

Judith Moll – Testimonial April 21, 2019

Sometimes people ask me, how did you happen to become a member here? I found my way to A2U2 through social action, admiration and respect for a member, and the sense of connection from being part of a larger effort of working for peace. More specifically, I often stood shoulder to shoulder with Cush Anthony during many, many Wednesday noontime protests of the Iraq war in 2008 and 2009 in Portland. We would get talking and he told me how much he valued Allen Ave. UU and how he thought I would, too. Cush is someone whose opinion I trust, so I paid attention to what he said. Eventually, I came to Sunday services and immediately felt I had found a spiritual home. In 2010, appropriately enough on Valentine's Day, I joined.

The covenant we frequently say, "We believe in love, love is the doctrine of this church," immediately resonated. Similarly, the quest for truth has always been central for me, including when I got into trouble for asking too many questions as a child in catechism class in the patriarchal church of my childhood. However, here at A2U2, questions and the search for truth are really valued. Hearing the words that "service is our prayer" resonated with my heart and the way I have attempted to live my life. Whenever we say these words together, I feel I am home.

Being a part of a community that challenges me to grow and learn and be of service is critical to me. I feel accepted, welcomed, and also challenged to put my values into action. As part of the A2U2 community, I have marched in Gay Pride celebrations, participated in vigils following violence, marched at Women's marches in Augusta, presented petitions at Susan Collins' office (too many times), learned about my own racial biases through the Common Read books, and participated with Family Promise in supporting our homeless families. These are just a very few of the ways I have been able to learn and grow and live my values, supported by my UU sisters and brothers. The opportunities I have for service through the Pastoral Care Team and the connections in my Spiritual Enrichment Group are deeply valuable to me, as well.

At this stage in life, I want to make really mindful decisions about how I invest my time. I invariably come away from Sunday services feeling enriched, that my spirit

has been nourished and I have been in the company of valued friends. What a gift!

The friends I have made here at A2U2 are a priceless part of my life. In hard times and joyful times, the community has supported me, just as I strive to support others myself. I truly believe we are all deeply interconnected and at A2U2 I see the evidence of that truth. I feel blessed to be a part of this community and grateful to be able to say so today.