

## Getting Acquainted with Elizabeth Donovan

I joined UUCSC in 2003 when my younger daughter was about to graduate from high school and I realized I needed a new circle in my life. Having had only half-hearted early exposure to Catholicism and dipping my toes briefly in a few other faith communities, I had only recently discovered UUism. Nature and creativity have always been where I receive my spiritual sustenance but my two daughters and I could have benefited from a more communal experience as we navigated a sometimes bumpy road with me as a single parent.

To answer a question Rhode Islanders always want to know, no, I am not native to this state. Born in Connecticut, I spent many years in Provincetown, MA and after a brief period in Florida I moved here 40 years ago with my then husband.

You may recognize me from the choir, not because I am an outstanding vocalist but because I am most often in the front row right where our choir director can hear every mistake I make. I joined the choir just before I retired from 34 years at the North Kingstown Library, the last 8 years spent as the Community Outreach Coordinator in charge of adult programming. Again I was thinking of new circles. Unlike most people in the choir I did not have any prior experience singing in a choir or playing a musical instrument. I wanted to stretch my brain along with my vocal chords. It has been quite a challenge but I do love to sing with others and have even joined a second choir. Side note: Zoom choir is very different! It has obvious disadvantages, notably we have to each record solo at home— quite humbling to listen to. But we do still have fun and Mike is managing to stitch us back together into our choir voice - sounding better than ever. I just hope he doesn't get too used to being able to fix a flat note here or there!

I have been involved in several things at UUCSC over the years but I was most busy during the capital campaign held during the purchase and renovation of our home at Lily Pads. I painted the giant sunflower in our church entrance, each week adding a new bird or flower to indicate the money we had raised towards our goal. And Gene Santos and I produced two short videos, the first of which was used to generate interest in our mission to move to a new home. The second video was made because UUCSC had received an award from the UUA and the film was shown at the General Assembly that year. Gene and I had so much fun that we made a third video about the history of the North Kingstown Library!

Six months ago after 25 years together (we didn't want to make a rash decision), my partner Jeff, who recently retired, and I decided to share my home full time. Fortunately I had time to work through much of my angst about this change just prior to the pandemic necessitating that we spend even more time together. Between the two of us we have 4 daughters and seven grandchildren. We are richly blessed.

So what am I doing during this pandemic?

I am constantly trying to find new ways to interact with our grandkids without being able to be with them (my daughters both live out of state); I play Zoom Legos and post daily nature questions. Jeff and I walk and bike—a lot. I am actually enjoying slowing down and not having to go places. I spend a lot of time exploring a nearby pond and beach, always on the lookout for a new nature fact to share with the kiddos. The osprey cam on Narrow River is very cool! I'm reading, sewing, gardening, painting and staying in touch with lots of people. I'm finding new ways to do some of the volunteer work I am involved with. I am aware of how very fortunate I am during this difficult time. I miss seeing everyone on Sunday morning and hope these periodic bios will help us all to feel connected.