

December 2, 2019

Dear Friends:

The appointment of a new acting president at Valley Unitarian Universalist represents a moment of opportunity not only for the Board, but for VUU.

As the Board of Trustees, we not only take into consideration what the Board needs in a new executive, but what VUU needs from their Board.

We feel a measure of the Board's success is the large degree to which VUU congregants feel they are "stakeholders" in the congregation. We are grateful for the support the congregation and staff, provides.

As your departing Board of Trustees President, there are five characteristics that I appreciated most in the people with whom I have worked with in my role. Sue Keen embodies these characteristics, values:

Curious: The word "curious" evokes a sense of exploration and openness to wonder. Sue has a deep knowledge and love of our congregation and its varied people and communities. She has taught job search skills to homeless men in North Carolina, Connecticut, and South Carolina and at Save the Family and WHEAT here in the valley, as well as designed career planning and life skills programs for churches and organizations in Arizona. She has a desire to learn and explore the potential of VUU and our communities. She knows how to strike a balance between curiosity and a measured pace.

Visionary: The Board has always been led by a strong vision for VUU, and we have especially appreciated the emphasis on inclusive democracy, community development, under-represented communities and social justice as components of that vision.

It is hard for me to envision a strong VUU that does not have strong community-based ties. Whether Sue is career planning, designing job search skills or life skills for various organizations, or playing the piano for the Ahwatukee Recreation Center Singers, HOA president in Mesa or being VUU's Flower Chair, CCC's Liaison, Chalice Circle facilitator or assisting whenever the need arises, she will ensure our vision and our ties stay strong.

Ego-less: While no organization or individual can truly be without ego, I appreciate the Board's, as well as an individual's modesty, not only when interacting with each other but also in interactions with the congregation. Today though, I say heck with modesty, I want to toot Sue's horn: with her B.A. in Oriental Studies, a M.A. in Human Resources Development, and Ph.D. in Adult Learning she parlayed her degrees into 30+ years as an instructional designer and college professor, delivering leadership and management training and designing training for all corporate levels, both in the U.S. and Jamaica. So now you know.

Investing: Though investing in VUU means many things, I believe the main fundamentals are our Vision & Ends Statements:

1. We challenge each person to discover, experience, and be transformed by the deep and mysterious.
2. We cultivate our inclusive community through radical hospitality and nurturing.
3. We prioritize intergenerational experience through increased investment in the faith formation of the next generation.
4. We engage in partnerships to counter systems of oppression and create a just, sustainable and healthy world.
5. We are an innovative congregation, growing Unitarian Universalism in covenant with our UUA partners.

Sue comes to the Board not only fully invested in VUU's vision but with the strengths and skills to move forward: the ability to creatively combine planning with problem solving, organizing and project management along with a mean set of needles for sewing, knitting, and crocheting.

Optimistic: "Pessimism is about an assessment of the situation," goes a saying, "while optimism is an orientation of the spirit." Sue is optimistic: who else would cook and provided meals for the North Carolina's version of I-Help, teach job search skills to homeless men and volunteer as an investigator for the ABC15 Let Joe Know/Better Business Bureau team if she did not believe her work would make a difference? She knows it is not just about service but also about inspiration, commitment and values.

Sue Keen embodies these characteristics and values, and I am optimistic that the Board and VUU will find new strength in its new acting president. In this spirit, thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Musette Steger

FYI ask her what she is most proud of besides her family next time you see her.