**Al & Ann Sawyer Within These Walls Award**

The Al & Ann Sawyer Within These Walls Award is presented each year to a member of our church in honor of their outstanding contributions to our church. The winner of this year’s award is BIANCA RODRIGUEZ.

When Bianca first arrived at the Community Church in 2015, she jumped right in, taking a part in the musical Fiddler on the Roof. Over the following years, Bianca would take on leadership roles in numerous areas of church life, helping our church to thrive, grow, and deepen:

As a member and chair of the Music Team, Bianca helped to organize and support the rich offerings and events of our dynamic music program.

As a co-chair of the “Living Our Covenant with Intention Ministry,” Bianca helped to support programs, like Panels of Faith, that asked us to consider how to be more inclusive and intentional about how we are with each other in community.

As a member of the Board, and as the youngest Board President in the history of our church, Bianca modeled shared, collaborative, and relational leadership, helping our church to run smoothly, even during the challenges of the pandemic.

Bianca is a gifted singer, a wise leader, a generous volunteer, and a woman of deep faith and convictions. Her inspired service to our congregation has been immense and we are honored to present her with this year’s Al & Ann Sawyer Within These Walls Award.

**Joe & Lucy Straley Beyond These Walls Award**

The Joe & Lucy Straley Beyond These Walls Award is presented annually to an individual or group in our congregation who help our church live our mission and our Unitarian Universalist values in the wider world. This year’s award is presented to MARY BETH POWELL and BILL ROTE.

The only thing difficult about presenting an award to Bill and Mary Beth is deciding whether they should receive an award for their service within these walls or beyond these walls. Within These Walls, Bill and Mary Beth have an impressive record of service, including service on the Board of Trustees, the Membership Team (remember the picture directory in 2014?), the HR committee, the Worship Ministry, the Preaching Practicum, and the Community Church Singers.

However, this award is presented to Mary Beth and Bill for their leadership in helping us to serve the wider community. As the leaders of the Community Day of Service in 2019 and 2020, Mary Beth and Bill provided the vision, organization, energy, and enthusiasm, leading us to two amazing days, two extraordinarily successful pledge drives, and thousands of hours of service to our wider community.

Thanks to Mary Beth and Bill’s infectious energy and zany costumes, members of our church came together to clean up streams, stock food pantries, write letters, knit shawls, work at community gardens, and much, much more. Through our community days of service, we built community, lived our values, and showcased a church dynamically connected to the wider community. The 2020 Community Day of Service was our last church event before the pandemic, and the spirit of that day has helped to sustain our church over the past year.

We give this award to Mary Beth and Bill for helping us to “laissez les bon temps roulez” and providing us with shenanigans to help us find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

[As Board President, I would be remiss not to mention that we hope to bring the Community Day of Service back in the Spring of 2022, but that we are currently looking for a leadership team to help us organize it. Bill and Mary Beth know that it is time to pass the leadership on to someone else, so reach out to me if you would like to help make this event happen this coming year.]

**Gertrude Willis Lifespan Religious Education Award**

The 2021 Gertrude Willis Lifespan Religious Education Award is presented to Abbie Crombie Beasley and Nick Crombie in  recognition of their outstanding service in building a vibrant multigenerational community and creating a creative space for children and youth to interact with adults. Nick and Abbie are moving to Arlington, Virginia this June and leaving the Community Church. We will miss them.

When we think of Nick and Abbie, we first think of Hogwarts on the Hill. They have been lynch pin leaders in creating all the Hogwarts events since the beginning. Nick has been head of house Slytherin and Abblie head of House  Ravenclaw.  Nick brought  exciting Virtual Reality experiences to Hogwarts and Yule Ball that he was able to do because of a grant he received from his work. Their contributions are immeasurable from wearing spectacular costumes to storing Hogwarts materials in their house, they were out front and behind the scenes in making Hogwarts magic.

Nick served on the Children's ministry Team where he was grant writer in chief and technical advisor to the team.  Abbie served in the Welcoming Minstry where she made it a mission to welcome and integrate new families.  Abbie has also served in many other important roles in the church including the Nominating Committee and working on the church musicals and other theatricals with costumes, logistics, child wrangling, and make-up.

Nick and Abbie have brought so much vitality to our community helping to build the beloved traditions that bring people of all ages together in creative community.  Thank you Nick and Abblie for sharing your energy and commitment here at the Community Church.