

General Douglas McArthur once remarked, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." For almost a decade, I have had the privilege to serve on the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship board. Now this old soldier has completed my last year on the board as past president; it is my time to rest. I have been honored to have served this wonderful group of people.

I was not a Christian when I first joined a Unitarian Universalist church. I had rejected the intolerant and exclusive Christian church of my youth along with the God it represented. Like Jonah in the whale, I used Unitarian Universalism as a place to hide from God. But the God I lost faith in had not lost faith in me, and we found one another again at the Christian Fellowship Communion at General Assembly in 1985.

Through Christian Fellowship events at General Assembly, the Revivals and eventually at a short-lived UU Christian church, I discovered what Christianity could be – what it, in fact, should be. I found Unitarian Universalist Christianity is not only a unique faith, but is a living embodiment of "the way" that the Jewish Rabbi, Jesus of Nazareth preached of as he walked the length and breadth of the Roman province of Palestine. My faith journey, made possible because of the work of the Christian Fellowship, has enriched my life in myriad ways.

My time in service to the Fellowship has been but a small repayment of that huge gift. Through this service, I had the chance to work with people as they resolved challenging problems -- but without the conflict that occurred so often in other UU organizations I have served. Whether dealing with a budget shortfall, planning a revival or struggling with issues like baptism and disaffiliation, there was always a sense that we were doing more than just dealing with problems. There was the belief that we were here to do God's work in this world; we were here to help build the loving community that Jesus called the kingdom.

Now new, younger and more energetic leaders will have the experience of moving the Fellowship forward. There are some great paths to explore. Creating a loving Christian community in cyberspace, a community where all are worthy and all are welcome. Gathering as families and generations each summer in an environment where we can appreciate each other in the presence of God's creation. Reaching out to Unitarian and Universalist Christians around the world, uniting all those who have freely chosen to follow Jesus.

All of you reading this have an opportunity to be part of these journeys. You can serve on the board or one of our program teams.

You can financially support our ministry. You can come to Revival or the new family retreat. You can become part of our virtual church.

But some parting advice from an old soldier who knows – no matter the form or size of your contribution, you will be repaid a hundred fold if you chose to give.