



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

Thoughts on Dementia

By Joe Good

I am certain that through our years we have giggled at jokes – or told them ourselves – like the one about the bumbling geezer with his fly open and mustard on his tie asking, in July, “Is it still snowing?” And we have winced at hearing about the tragedy of the old gal next door who doesn’t recognize her own daughter. In fact, for the most part, dementia is neither comedy nor tragedy. In the case of someone taken by Alzheimer’s in middle age, the latter may apply. But, being realistic, dementia is just one of the many illnesses that will afflict almost all in later life.

In his book, *The Road Less Traveled*, M. Scott Peck frames life as it certainly is: “Life is a series of problems.” With some luck, and helpful genes, if we solve life’s problems in a way that promotes us to advanced age, we will encounter more problems to be solved. If we fail to accept this reality, I think it will only increase our suffering. It’s a choice.

I have a spouse with Alzheimer’s. (How hard that was to say at first.) I am newly challenged. Ways of being that I always thought were admirable are now imperatives: to be kind, loving, patient, understanding, accepting, non-reactive, non-corrective, non-dismissive. Diane’s conception of things has been altered, but her reality is no less valid than mine. Her ability to make choices to solve complex problems is now limited. Mine is not. I choose to learn what I must to be an effective

caregiver. I choose to find new depths of love, patience and acceptance. I choose to ask for help from loving comrades and helping professionals.

In facing old age, with its inescapable realities, I choose acceptance. And love. And peace. I must surrender my will, but not my willingness. The future is a known yet an unknown thing. I must be ready.

I think repeatedly of Leonard Cohen’s words: “Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That’s how the light gets in.”

Get to Know Our Musicians

This is the second in a series to help the congregation better know the talented individuals who provide our special music on Sundays.



Liz Barnes has been a professional pianist for over 30 years. She is accomplished in most music genres including jazz, rock, blues, R&B, country and classical, although she performs primarily as a jazz artist. In

addition to her extensive experience as a performer, Liz is also an accomplished music

educator, having been the Director of Jazz Studies at the acclaimed Governor's School for the Arts in Norfolk. She teaches all facets of musicianship including technique, theory, harmony and ear training, and is adept at helping instrumentalists and vocalists master improvisation. She has taught privately and served as a church musician throughout her career. Liz holds a B.A. in performance and has continued her study of music and composition through the years, including working with several well-known artists.

More recently, Liz has developed expertise in therapeutic music. Her rich background in improvisation made her well suited for it, as therapeutic musicians rely on this skill. As a certified therapeutic musician, she brings live music to patients in a variety of health care settings, including hospitals, nursing and assisted living facilities and palliative care programs. She is also able to serve individuals in their homes and through telehealth sessions.

Liz has worked with people dealing with a wide variety of diagnoses, including cancer, dementia, stroke, chronic diseases and mental health issues. She has found that music has numerous therapeutic benefits, and her journey in this area has been incredibly meaningful. You can learn more about therapeutic music from Liz's website, [Music for Body and Spirit](#).

Our Budget and Beyond

By Peggy Anders, Treasurer

We are quickly approaching the UUFW Annual Meeting on June 8th. The Board of Directors has called a short meeting immediately after the Service this Sunday

(June 1) for a detailed presentation of the budget for Fiscal Year 2026. This seems like the right time to answer a few questions about our budget process.

What does the budget contain? It is a detailed plan estimating, to the best of our knowledge, what the expenses and revenues for the upcoming fiscal year will be.

How is the budget created? In early spring, we hold our pledge drive, and the result is a vital factor in determining what we will have for operating expenses. Pledges are our highest source of income (more than 85% of the total) and an important factor in the process.

Rev. Paul then creates a trial budget, which he presents to the Board in March. It is discussed at Board meetings line by line for the next few months. When the Board and Minister are satisfied, and your questions answered, the proposed budget will be put to a vote of approval at the Annual Meeting.

What are the dates of the fiscal year? The budget that will be presented this Sunday is for FY 2026, which begins on July 1, 2025 and ends on June 30, 2026. When you made your pledge in February, it was for the fiscal year that doesn't begin until July 1.

I look forward to our budget review on Sunday and encourage all interested members to attend. You should have received the proposed budget in an email sent to members last Friday. We will do our best to answer any questions you may have. If you can't be present for the meeting, you may email your questions to me at treasurer@uufw.org.

(As a reminder, the current fiscal year ends on June 30, and fulfilling your FY 2025 pledge by then will be most appreciated.)

