

Board of Christian Education Presented during Worship on February 12, 2017

I am Ruth Benedict. My husband, Gary Pine, and I have been married for nearly 35 years and a faith community has been an integral part of all those years. We have spent the past 16 years as members of this church. When we first met, values we shared that have persisted to this day are our belief that: 1) faith must be reflected in action and 2) stewardship goes far beyond the giving of financial resources.

As a young couple with few financial resources, we were committed to the giving of time and talents to benefit our faith community and the world it serves. Even as our ability to provide financial support for the church has grown, we remain committed to giving of ourselves, our time and the individual gifts with which we have been blessed. Why? Because we see the ways in which the sharing of time and talents furthers our call to be Disciples of Christ's teachings, as noted in the children's anthem this morning, AND because we know that it is the community of people sharing their gifts, not the financial resources, that keep the church alive and strong.

For the past six years I have been blessed to see gifts shared generously by the members of the Board of Christian Education. I was first recruited to be the Board Liaison to the Executive Council because many of the parents of young children serving on the Board found it difficult to carve out another night each month to attend the meeting. Although I was told that I only had to attend the Executive Council meetings, I did not see how I could serve as a liaison without also attending the CE Board meetings. It has truly been a wonderful experience. How can one not be inspired by:

- A Director of Christian Education who gives of his time and talents to not only create a safe, welcoming and creative space for our children and youth but also for the greater Madison Community through coordination of the CROP walk, the Martin Luther King Service Day and planning enticing activities for a Neighborhood Party.
- Those who have provided outstanding leadership for the Board including Alison Pharo, Pam Cramer, Sara Beachy, Robin Craig and others and Sam Cramer who attends to represent the youth perspective.

- Susan Veit who faithfully takes minutes and supports the Committee through representation on the Adult Ed committee, Sunday School teaching, children's programming efforts, and slicing veggies for the Advent Workshop luncheon.
- Sean Hadfield who faithfully attends meetings, and brings his army of 3 children to assist with set-up and clean-up for various CE Board activities.
- Emily Cochran who ensures that our Nursery is kept clean and in order.
- Carolyn McKinney who joyfully recruits people to help with CE Board events and brings us "Wild Animal" crackers from the mountains of Montana.
- James Chandler who, with his partner Paul Lorentz, romps aisles of Woodman's shopping for the food to feed the masses at the Advent workshop luncheon.
- The members of the Accessibility Committee, of which I am a founding member, who faithfully ensure that our physical and social spaces are accessible and welcoming to all who want to enter this community of faith.

I am grateful for the generosity of these, my friends, and the many blessings I have received from each. I hope that some of you will be inspired to live generously and graciously for others and consider serving on the CE Board, as several members' terms are coming to an end.