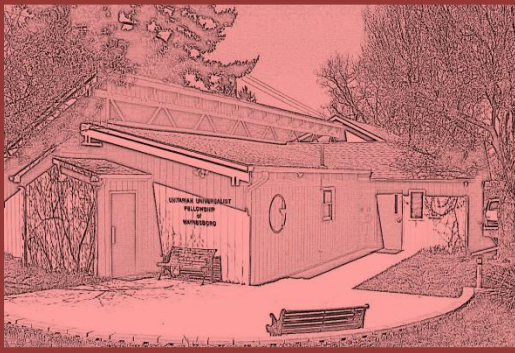




# The CommUUnicator

**Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of Waynesboro**

## Be the Bird in Flight

By Jolie Rocke

Every Sunday as I enter the sanctuary, I welcome another opportunity to greet congregants with an eclectic tapestry of sound: a blend of piano melodies, choir harmonies, and the strumming of instruments. I greet the sexton with a cheerful “Good morning.” I wave at the staff who have meticulously planned our services. The choir members arrive, ready to lift their voices and spirits in song. I take my place, prepared to lead congregants in worship. I hope they’ll join in—not just in song, but also in spirit, receiving the message interwoven through word, music, and movement.

It’s not always easy. I often carry the weariness of endless days and late nights. Sometimes, I find myself moved during worship. A tear wells, my heart fills with heaviness.... These are the difficult moments: when I have to remind myself that I’m here to serve. My moment to reflect will come later; for now, I must stay on task.

My gaze wanders across people’s expressions and then to the art that graces the sanctuary walls: four bronze birds spiral upward, like whispers of hope. Their wings spread wide, urging me to rise above the weight of daily life, to soar into a space untouched by earthly worries—a realm of lightness, joy, and fresh air. It’s a place where I can breathe deeply; where my soul is freed to sing, dance, and thrive.

Art heals. I’ve experienced firsthand the restorative power of music, poetry, prose, quilting, sewing, and other forms of creative expression. They’re essential for my well-being. Creative expression feeds my soul. Just like worship itself can inspire, creativity can offer a pathway toward healing. We heal through absorbing the creative acts of others as well as engaging in our own creativity.

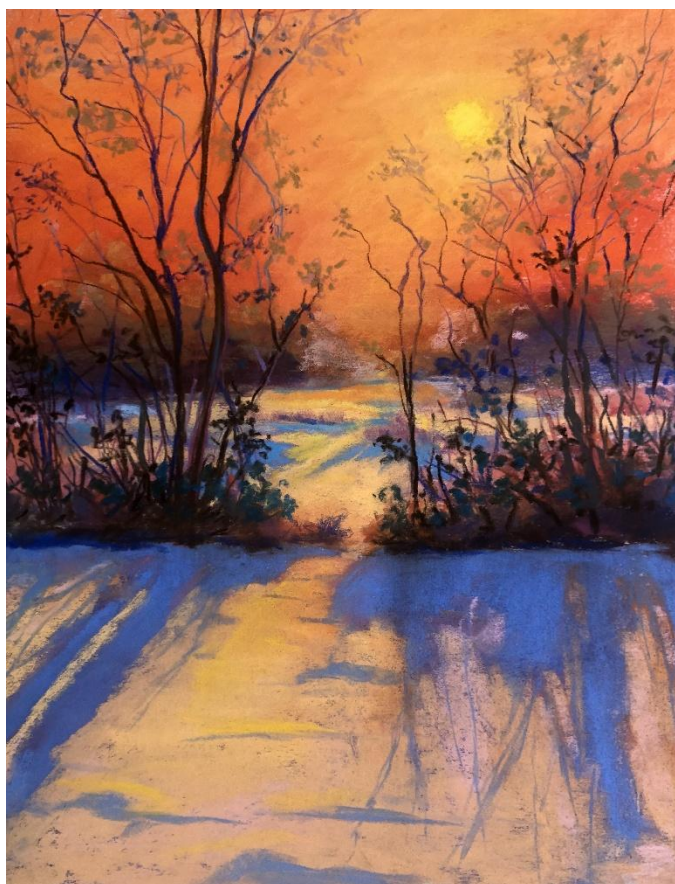
When the world presses too hard; when the weight of despair feels too heavy and the light of hope seems dim, I remind myself to close my eyes and be the bird in flight. Soar toward your dreams. Aim for your highest self. Let the creativity within you flow—sing, dance, sculpt. Let my wings unfurl, guiding me toward freedom, peace, and joy.

*This essay is reprinted from the UUA website’s weekly inspiration, [Braver/Smiser](#). It was first published on June 11, 2025. Dr. Jolie Rocke is Director of Music and Arts at First UU Church of Houston.*

## About My Art Show at the UUFW

By Mae Stoll, Guest Artist

I credit my late-in-life “art awakening” to my move to the Shenandoah Valley in 2019. After about a year steeped in the beauty of my surroundings, and totally on a whim, I purchased a cheap set of acrylic paints and dabbled for a couple of hours and found I was hooked. Many, many tubes of (much better) paint later, I can say that the relative short time that I’ve been painting has been an exploration, an exciting one down a road with many



subtlety of soft pastels, it's essentially color, with its myriad of possibilities, that continues to excite my soul.

I am thrilled and honored to have my work represented at UUFW!

*You can learn more about Mae's art from her [website](#). This art show will be up through December 28. All of her paintings are available for purchase with 15% of sales to benefit the Fellowship.*

## Halloween at the UUFW



*The RE teens enjoyed passing out candy and treats to the neighborhood, and the RE children had much fun decorating the*

*Chalice House porch.*



byways and one that has changed how I look at the world.

I discovered soft pastels about a year after starting in acrylics and now love both mediums. It may be a while before I settle into a definite painting style since I'm having too much fun at this stage. And although I'm predominantly drawn to semi-impressionistic landscapes, I am often lured by other subject matter and styles. I find that I am attracted almost equally to realistic representation and to attempting to capture only the mood or the feeling evoked by a scene, sometimes turning to one mode instinctively after spending a significant amount of time in the other. Whether I'm moving wetness around with a brush or being seduced by the powdery

