cramblit, Lee Ganske, Jerry Pietz, John Knox, and Deb Fitzloff; Richard Chambers was our photographer, Christa Bohlmann and Jeremy Bohlmann-Little provided pre-service music, and Nancy Cramblit was our accompanist and provided the Processional music (from Saint-Saens' Organ Symphony).

And, along the way, we added some physical improvements to our space in the run-up to the Installation. Dennis Siemer designed and produced the chalice plaques that now decorate the ends of each of the pews in the nave, and Ken Davey designed and built a new cabinet for our name tags and a set of stairs leading up to the pulpit. These are beautiful, graceful touches that make our space feel more our own. Less apparent, perhaps, is the new, energy-efficient LED lighting in the sanctuary and most of the other spaces in our building. The work is being finished this week as new LED fixtures are fitted into the Fellowship Hall. Soon we should see work begin on the solar panels that will be installed on our roof.

Together, we create so much more than the sum of what each of us can do separately. Thank you, all, for all that you do so we can do good things together.