

# Candidates for Elected Positions at The Unitarian Church in Westport June 2013

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### *Laura Steinbrecher – three-year term (new)*

Laura Steinbrecher has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for 13 years. She lives in Weston. Her children, Matt and Kaela, now in college, embody the values they learned growing up in The Unitarian Church of Westport (TUCW) community and in our RE program.

Professionally she is a part-time DRE at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Stamford and is a full-time Operations and Human Resources Manager at Wise Learning Centers.

Since coming to this church in 2000, Laura has been involved as a volunteer teacher in Religious Education for over 12 years and has also served on the RE Council for 8 years. She is on the Year Round Stewardship Committee and has served on several annual appeal drives. She has been a key volunteer for fundraising events such as Chowdafest, OneVoice, Sly Like a Fox and the annual Luau. She is an usher and loves welcoming folks on Sunday mornings. For several years she chaired the Camp Jewell Retreat committee. In addition, Laura has sung in the Women's choir, Special Projects choir and Once and Again Folk Singers.

On the Metro NY District level, Laura is the Chairperson for the Scholarship Committee and looks forward to being more involved in other areas.

### *Chuck Colletti – two-year term (re-election)*

Chuck has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for 30+ years. He lives in Westport with his wife Rose Marie, is the father of two women and the grandfather of two girls. Professionally, Chuck is a semi-retired consultant to the media industry. During his 40+ year professional career in media, he has held numerous leadership positions.

Since coming to this church, Chuck Colletti has been deeply involved with various committees and held the following leadership positions:

- 1981- 1983-Annual Appeal (Chair)
- 1983-1989- Board of Trustees (Vice Chair & Chair)
- 2007-Present – Building & Grounds Committee (Chair)
- 2008-Present – Board of Trustees (Chair)
- 2011 – 2012 – Annual Appeal (Chair)
- 2012 – Present – Year Round Stewardship Committee
- 2013 – Interim Minister Search Committee

He is fortunate to have the ability to evaluate and resolve problems and the skill to lead during complicated times. He is honored to serve The Unitarian Church in Westport during these complex times of change.

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### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES (Cont'd)**

#### ***Denny Davidoff – two-year term (re-election)***

Denny's volunteer career with the Unitarian Universalist Association began in 1971. She has served the denomination as Treasurer and President of the UU Women's Federation, Chair of the General Assembly Planning Committee, Trustee-at-Large, member of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, and as the elected Moderator of the Association from 1993 to 2001, presiding over the Board of Trustees and the annual General Assembly. In that capacity, she was one of the religious leaders who founded The Interfaith Alliance in the summer of 1994.

In November 2008, Denny was invited to join the staff of Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago as Senior Consultant, Director of Development and Alumni Affairs. She had previously served on the Meadville Lombard Board of Trustees from 2002 to 2008. In this capacity, Denny travels widely and frequently to meet with donors and potential donors and to tell the continuing Meadville Lombard story, a story that mingles tradition and transition.

Denny's past service includes membership on the Trustee Council of the World Conference on Religions for Peace, and chairing the Board of Directors of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship. She has been an active member of The Unitarian Church in Westport, CT since the mid-sixties and is currently serving as the elected Clerk of the congregation which includes membership on the governing board's executive committee. She also finds time to act as Vice Chair of Workplace, Inc., the Workforce Investment Board of Southern Connecticut with responsibility for oversight of more than twenty job training programs for a wide variety of jobless clients.

Denny and her husband Jerry were presented with the 2006 Award for Distinguished Service in the Cause of Unitarian Universalism. Jerry died in November, 2009 and Denny has since moved to a retirement community in Bridgeport, CT (although the term "retirement" does not really apply). She has two sons and four grandchildren.

#### ***Michelle Garvey – three-year term (re-election)***

Michelle has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for over 12 years, and a member of the Board of Trustees for the past two years. She lives in Weston with her husband Luke and intermittently, their two college-age children, Alison and Luke. Her family began attending the church shortly after moving to Weston, and has been attending ever since, with both kids choosing to be dedicated in the church in a somewhat unusual older child dedication ceremony. The Garveys have been active in many aspects of church life over the years, and are delighted to have found a church community that embraces a wide variety of beliefs and individuals under a common set of values. In addition to the Board, Michelle's individual activities include several years on the Finance Committee, teaching RE, and the Camp Jewell committee.

Michelle has a BS in Engineering and an MBA, both from Cornell University, and has had a lengthy and successful career in retail information technology. Currently she is serving as Chief Information Officer of Ann Inc, the parent company of Ann Taylor and Loft.

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### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES (Cont'd)**

Michelle has served as a member of the Board for the past two years and believes that her unique combination of intelligence, humor, compassion and logic provides a useful contribution to church governance in helping to balance growth with closeness, financial realities with budgetary needs, and the demands of the present with the vision for the future.

#### ***Lyn Hamilton – three-year term (re-election)***

Lyn has been a member of TUCW for 13 years, and attended regularly for several years prior to that. Lyn lives in Norwalk in the home where she raised three children, with plenty of space now for visiting grandchildren. Lyn has been working for the State of CT for almost 30 years, and is a social work supervisor in children's protective services. With her strong interest in children's safety, Lyn has been a member of the Safe Congregations Committee for several years at TUCW. Lyn was drawn to TUCW by her interest in music, and has been a member of several choirs for many years. In 2003, she traveled with the Chamber Choir to our Partner Church in Alsóboldogfalva, Romania, where the choir sang in the small Unitarian church in the village, and where choir members and villagers developed lasting friendships. Lyn also served on Ed Thompson's Ministerial Relations Committee before accepting a position on the Board of Trustees.

As a member of the BOT, Lyn helped to organize the UUMatters sessions between/after Sunday services, believing that this would provide a safe and welcoming opportunity for congregants and Board members to chat in an informal, and hopefully informative setting. Lyn looks forward to serving again on the Board as we, the members of TUCW, transition into a new beginning, a new era in the life of TUCW.

Continued, next page

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### AUDITING COMMITTEE

#### ***Anne Khanna – one-year term (new)***

Anne Khanna has been a member of The Unitarian Church of Westport for 3 years. She lives in Wilton with her husband Sam and their children Nicole (14) and Christopher (11). Professionally, she has been active in the finance community since graduating from Wharton Business School in 1993, including positions in investment banking and corporate finance. She spent 12 years with GE Capital, most recently as Senior Vice President of Distressed Debt, where she oversaw the analysis and investment of over \$80 million in distressed debt securities.

Since coming to this church, Anne has been involved with numerous committees and activities in RE, including being a 5/6th grade RE teacher, Youth Group Advisor, Boston COA/Heritage trip organizer, Youth Service Outreach trip organizer, co-chair of the Youth Leadership Circle, and member of the RE Council. She volunteers weekly in the RE office, with a particular focus on improving RE's member databases and systems. In 2012, she was a member of the Youth Program Director Search Committee and in 2013 she joined the Interim Minister Search Committee.

Anne is looking forward to the opportunity to serve on the auditing committee since it allows her to combine her expertise in finance with her enthusiasm for the church and her commitment to service. She is being nominated to a first term in this role.

#### ***Jean Sturges – one-year term (re-election)***

Jean lives in Fairfield with her husband, Tom, of 52 years. They have 2 children and 2 grand-children. for more than 40 years she's known she is a UU. She made it official by signing the book May 2010. Since then, Jean has focused on getting to know others through small groups: Newcomer Orientation, Building Your Own Theology, UUWF, Odyssey, and as facilitator of Neighborhood Circles of Care #19.

Although Jean graduated from Wellesley College with a BA in Biology, she later earned an accounting degree from Sacred Heart University, and passed the CPA exam in 1982. She served as Fairfield Town Clerk and then worked as Financial Manager and Corporate Secretary/Treasurer in a very creative audio-visual firm in Westport (the only left-brain-dominant person!).

Jean's volunteer activities include 15 years as Treasurer for Micah Housing and Operation Hope of Fairfield, Inc., handling all the bookkeeping services and working with the 3rd party CPA. Jean was Treasurer for the League of Women Voters of CT for 2 years, and informally audited the books for Friends of the Fairfield Library for 3 years. She established and ran an IRS Individual Income Tax Assistance Program at the Fairfield Library for seniors and persons with low income. Jean writes, "It has been an honor to serve on the Audit Committee; I feel my training and my analytical abilities have been useful in this capacity."

Continued, next page

## **Candidates for Elected Positions at The Unitarian Church in Westport June 2013**

### **ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**

#### ***Brian LaVoie – five-year term (re-election)***

Brian LaVoie has been a member of TUCW for 17 years. He lives in Trumbull with wife Patricia Woods-LaVoie, son Henri, and one very needy cat they call Budley. Brian has worked in or with finance organizations for 20+ years, and is currently a financial-systems Program Manager for The Hartford Insurance Group.

Brian and his family recommitted to the Church 2 years ago when his son started asking “the big questions.” Last year, Brian began looking for opportunities to participate more directly in the life of the Church, both as a way to connect with other members and to contribute to the Church’s work in the community.

He believes that through service on the Endowment Committee he has leveraged his financial experience, obtained insight into other administrative-service opportunities, and allowed him to share directly in meeting the financial challenges the Church faces.

### **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRIES**

#### ***Cheryl Dixon Paul, five-year term (re-election)***

Cheryl came to TUCW in 1995 and signed the book in 2000, initially to sing with the Women’s Choir, and continued singing with Special Projects and Chamber Choir.

For the last year, she has served on the new Committee On Ministries, and is dedicated to furthering that Committee’s efforts in the coming years. Traveling to our partner church in Transylvania and four Unitarian churches in Scotland with the Chamber Choir has been a special connection for Cheryl. She has been back to Alsóboldogfalva five times and she’s currently chair of the Partner Church Committee. In 2009, she helped plan and facilitate the visit of ten members of our Partner Church to Westport.

Cheryl has planned and programmed the Summer Services with Linda Hudson for ten years, to provide summer worship for TUCW by ordained ministers and lay leaders. She taught the 8th grade Our Whole Lives curriculum for six years in our Religious Education program, and she reads to 4th graders at the Beardsley School bi-weekly.

Cheryl and her husband Erik live in Bridgeport. She is the owner of Dixon Interiors in Southport.

Continued, next page

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### COMMITTEE ON MINISTRIES (Cont'd)

*Elaine McMillan, two-year term (Completing final 2 years of 3-year term held by C. Lavender)*

Elaine has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for 22 years. She lives in Blackrock and privately tutors elementary students in reading and math.

Since coming to this church, Elaine has been:

- Youth Group Advisor, facilitator for OWL and its predecessor About Your Sexuality
- Chair of Leela Sinha's Ordination Committee
- Member of the Social Action Committee (when it existed!) and then chair of the Green Sanctuary Committee
- Chorus of the Once and Again Folk Singers
- Member of Nominating Committee and Chair of its successor, Nominating and Leadership Development Committee
- Ad hoc helper for the Constitution Committee

She has also been involved at the District level, volunteering with registration for the annual meeting for three years. She is an absolute GA Junkie, having been indoctrinated at General Assembly in Boston in 2003 and not missing one since, despite broken leg & hip replacement. As a result of these interests, she has been Association and Denominational Affairs Representative for 4 years, writing the Soundings article "Explore Your Whole Wuurld."

Elaine has two sons, one in NYC studying law (Mark, his wife Shirin, and new baby) and one in Frankfurt, Germany, in the financial investment field (Rob, with girlfriend Petra).

With her knowledge of many aspects of church life, she feels she is a good candidate to serve on the Committee on Ministries.

Continued, next page

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## NOMINATING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### ***Carrie McEvoy, Chair, one-year term (re-election)***

Carrie has been a member of TUCW for 3 years. She lives in Norwalk with her husband, William, two dogs and three cats. She is a computer programmer, writing software for book publishers.

Since coming to this Church, Carrie has been the Neighborhood Circle of Care facilitator for circle 7, sings with the Women's Choir, and is the head of the nametag manufacturing department.

Last year was Carrie's first time being elected for a committee at TUCW. Carrie's organizational and observational skills, as well as her ability to listen to the interests and skills of others will help the NLDC to find the people who will best lead our congregation through the challenges we will face as a community in the years ahead.

### ***David Caplan, one-year term (new)***

David has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for four years. He lives in Norwalk with his wife Liz and assorted pets. Professionally, David has been a hospital administrator for 25 years, specializing in patient data and information.

Since coming to this church, David has been a member of the Once and Again Folk Choir, and helped found Voices Café.

David is originally from Westchester County which is where he and Liz raised three sons before moving to Norwalk. Having come of age as an agnostic in the early '70s, David journeyed through a long stretch of his early adult life as a born-again Christian. He is very happy to have found his way to Unitarian Universalism, and has deep appreciation for the friends he has made, for the community we share, and for the principles that unite us at TUCW. He would be honored to serve the church as a member of the Nominating Committee in 2014.

### ***Joann Coviello, one-year term (new)***

Joann has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for one year and has been actively involved in the Church for over 10 years. She lives in Wilton, CT and is a conference planner and tradeshow producer.

Since coming to TUCW, Joann has been involved in a number of committees, including chairperson of the Odyssey Committee for three years, and was one of the founding committee members of Voices Café. She has also served on the Summer Worship Committee and is on the committee that is planning the celebration party for Frank's retirement. She organized and ran a cell phone recycling program for four years and single-handedly ran a book drive for the Beardsley School where she procured over 200 brand-new books from children's book publishers.

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### **NOMINATING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Cont'd)**

Joann sings in the Women's Choir and with the Once & Again Folksingers and has a talent for creating parodies and skits that have been used at a number of Spring Flings, the Frank 'n Fun gatherings, and other celebrations and special events.

Joann is being nominated to a first term on the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee. Her past and current activities at TUCW have allowed her to come to know many church members from a variety of constituencies within the church. She will therefore be able to suggest nominees that represent a broad cross-section of the congregation.

#### ***Luke Garvey, one-year term (new)***

Luke has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for over 10 years. He lives in Weston with his wife Michelle and their two children, Alison and Luke Jr. After getting his MBA from Cornell, he has had a successful career in healthcare information system, and hospital administration. He then received a Masters in Social Work from Fordham University with honors. He is currently working in the Bridgeport Hospital Emergency Room, doing psychiatric evaluation and diagnosis.

Since coming to this church, Luke has been involved in various aspects of TUCW:

- 5 years on the Camp Jewell Committee
- Taught Religious Education
- Active in Small Group Ministry
- Started a Career Change Group
- Has been part of the Westbridge Coalition, contributing time and effort to rehabilitating homes for the needy. He was also asked to represent Westbridge to its parent organization, Rebuilding Together of Fairfield, and was recently elected to their board.
- He was a charter member of the Circles of Care planning committee
- He served as a facilitator and editor in the recent effort to update our Mission Statement

Luke has a strong desire to serve, and *preserve* TUCW. He feels that the Nominating Committee is a vital component of assuring the population of the Board and other key committees with practical visionaries. Within the next few years, we will be going through a critical period of transition, which can either strengthen the church, or leave it weakened. Having the right people representing the congregation and guiding its path is an incredibly important factor. To this role, Luke brings insight and compassion, coupled with practicality borne of decades of managing at a senior level in the not-for-profit arena.

#### ***Anita Pfluger, one-year term (new)***

Anita has been a member of The Unitarian Church in Westport for nearly 25 years. She lives in Trumbull with her husband, Bob Dunn, and is enjoying retirement from her career as a teacher/library media specialist/public school administrator.

## **Candidates for Elected Positions at The Unitarian Church in Westport June 2013**

### **NOMINATING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Cont'd)**

On most Sundays Anita can be found at the front of the sanctuary, singing in the Women's Choir, the Chamber Choir, or the Special Projects Choir. She has enjoyed two amazing trips abroad with the Chamber Choir; the first, in 2003, to our partner church in Alsóboldogfalva, and the second to Scotland in August of 2010. Anita and Bob were thrilled to host Laszlo Deak when our Transylvanian visitors came to Westport. She also keeps her library skills current in her service as the choir librarian.

Anita has been involved with our Beardsley School initiative for a number of years. In addition to being a regular reader at the fall Read-In Day, she volunteers each week in the Beardsley library, cataloging, shelving, and repairing books. She has worked with fifth- and sixth-grade students on research projects and various reading activities. Anita also sang in the presentation at the school of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, organized by Carl Serbell several years ago.

Anita not only has participated in several Odyssey programs, but also led one on Non-violent Communication. She is a member of Circle of Care #22 and a small group that has met for the past 6 years. Anita is committed to our Social Justice endeavors, most recently attending the Valentine's Day rally against gun violence in Hartford.