Clio Needs Your Congregation's History!

History and Heritage Committee
MidAmerica Region
Unitarian Universalist Association

Image: Wikimedia Commons
The History and Heritage Committee has already been heeding the Muse of History. In recent months we have been looking at online histories on the websites of all congregations in the Region. We have examined every congregational website in the Region at least once.

Results, of course, vary. Some congregations have posted exemplary histories, including hard-copy celebratory volumes; others have done less. Shorter efforts are often as impressive as more elaborate ones.

*A list of the histories we have found is attached.* If your congregation has done more than we’ve recognized, corrections are welcome. Contact information is on the following page.

There have always been important payoffs to creating a congregational history, *and soon there will be more.*

Please read on.
Why Write a Congregational History?

- **To spread useful information.** Your members and community should know that you *have* a history. Many congregations have been active in and shaping this region for well over a century.
- **To create pride in membership.** Did past members oppose slavery, agitate for woman suffrage, oppose unjust wars, or campaign for civil rights? Knowing this makes today’s members proud.
- **To promote congregational life.** Your story reveals your character and attracts the kind of staff and members you’re looking for.
- **To support our movement.** The UU History & Heritage Society will gather all congregational histories into one database available to all UUs. This resource will help us know each other better and grow healthier congregations. Your history will contribute to that.

How Do We Write Our History?

This task is manageable and rewarding. The following method has worked well:

1. Form a task force. Projects go better with mutual support and accountability.
2. Get good advice. At the **Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society website**, click on “**Congregational History Project**” for general advice on writing a history.
3. Break the task into stages, set a timeline, and get started.

The **MidAmerica History and Heritage Committee can also help.** Reply to Victor Urbanowicz — *vurbanowicz@yahoo.com* — to get in touch with people who have recently done this work and for information about archiving.