

## **Brian Emery – Testimonial April 14, 2019**

Hi. My name is Brian Emery.

My wife Linda and I have been attending A2U2 for almost two years. I have been retired for about 2 years, and prior to that I was in IT for 46 years. Linda was a registered nurse for 30+ years, retired prior to myself, and waited for my turn to retire.

Prior to A2U2, we were Congregationalists, but for perhaps the 10 most recent years, we did not attend. After our family was grown and gone, we decided to try and reconnect, but found that the church no longer fit our needs nor our belief system.

For the past thirty years, Linda has been involved in practicing Buddhism, which was in direct conflict with Christian-based religions. I became more and more a Humanist, with a splash of Buddhism and Atheism thrown in for good measure. We were definitely square pegs in round holes!

Linda retired first, and she began to look for a place that reflected our values and beliefs.

She began to follow A2U2 online, checking out Rev. Myke's sermons and the involvement of the UUs in community, environment, social justice and diversity. In time, we decided to take the plunge and attend a service. Right from the start, we were very warmly welcomed and we were encouraged by friendly members to return each Sunday, which we were happy to do.

Soon after coming to A2U2, we had the opportunity to attend a class on Permaculture and Spirituality, taught by Rev. Myke. It was one of the most positive and enriching experiences we had had in years. It was not only educational, but a wonderful vehicle for meeting and bonding with members of the church community.

We suddenly knew we were home and that this is a place that fills just about everything we felt had been lacking in other churches. We became members in February of 2018, just 7 months after our first visit.

In our time here, we have made many friends and met so many wonderful people. We are slowly becoming more involved and I have found that the Men's Group is a high point for me. Oh those yummy breakfasts, as we solve the problems of the world on every second Saturday of the month!

We recently hosted one of the House Meetings at our home in Cumberland, which was a wonderful experience. By doing this, we heard how much this church means to our members in so many ways, and how much we all want our church to have a vibrant and successful future.

A2U2 is a liberal, diverse and energetic community that has a bright future. We are proud and excited to be members.