

THE PARISH CO-MINISTER'S SABBATICAL FOR THE CHURCH YEAR 2011-2012

At the June 2010 Annual Meeting, the congregation voted to approve the Parish Co-Ministers Sabbatical Leave and Plan. The plan involves about 5.5 months of sabbatical time spread out over thirteen months from July 2011-through July 2012. This is the second sabbatical leave our co-ministers have had approved since 2000. During 2005-2006, Kathleen Rolenz and Wayne Arnason devoted their first sabbatical to a study of worship and writing of their best selling UU textbook "Worship That Works." This brochure describes the 2011-12 sabbatical and the meaning of the sabbatical for our congregational life.

What is a Sabbatical?

A sabbatical is an old concept that relates to a period of rest or change, usually after six years. The root is from the word "Sabbath", the biblical term, meaning the day of rest after 6 days of labor. Unitarian Universalist congregations routinely grant their ministers a sabbatical leave with full pay in recognition of their difficult and consuming work. The result is a renewal of the ministers' outlook, new directions of thought and growth of vision. The plan for the sabbatical at West Shore is developed by the ministers according to their Letter of Agreement with the church.

What are the Co-Ministers' Goals and Plans for this Sabbatical?

The first is suggested by the congregation's motto: "One Church, Many Paths" and the minister's interest in multi-faith theological education. They will *study and experience the interaction of Muslim, Jewish and Christian cultures historically and in the present day*, both through reading and experientially in visits to southern Spain during October, Palestine and Israel in



November and Turkey in December. In Israel and Palestine they will be part of an Interfaith Peace Builders delegation. In Turkey they will participate in a study program on the life and work of the Sufi mystic poet Rumi led by Starr King School professor Ibrahim Farajaje.

During January – March, back home at West Shore, the congregation will share in classes and services based on these experiences.

The second goal *is personal and spiritual renewal:*

- The ministers will have some down time at home, that is purely for personal renewal.
- In spring 2012, Wayne plans to spend three weeks in residence at Zen Mountain Monastery as he did last time. Kathleen plans a personal spiritual renewal project during three weeks of her time.
- In May 2012, the co-ministers will take two weeks to travel to their niece's college graduation and spend time with family in New England.
- In summer of 2012, they will take advantage of the location of the GA in Phoenix to undertake a lengthy driving trip of western national parks, returning across Canada to Manitoba for their usual family vacation weeks. They will return to work in in the middle of August

A third goal is writing and reading time.

The co-ministers said at the time the sabbatical was voted:

"We are deeply grateful for our congregation's foresight and wisdom in planning sabbatical leave into the ministry of the church. The opportunity it offers us is an investment in us that we want to return many times over through our ministry."

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When Will the Ministers be Away?

As was the case with the last sabbatical in 2005-2006, the co-ministers' sabbatical periods are proposed to be spread out over the year to minimize the impact. Some time is proposed to be taken in July on both ends of the sabbatical year when the demands for them at church are minimal anyway. They will both be here during the winter months of 2012 when the second part of the Director of Lifespan Faith Development's sabbatical is scheduled, and when we do our canvass and budget building process. The co-ministers plan to take portions of their spring 2012 sabbatical time separately rather than together, which creates the advantage for the church of having one of the co-ministers present and performing the usual ministerial duties full time while the other is away.

The weeks away for both ministers are in distinct blocks throughout the year, with the blocks separated by times when one or both co-ministers cover their full time duties. Vacation weeks away vs. sabbatical time is noted "

July 5- 18, 2011 *Vacation* travel Iceland

September 27- December 19, 2011— Sabbatical weeks (12) in Europe & Middle East

May 15 – 28, 2012 Sabbatical w/family in New England, NY

June 12-18, 2012 Sabbatical travel to GA

June 26 – July 23, 2012 Sabbatical weeks in West's Nat'l Parks & Western Canada

July 24 – August 13, 2012 *Vacation* Manitoba,

Who's Leading Sabbatical Worship?

During the 12 weeks in the Fall of 2011, we anticipate pastoral coverage and management of the worship life of the church from the our part-time two year Intern Minister Ellen Carvill Ziemer. We are grateful to our Minister Emerita Midge Skwire for her willingness to supervise Ellen's internship during the time we are

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away. The co-ministers have arranged for four area ministers to offer guest sermons and our intergenerational, choral, and worship-associate-led services will proceed routinely. Kathy Strawser will manage the worship life during the two weeks in May 2012 when the ministers are away.

What if there is a pastoral crisis, or a death in the congregation? Will you come back for it?

We can't anticipate every circumstance. However, if there was a traumatic event in the life of the congregation, we would be in touch with our Executive Team and with sabbatical minister Ellen Carvill Ziemer to determine what needed to be done. Our letter of agreement states that the congregation would pay the cost of our travel from and back to, sabbatical. Given the distance and perhaps the difficulty of being able to return to West Shore quickly, it is unlikely that we would return except for the most serious of circumstances. Obviously, we hope and pray for the well being of the church and all its members.

Who Handles the Executive Role?

The Board of Trustees will delegate executive authority for day-to-day operations of the church to a four person team, including Ellen Carvill Ziemer as a consultant. The persons on the team are: LFD Director Kathy Strawser, Administrator Debbie Lydon, and Treasurer Jeff Palmer.

What is the staff's role in the Sabbatical process?

We have tremendous confidence in the church staff, both professional and volunteer, who have been routinely managing the day to day administrative life of the church and the building project. Your contacts with the church staff for needs and questions will be routine while the co-ministers are away.

Who do I ask if I have questions about . . .

Church Finances? Suehana Kieres, Financial manager, Jeff Palmer, Treasurer

Classes? PUURL? Children's/Adult RE? Kathy Strawser, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Pastoral Emergency? Doris Matthey, Ellen Carvill Ziemer

Conflict in the church? CARE team, David Kleinschmidt, Dave Willet, Dawn Starkey

Needs for Sunday Morning? Cathy Ross, Program Assistant

Advertising in Shorelines, West Shore Weekly, Monitor, Slides? Debbie Lydon, Administrator

Building issues & concerns? Debbie Lydon

Problems with my pledge? Suehana Kieres

Worship? Ellen Carvill Ziemer and/or Kathy Strawser (Intergenerational Worship)

Overall Function of the church? Executive Team., convened by Kathy Strawser

Publications? Debbie Lydon

Not Sure? Debbie Lydon or Ellen Carvill Ziemer

CO-MINISTERS 2011-2012 SABBATICAL



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ONE CHURCH  MANY PATHS
West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church