

# **Chalice Singers & Chalice Bells**

## **2016-17 Annual Report**

### **Chalice Singers**

Director of Worship and Music Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout leads the music ministries at First UUAA, and serves as the director of the Chalice Singers, who rehearse weekly from Sept. through May. A highlight of the past year was the 3rd annual BIG sing hosted by the Chalice Singers, held on March 11 and 12, 2017, drawing an enthusiastic group of singers from the congregation and the region (Lansing, Kalamazoo, suburban Detroit, Ontario) to form a choir of over 100 voices. This event provides an experience in music and community that reaches far beyond the walls of sanctuary.

Of note is the work of the congregation's pianist-in-residence, Allison Halerz; Allison is most visible during Sunday worship but plays a vital collaborative role in rehearsals for both the Chalice Singers and the Chalice Sparks.

The Chalice Singers are supported by an active team of volunteers from within the ensemble, who assist with score preparation, social events, the BIGsing, sectional rehearsals, and program note writing for the Order of Service.

Music at UUAA continues to grow each year; the Chalice Singers now number close to 70 voices. Beyond the choir, the sound of the voices of this congregation singing on any given Sunday is clear evidence of how essential music is to the spiritual well-being of First UUAA.

### **Chalice Bells**

The Chalice Bells have completed their first full year under the direction of Theresa Rohlck. While the group is small, it is an enthusiastic and dedicated group of musicians, some of whom are first time players this year. A goal from last year was to increase the times the handbell choir would play in worship services; we have met that goal by playing in four services this year, plus one collaboration on a piece sung by the Chalice Sparks. In October 2016, the group benefitted from a workshop focusing on playing technique led by guest clinician Susan Berry.

In December 2016, First UUAA received the gift of a 3-octave set of handchimes, which had their debut at the Christmas Eve services. We are extremely grateful for this gift, and thrilled to be able to expand our repertoire to include pieces that incorporate handchimes with the handbells. As the director, a goal I have is to find ways to use the new handchimes in collaboration with the Chalice Sparks, and perhaps involve more children and congregants in the experience of playing in an ensemble. We hope to increase membership in the choir and continue to be a presence in worship 4 or 5 times a year.