

# INTERN MINISTER NEWS

by Katie Romano Griffin, Intern Minister



*“We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, The warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.” – Elizabeth Selle Jones*

Hello from Chicago! It is a not-so-balmy 17 degrees and I am seated in our school’s main gathering area, “The Atherton Lounge” waiting to hear a friend and fellow seminarian share her spiritual learning from her month-long study at the Shinto Tsubaki Grand Shrine in Japan.

I have been at school since 8 am this morning and will be here until at least 8 pm tonight. The long hours are as much a part of this transformational journey as the tea ceremony my dear friend is about to share with us. It is a joy to be able to share a small part of this journey with All Faiths.

*We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth...*

Life at Meadville Lombard Theological School involves as many goodbyes as it does hellos. In order to take classes, we must leave our families and our internship congregations to say hello to our Meadville Lombard Community. Each week we take a different “intensive” course that is a culmination of study that we have been engaging in all semester. As a full-time student, that means I am in Chicago for the entire month, but for my friends who are part-time students they are here only for a brief stretch of time. Regardless of how long we are together, each week we are charged to find new meaning in life, to reveal some new truth through our work together and before saying goodbye again we renew our commitment to carry the “truths” that have been discovered back to our faith communities.

*The warmth of community...*

For many, regular spiritual practice is an important part of life. A consistent spiritual practice is especially important for a minister. Equally valuable is a strong community connection. While I am at school, a few of my friends and I agree to gather together each night, no matter how long or hard or exciting our day has been, to join in spiritual practice. Sometimes we pray for each other, our families, and our communities. Other times we meditate or sing songs. Often we engage in all three practices. This

work binds us together and the warmth of our community sustains us as we weather the cold days life occasionally delivers to us.

*... or the fire of commitment...*

The passion for Unitarian Universalism is evident in the air. I often pause to breathe deeply of the discussions swirling freely around me. For instance, did you know that during World War II the Unitarian Minister Waitsill Sharp and his wife Martha went to Prague? They were spiritual and social leaders who, at great personal risk, went on to help families avoid the concentration camps. They used the flaming chalice of the Unitarian Service Committee to seal the falsified papers families used to get out of the country.

Our flaming chalice remains a symbol of freedom in Europe. What a gift it is to celebrate the legacy our chalice represents each Sunday! This is just one of the ancestral stories we share together as we each recommit in our own hearts daily, for our own spiritual growth. I will be bringing this “fire of commitment” back with me when I return.

*These we carry in our hearts until we are together again...*

The sun has long ago set. The tea ceremony has ended and it is time to say goodbye again for a bit. I am so looking forward to returning and sharing what I have learned. I hope to see you on February 7th when I deliver the sermon on “Sources of Hope!”

## GETTING TO KNOW YOUUU

*Two Sessions on February 14, 2016*

*An opportunity to new people to learn more about us*

On Sunday, **February 14**, after the first service, there will be a "Getting to Know YouUU Q & A" session in the minister's office and after the second service, in the sanctuary with Reverend Beard and a board member. This will be a brief and informal time for new people to ask questions about All Faiths and/or Unitarian Universalism.

## BOARD NOTES *continued from page 2*

Finally, since Sharon Gray has assumed the role of treasurer, the Board has appointed David Slocum to complete her term as governor until the March elections. Welcome and thank you, Dave.

*The next meeting is scheduled for February 17 at 3:30. All are welcome to attend.*