

New Temporary UU Minister at UUCGT!

The UUCGT Board is pleased to announce that we have engaged Reverend Beth Marshall, a UU Minister, to serve us as a half time Minister starting in March and running through July. Rev Beth lives in Oberlin, Ohio and will be here for ten days each month, including two Sundays, serving full time while she is here. As previously announced, the Board is working on getting a full time Interim Minister starting in August and Rev Beth will fill the gap until then. Following is a biography furnished by Rev Beth.

“As a life-long Unitarian Universalist, I can trace my path to ministry back to growing up in a small, lay-led fellowship. At the time, I believed that ministers were the prerogative of other faith communities. While ministry, as a vocation, showed up on aptitude tests in high school and college, I dismissed it as an anomaly because our fellowship did not *have a minister*. Years later, as a member of a UU church with multiple ministers, I began to explore what ministry might mean by teaching religious education, working on various committees, fundraising and serving as a worship associate.

My theological roots are unabashedly secular humanist. Today I define my theology as Unitarian Universalist, without modifiers. In the course of any given liturgical year, I draw upon modern works of poetry, fiction, non-fiction and science, as well as ancient readings from all the faith traditions, believing that the holy and sacred can be found in the most unexpected of places.

I began seminary at John Carroll University in Shaker Heights and completed it at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. Because it took almost ten years to complete my MDiv, more than one person suggested that perhaps it was more of a “Gradual Degree” than a “Graduate Degree”, but I have no regrets. Taking classes part-time in the evenings, allowed me to be home with my two children.

Since ordination in 2003, I have served First Universalist Church in Southold, New York; the UU Church of Blanchard Valley in Findlay;

Ohio, First Unitarian Church in Toledo, Ohio; The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, in Erie, PA; and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greater Canton, in Canton, Ohio. At the end of January, I completed a targeted, short-term ministry with First Unitarian Church of Cleveland.

Sixteen years of parish ministry have me reflecting on a series of questions: How can we better articulate and define our faith in positive terms? How might our efforts heal some small part of the world? How might we become more tolerant and understanding of those whose beliefs differ radically from our own – in large part by better understanding ourselves? Where is the common ground, and how can we build upon it? I am deeply committed to worship that speaks to both our minds and hearts.

My husband, Tony Wilgus, and I have made our home in Oberlin, Ohio, residing in the home my grandparents purchased in 1938. Tony recently finished teaching Social Work at the University of Findlay, and is now focusing his time on writing, consulting, and serving on the Board of Healthy Congregations in Columbus and the local Human Relations Committee in Oberlin. Between the two of us, we are parents to five grown children and grandparents to seven grandchildren, who live across the country in five states and three different time zones.”

