

sabbatical update

SABBATICAL NEWS

living under a pew?

The ministerial sabbatical is set to start in January 2014, when Allegheny's called minister, Rev. David McFarland begins his six-month sabbatical leave. Members and friends should already be well aware of this important benchmark in the life of the congregation — unless, of course, you've been living under a pew.

Actually, we all need a reminder, and as an aid to communication, the Sabbatical Team has inaugurated this *sabbatical update* newsletter, which will be published bimonthly through June 2014.

You'll find information about ministry, congregational life, and opportunities to serve during the sabbatical. We'll also be hearing from Rev. Dave as we learn a bit about his plans for this time of study and professional development. Stay tuned.



SABBATICAL AGREEMENT

change, growth, renewal

Ellen Kerr / Sabbatical Team Chairperson

Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church has a Letter of Agreement with Rev. David McFarland establishing that he accrues one month of sabbatical leave every year of service with the congregation. Rev. McFarland has been with us for nine years. He asked the Board for six of the nine months of accrued sabbatical leave to start January 2014. The Board accepted his request. The Board established a Sabbatical Team (Ellen Kerr, Mark Tomlinson, Jane Dirks and Devon Woods), which is working with Rev. McFarland and congregational teams, committees, and ministries (hereafter referred to simply as 'teams') to plan for the smooth running of Allegheny UU during the Sabbatical.

We understand that a sabbatical strengthens and enhances a minister's ability to serve. This sabbatical is ours: it is designed to benefit both Rev. McFarland and the congregation. A sabbatical is an opportunity for professional development, spiritual fulfillment and reflective work for the minister. And, it is an opportunity for the congregation to strengthen, develop new abilities and grow. During the sabbatical Rev. McFarland will receive his full compensation and benefits.

continued

During the six months of sabbatical leave, the Sabbatical Team will become the Sabbatical Support Team to support the congregation's teams to ensure provision of all aspects of Allegheny UU ministry. The worship team, including Rev. McFarland, is working prior to the sabbatical to plan for the Sunday worship service for the six months of sabbatical leave. The budget reflects the need to pay, when necessary, other clergy or lay leaders who are invited to lead our Sunday services. Religious Education will continue for the growing number of children under the direction of Brian Byers, Director of RE. Music will continue to be an important part of the worship services under the direction of Jesse Landis-Eigsti, Director of Worship Music. A newsletter has been created with the support of the Sabbatical Team to facilitate greater communication within the congregation and to keep the congregation informed about the sabbatical. During the sabbatical leave, a member of the Committee on Ministry will meet with Rev. McFarland, discuss his endeavors. Rev. McFarland is creating an In-reach Ministry group within the congregation to provide pastoral care. A professional minister will also be on call for more serious pastoral needs.

Congregational problems and questions will be listened to and addressed by the Committee on Ministry. If emergencies arise, the Committee on Ministry will decide what needs to be done and by whom, including but not limited to additional, compensated ministry services provided by UU clergy or trained lay leaders. The Committee on ministry in consultation with the Sabbatical Support Team and District Staff will decide if Rev. McFarland needs to be contacted. Rev. McFarland plans to be here in the Pittsburgh area. However, if Allegheny UU decides it needs to call him back when he is out of town, Allegheny UU is responsible for his travel expenses. If necessary, Allegheny UU will compensate him for any decreased Sabbatical time by offering an extension of his sabbatical end-date or a mini-sabbatical in fall 2014 or winter 2015.

Celebrations are an important part of our community. The Sabbatical Support Team will be planning celebrations to mark both the leaving and the welcoming back of Rev. McFarland.

Rev. McFarland returns to Allegheny UU in July 2014 to resume all of his duties as full-time minister. Allegheny UU shall not effect any changes to Rev. McFarland's Letter of Agreement during his sabbatical or for one full year after this sabbatical. And Rev. McFarland shall remain in the ministry of this congregation for at least one full year after this six months sabbatical.

Allegheny UU operates with a covenant that includes all members of the congregation including the minister. Our covenant requires all of us to consider our relationships especially within the congregation. We at Allegheny UU will honor our covenant and include Rev. McFarland in our promise to seek to build our vision of beloved community. Even during this sabbatical leave we will live and embody Love, kindle and sustain Spirit, build and honor Trust, embrace and share Compassion, give and seek Forgiveness, accept and celebrate Humanity, recognize and cherish Oneness, acknowledge and respect Difference, feed and grow Hope, and practice and extend Justice. This next church year will be an opportunity to strengthen our ties to one another and to deepen our sense of community. We hope and plan for this to be an enriching year for all.

SABBATICAL TEAM

meet the members

Ellen Kerr / Sabbatical Team Chairperson

Allegheny's Sabbatical Team consists of Ellen Kerr, Jane Dirks, Devon Wood and Mark Tomlinson.

The Team will work with the Church's groups to ensure coverage of worship, adult faith development, pastoral care and administration while Rev. Dave is taking his sabbatical. The Team see the sabbatical as an opportunity for growth, inspiration, creativity, and deepening of commitment to the Church.