

FIRST UNITARIAN  
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY  
**BR**  **KLYN**  
A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

**Transforming Lives**

**Dawn Elane Reed**

(Member since January 6, 2008)



In the fall of 2007 a single mom was searching, searching for healing from an abusive relationship, searching for a community to help her as she raised her 18-month-old son, searching for acceptance, stability and spiritual grounding in a world where many of her decisions were based in fear. That single mom was me, and what I found that fall, ten years ago was this congregation.

There are countless ways that First Unitarian has made my life better, the RE program which has helped my now 11-year-old son as he grows into a thoughtful, caring person, the spiritual sustenance and support that I've found in this sanctuary, the abundance of opportunities to give back, and ways to align my life with the 7 principles of Unitarian Universalism which I have wholeheartedly embraced. Instead of trying to describe in detail that cornucopia of blessings that we have received from this congregation I would like to share one very specific transcendent moment.

During a Christmas Eve music service, I was in the loft, standing near the section leaders of the choir. Relatively new to the church, I was thrilled to be singing beautiful challenging music with such talented singers. The sanctuary and balconies, lit with the glow of candlelight, were overflowing. At one point I was surrounded by the voices of the soloists. There was something about the music and vibrations of the voices at that moment, along with the congregation intently listening. I felt my spirit grow out of my heart and expand to fill the space of this sanctuary. It was truly transformative.

I believe that music is one of the more direct ways to communicate with the soul. It's akin to how scent bypasses the higher functioning areas of the brain and goes straight to the more primal limbic system. When we participate as listeners or join in the music making we are connecting with each other at a deeper level. Performing in the choir, singing with the Unitones, Directing and acting in the Mother Theater pieces, and Strumming in the Ukulele circle, are all experiences that have allowed me to be in soul communication with you my community. From the time when I first arrived and was struggling, my voice was heard and strengthened. These experiences have truly transformed my life.

I have found my voice here at First Unitarian, but I am not alone. I speak and sing among a congregation of like-minded spirits. Our voices and our song can have a profound impact on others.

"First Unitarian has changed my life. Working together, we can change the world"

October 29, 2017