

## **UWM – Great Lakes Region President’s Report 2021-2022**

On behalf of the GLR Board of Trustees, I share a collective sigh. We did it! What is the “it” that we did? Most importantly, we worked as a cohesive team dedicating time, energy, wisdom and a great deal of growth and learning to jump all the hurdles that presented on our path in the past year. We remembered throughout that we were in service to all of our members in the region and to the Unity Worldwide Ministries. We also remembered that our work, although business and governance, is sacred work; and we worked lovingly with Spirit’s guidance, always trusting Divine order.

We began our year of service during the 2021 conference with the new board which included the following members, and we selected our officers and liaisons:

- Cindy Yamamoto – President
- Ray Nelson – Vice President, and Conference and Communications Liaison
- Carl Nawrot – Treasurer
- Evin Wilkins – Secretary
- Kathy Harwood Long – Youth and Family Liaison
- Wilma Costen Taylor – By-laws team Liaison
- Susan Liddell – LUT Liaison

Shortly after the conference, Evin Wilkins notified us that he would be moving from the region and resigning from his post. We set out to replace him and find an alternate member to serve. Before the end of the calendar year we welcomed Anita Graham to complete Evin’s term, Lisa Herklotz as a board alternate, and Valerie Mansfield as our UWM Liaison. With our team complete, we set about to do the work at hand.

It was decided that our by-laws and policies were in need of some updating, as was the website, and we formed teams to make that happen. Many thanks to Cindi Cousineu who always supports us in whatever we ask, and made sure that the current by-laws, policies, meeting minutes and other important information, including revised scholarship applications, got added to the website.

Another great supporter is our Regional Representative, Greg Coles. He attended every Board meeting and kept us in the know about the changes and needs of our member ministries. He continues to offer his monthly resource Zoom calls which have been very beneficial to so many. Recently, at his request, we changed his role description to no longer include being a part of the UWM Standards team. He felt, and we agreed, that he could then better focus his attention of being in direct service to those in our region. Along with this minor change, came a title change to Regional Consultant. We are still considering how to have a representative on the standards team and who that might be.

The year flew by and there was always something new. As I reflect, I can get the sequence of events mixed up, but they are all outlined in the minutes online. Here are some of the major events and their outcomes:

- Tyler Pritchard notified us that she was relocating out of state and resigned from her long-time position as Youth Events Coordinator. There was a farewell event held in her honor.
  - Rev. Leisa Chase agreed to handle Tyler’s duties temporarily while she and Board Liaison, Kathy Harwood Long began creating new position descriptions and visioning for the future of YFM. Thank you both for your steadfast dedication to ensure that the Youth and Families of our great region continue to be served.
  - Chase also offers monthly calls for all in the region who are looking for ideas and support for their youth programs.

- It was decided to move this year's conference to a new location and the conference planning team went to work on that.
  - Thank you for your foresight and hard work that brought our conference to Chicago-land.
  - As the conference will again be hybrid this year, it was decided to outsource and hire a professional tech team so that all attendees will have a great experience.
  - The LUTs were excited to welcome back former GLR President, Glenda Walden as the guest speaker for the luncheon they host at the conference. Remember that all are invited to attend this event and tickets are available.
  
- Switching our financial data and church management system to a better format had been a discussion for years and we were finally able to make that happen. After the resignation of our bookkeeper, Robin Volker, it took us some time to find a replacement. It made sense to have the conversion to QuickBooks Online in place before bringing someone new onboard.
  - We were very excited to get a referral to Sheila Watts, CPA who specializes in bookkeeping for non-profits, and thrilled when she offered to do the conversion and come on as our new bookkeeper. By June, she had everything converted and beautiful reports presented that show that this region is in good financial standing.
    - Special thanks to our treasurer, Carl Nawrot, who worked with Sheila to onboard her and get her all the information she needed to get us up to speed even in the midst of caring for his mother. Blessings to Carl and his family as they move through the grief of his mother's transition.
  - With everything up to date, we were able to approve a 2023 budget which will be presented at this conference.
  
- Another thing that we are proud of is the willingness of all Board members to submit blogs for the website and newsletter each month. We hope that you enjoy reading them and that they give you some insight into who we are and what we do.

As a new Board member, and your Board President, I'd like to thank all of you who take part in continuing to make this region the GREAT Great Lakes Region that it is. Special thanks to all of my fellow Board members, staff and special teams. Your dedication and support inspire me. This year has brought incredible change and growth for me. It has been my honor to serve as your board president. All that I do, I do for the good of the whole ...

In Peace, Joy, Love, and Gratitude,

*Cindy Yamamoto*

Cindy Yamamoto  
GLR Board President