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A Message from EA

Dear Friends,
It seems time passes so quickly these days. Between my daughters' various appointments, my own work obligations, and the never ending tasks of daily living, I can hardly find time to focus on the important work of disability advocacy (case in point, this newsletter was suppose to be released in October—Oops!). No doubt, there have been times in your life where you have felt similarly. And,

yet, this important work DOES continue, even without us.

We at EqUUal Access have discovered that some of your congregations have been working on making themselves more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive. For example, the First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati installed a ramp to its pulpit this past Summer. First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati is not an AIM congregation,

they do not have a minister that requires a ramp, and yet, they installed one anyway.

We'd like to know what else is happening. What wonderful measures is your congregation putting in place to make itself more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive? Let us know! Email your congregation's accessibility wins to info@equalaccess.org, and we'll highlight your congregation in our next newsletter.

- Meredith Plummer

Follow Up from General Assembly

By Barbara Meyers

At General Assembly 2018 in Kansas City there were a number of EA - related events. One was a celebration during which we gave official AIM recognition to

representatives of two congregations and announced our sermon award winner.

Congratulations to both the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo, New York, and the First

Unitarian and Universalist Church of Rochester, Minnesota, for completing their AIM certifications! Ginny Wixson, who has been leading the Buffalo AIM team for five years, and

Paula Horner, team leader of the Rochester Disability Task Force, accepted their congregation's awards at EA's celebration at General Assembly.

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Continued: Follow Up from General Assembly

(Continued from Pg. 1) EA's 2018 Sermon Contest winner was Joanna Lubkin, with her sermon "The Spoon Blessing." Joanna is an affiliated community minister at Arlington Street Church in Boston, MA., and

works for the UU Minister's Association. Her winning sermon can be read on the EA's website at: <https://tinyurl.com/yb2k75vf>.

In addition to this wonderful celebration, EA had a booth in the Ex-

hibit Hall that had many visitors, getting information about EA, AIM, and trying out a hearing loop. There was a hearing loop installed in the main conference hall which made it much easier for people with t-coil enabled hearing aids

to hear the proceedings. And, there were two GA worship services that focused on disability, led by the Rev. Theresa Inez Soto.



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Acronyms

- EA — Equal Access
- AIM — Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry
- GA — General Assembly
- UU — Unitarian Universalist
- UUA — Unitarian Universalist Association
- CLF — Church of the Larger Fellowship
- MS — Microsoft

Website Roundup

By Suzanne Fast

We at EA have 3 asks...

Nominate a Website

We're on the prowl for examples of congregational websites with good accessibility. Do you know one that's doing it rather well? Nominate your favorites by emailing us at info@equalaccess.org with 'Website Wonders' in the subject line.

Suggest Resources

In the UU universe, both congregations and small related organizations often rely on people to maintain their sites who are not website pros. And while there's more and more information

about making a site accessible, much of it assumes a level of technical expertise. If you have website accessibility resources for non-experts to recommend, would like to help curate those resources and/or would be part of a team to present demystifying webinars/chats about website accessibility please email info@equalaccess.org with 'Website Resources' in the subject line.

Uplift Justice

WordPress has made a major new release, with new features including a new interface for updating site content called Guten-

berg. The WordPress platform is popular for congregational and small organization websites because it is easy for people without a technical background to update the content of a website. The UUA provides a customizable template for congregational websites that is a WordPress theme. Unlike the earlier dashboard, this new interface, Gutenberg, has major accessibility issues: <https://tinyurl.com/yb7bphrp>. WordPress based sites will still be accessible for the end user, but the interface for updating the content of a site will not be.

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Continued: Website Roundup

(Continued from Pg. 2) It is possible for a site to continue with the accessible interface, but then they won't have the new bells and whistles at their dis-

posal. We are glad to say that the UUA has volunteered to advise congregations using the UUA WordPress theme not to turn on the Gutenberg editor. Please send a thank

you to the UUA webteam and the Outreach Office for this principled support for accessibility. And, if your congregation uses WordPress, ask them about forgoing Gutenberg.



ASL Ministry Online

By Suzanne Fast



We are excited to say that CLF is exploring the possibility of field testing a Deaf/deaf friendly online ministry. CLF uses theme-based ministry, and is considering supplementing their current on-line offerings by

captioning sermons when they are archived. They are also exploring the idea of offering covenant groups (i.e. Small group ministry) in ASL. If you're interested or have questions, contact info@equalaccess.org. We will post specifics on

the EA Facebook page when they are available; please be thinking of how you can help spread the word so that this demonstration project gets the best chance of success!

Sermon Contest 2019!

By Helen McFadyen

We're pleased to announce EA's 2019 Sermon Contest. This annual contest highlights disability-related themes and topics. Entry deadline: May 1. One cash prize of \$500. When feasible, the winner may be invited to present their sermon at an EA event

during UUA GA. Travel costs to GA cannot be supported.

Eligibility

The sermon must be an original work on a disability theme or topic.

The sermon must be Preached between May 1 and April 30 of the

current contest year.

Entries (sermon text and entry cover information) must be submitted on or before May 1st.

This sermon contest is open to all Unitarian Universalists, lay or religious professional.

CONSENT: In entering the contest, the author grants permission for EA to post and publicize their sermon text, name, and photo. The sermon author retains copyright.

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Continued: Sermon Contest 2019!

(Continued from Pg. 3) please remove all identifying references (your name, name of the congregation, etc.). Acceptable file formats are MS Word or Plain Text (No PDFs). Complete all fields in the entry form below, or provide this information in a separate cover page. E-mail your sermon text file and entry form/cover page to info@EqUUal-Access.org with the subject line 'EqUUal Access Sermon Contest.'

Guidelines

The sermon should contain a title. Before submitting your text,

please remove all identifying references (your name, name of the congregation, etc.). Acceptable file formats are MS Word or Plain

Text (No PDFs). Complete all fields in the entry form below, or provide this information in a separate cover page. E-mail

your sermon text file and entry form/cover page to info@EqUUal-Access.org with the subject line 'EqUUal Access Sermon Contest.'

Entry Form—Required Cover Page Information

Name: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Street Address: _____

Town / City: _____ State / Province: _____ Zip / Postal Code: _____

Title of Sermon: _____

Date Preached: _____ UU Congregation where it was Preached: _____

In entering this contest, I grant permission for EqUUal Access to post and publicize my sermon text, name, and photo.

Signature of Consent: _____

EaUUal Access

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EQUUAL ACCESS  and  ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION MINISTRY AIM PROGRAM

**Enabling the full engagement
of people with disabilities in
Unitarian Universalist commu-
nities and the broader society.**

[Www.EqUUalAccess.Org](http://www.EqUUalAccess.Org)

