

Good Morning.... My name is Mary Delahanty and I was asked to speak about what being a member of this church means to me.

I'll start with a little of my history. I signed the membership book in 1990 after having attended Sunday services for about a year. At that time, I was approaching 40, and it felt like most of the people sitting around me in church were older than I was. There were only a few families with children young enough to attend Religious Education classes.

Look around today! What a difference! We are a healthy vibrant church with young families looking for a church home in which to bring up their children. One reason why I am proud to be a member of this church, is the way we interact with our children. We teach them that every person is important and that all people should be treated fairly. Each classroom includes all

seven UU principles in language which is appropriate to the age of the children.

Over the years I have seen young UU children grow into thoughtful, caring adults and it always makes me proud of them and of this church.

So, if you are new to this church you may be wondering about membership. For me membership is an honor as well as a responsibility. As a community, our time and energy are the backbone of this church.

You may have heard our Stewardship team talking about **time, talent** and **treasure**. They are asking us to think about how we can contribute to the church.

We can donate our **time** in many ways.

Volunteers are needed to usher every Sunday. If you've never ushered, we can partner you up with someone who has ushered before. You

can sign up to light the chalice or start the coffee pot. We will need help at the annual Harvest Fair coming in November. Please watch for updates on how you can help.

Friends and members contribute their **talent** by singing in the choir or helping with Religious Education classes. I confess I haven't sung in the choir, but I have helped in RE. What are your unique "talents"? How might you share them with the church.

The third thing we ask our members to do is to give generously of their **treasure**, meaning Financial support. More than half of the money that we need to support our healthy, vibrant church comes from annual pledges made by friends and members. Our contributions help pay for our staff, our programs, and everything we do to take care of this church. ... The largest

charitable donation that my husband, Richard, and I make is to this church.

So, today I invite your participation. If you are concerned about the urgent need to address Global Climate change, talk to the Green Sanctuary Committee. If you'd like to learn more about systemic issues around racism, consider attending the **Steps Toward Decentering Whiteness** workshop on October 5 offered by the UUA New England Region. And this morning you'll be hearing from **Rev. Ruth Bersin** and our Immigration Ministry Team about ways you can be involved.

In closing... I believe it takes a village to raise a child.... and that it takes a caring community, working together, to keep our church strong.

**Thank you**

