

## **Need to talk?**

### **Albany UU Pastoral Care Associates are here to listen!**

Our Pastoral Care Associates have been trained in compassionate listening skills and are available to all members and friends of our congregation. To contact a Pastoral Care Associate, email [listeners@albanyuu.org](mailto:listeners@albanyuu.org), contact Rev. Sam Trumbore, the Albany UU office at 518-463-7135, or one of them personally.



## **Getting to know our Pastoral Care Associate volunteers**

### **Sharon Babala**

I have attended Albany UU for nearly 20 years and have taught RE, volunteered at many functions and Sunday services and Chair the Caring Network. I also have 33 years of management experience mostly operating a small paralegal service company. What really matters in regard to this program is my training as a yoga and meditation teacher and yoga therapist. What I love is providing a deep listening so that every person can be heard, cared for and healed.



### **Donna Meixner**

My husband Peter and I joined Albany UU over 25 years ago, and I feel privileged to be a member of such a welcoming, active and caring community. Over the years, I have served in many capacities including the Board of Trustees and Nominating, Personnel, Strategic Planning and Stewardship Committees. I am honored to be asked to serve the congregation in this new role. I greatly benefitted from the caring presence offered by Rev. Sam and our excellent Pastoral Care team during Peter's lengthy illness in 2015. The empathic listening and compassionate support I received gave me the strength to make it through a difficult time. I am grateful for the opportunity to support others in the Albany UU community as a Pastoral Care Associate.



### **Chuck Manning**

I decided to become a PCA after completing Wellspring in 2013-14. The spiritual practice and listening skills that we worked on during Wellspring have proved to be very helpful. I look forward to being energized by the other PCAs and



the leadership of Rev. Sam. I have been an active member of Albany UU for over 40 years. During that time I have served in many capacities including President, Vice-President, Board of Trustees, Canvass Committee and Canvass Chair, Finance Committee, RE Teacher, Endowment Trust Chair, Architect Committee Chair, Green Sanctuary Committee, and RE Council.



### **Phil Rich**

Originally from Long Island, I attended residential grammar and high schools for blind children in New York City. I earned my Bachelor of Arts degree in liberal studies, with a minor in Psychology from Alfred University in 1976. I received my Master of Science degree in Social Work in 1980 from the School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison. I did volunteer work at a psychiatric day treatment center on Long Island before going to Madison, and I have since then learned independent living skills. I came to Albany and to Albany UU in 1989. Other involvements have included the Mental Health Players and lectures on disability health communication at Siena College's Baccalaureate social work program.



### **Randy Rosette**

My husband, Chris, and I have been part of the Albany UU community since 1992 when we were looking for a spiritual and ethical home for ourselves and our family-in-creation. A year

later, we adopted three teenage boys. I became active with numerous RE programs, teaching elementary through Youth group classes, and have been honored to mentor three Rite of Passage youngsters. Throughout our tenure at Albany UU, I have also been privileged to serve on the Board, Personnel and Finance Committees, and am involved with numerous activities including UU Weekend, Bazaar and Café, the Auction Committee, and the choir. Working in the community health care field for over thirty years, I strive to treat each person in need with compassion and care. I am honored to serve our community as a PCA and hope to help whenever called upon.

### **Sandy Stone**

I joined Albany UU about 30 years ago with my husband, David. At that time we were looking for a spiritual and religious home for our two children. We found one for ourselves and have served the Albany UU community in many capacities since then. I have been on RE council and have enjoyed several years with the Toddlers. I have served on the Finance Committee and the Nominating Committee, am the Chair of the Flower Committee, as well as a current member of the Caring Network. I was co-chair of the Cancer Support Group at Albany UU when it started about twenty years ago. Outside of Albany UU, I volunteered for the American Cancer Society in its outreach program for breast cancer survivors. I feel that I have developed good listening skills through my many affiliations and look forward to being of service to my fellow Albany UU friends.



### **Dee Van Riper**

I have attended Albany UU for about 17 years, having been affiliated with three other UU congregations prior to moving to Albany. I am a scientist/lecturer retired from Albany Medical College. Here at Albany UU I taught in our RE program for several years as my daughter moved through the grades. I have served on the RE council and am currently a mentor in the Rite of Passage program for our youth. I have also been involved with the Monday Men's group since its inception. My participation in men's groups has introduced me to the benefits gained from focused listening in confidence. I enjoy ministering to the adults in our congregation and am honored to have the opportunity to serve as a Pastoral Care Associate.



### **Erik F. vonHausen**

I have been a member of Albany UU with my husband Todd VonHausen since 2018. I have a Bachelor of Arts from Gordon College in Psychology and Theology. In addition to Christian theology, and Jewish History I



have also studied Buddhism and I remain open to the lessons I continue to learn from my Humanist, Pagan, and Atheist friends. I attended a Wellspring Sources Group in 2017 and Co-Facilitated a Sources group in 2019. I am a Reiki practitioner and have held positions as a counselor to troubled youth, adults with mental illness, as well as terminally ill HIV/AIDS patients. I practice what is called "The Middle Way" which is summarized by Thich Nhat Hanh, "The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now. It is not a matter of faith, but of practice." I am a believer in the power of Deep Listening and the power of love through a community like Todd and I have found at Albany UU.