

FIRST UNITARIAN  
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY  
**BROOKLYN**  
A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

**Transforming Lives**

Mary Huhn

(Member since March 18, 2018)



I stopped attending the Unitarian church of my youth nearly 40 years ago, when I started college. But it took two boys to bring me back: One entering my life; another leaving it.

My husband and I adopted our son, Altaseb, when he was 5 in the fall of 2012. Soon he began to ask the big questions, such as, if God made the earth, as some people say, who made God? I wanted him to have a place for such inquiries -- a place like I had when I was a girl: the Main Line Unitarian Church, in Devon, Pennsylvania.

Around the time our son joined our family, my 10-year-old nephew Leon was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a rare type of bone cancer. We were all optimistic that his first surgery would work, but a year later, the cancer returned. We continued to keep our

faith in science that the treatments would be effective.

My mother, who died in October at age 98, was raised Protestant, but became disillusioned with the notion of God early on. She instead turned to the Unitarian Church, where she was deeply involved, particularly as an activist. She helped to save the world from injustices and environmental wrongs, but really, the MLUC saved my mom's life, helping her escape from an oft-lonely marriage and chaos of raising four children.

I started coming here in 2014, invited by my friend Catalina. Getting the entire family to go was a challenge, so I attended solo. I looked forward to hearing Rev. Ana's creative sermons, Meagan's wisdom story, and all the wonderful music. I smiled a lot.

As Leon got sicker and the outcome looked like the worst possible, I lit candles and wept during meditation. I wouldn't find answers, but I might find peace. When he died in March 2016, I grieved everywhere, but here I had a space to reflect. And be devastated.

Joining didn't come easily to me. I am not a wallflower, but I felt like one at coffee hour as I didn't know too many folks. When Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason, a friend who officiated my husband's and my wedding, became community minister, that changed everything, as I looked forward to chatting with her and her husband Ben after the service. In fact, I was thrilled to attend her inspiring installation as senior minister in Wellesley last weekend.

In March last year, a longtime member approached me about joining during the fund drive, but let me off the hook saying, "You're not ready yet. You're too new." She didn't know I had been attending this church for nearly three years!

Around that same time, as the anniversary of Leon's death neared, I recalled how meaningful it had been for me to attend services. So I decided to stop being an outsider and commit. On Earth Day, 2018 -- accompanied by my son's big questions and my nephew's memory -- I pledged, pinning a white carnation just above my heart. I hadn't known I was looking for a spiritual home, but I found one.

April 14, 2019