Carolyn Hurdis Tribute

Carolyn Steere was born in Providence in 1941 and moved to Hamden CT with her family three years later. After high school she attended URI, following in the footsteps of both of her parents. In 1960 she met fellow student Dave Hurdis who was also born in RI. They were married three years later at Kingston Congregational Church—the beginning of 57 years together. Dave's job took them out of state and they lived in Maryland, California, New York and Old Saybrook, CT. Along the way they had three children—Daniel, Andrew and Rebecca. Carolyn was a dedicated, engaged and innovative guidance counselor for many years in public schools in Howard County, Maryland and Norwich, Connecticut.

Carolyn had fond memories of vacationing at the shore in Narragansett with her grandparents so when the chance came to return to RI in 1997, Narragansett was the locale they chose. After she retired, she was extremely active with local non-profits. Throughout her life, she was an avid runner, sailor, and cross-country skier. In Rhode Island again, Carolyn decided to research different churches to find one that more closely aligned with the beliefs of both Dave and herself. She settled on UUCSC and they began attending services at the "Bingo Hall." They became official members on December 5, 2004.

Carolyn was committed to our congregation and served for years on the Personnel Committee, as a member and as Chair. She also enjoyed teaching in RE. One of her deepest concerns was racial inequity. She served on Common Ground and the Racial Justice Committee, for the last few years as Co-Chair. Last year she and Jean Bowen wrote a grant proposal to fund expansion and educational outreach at the Tomaquag Museum. The UUA selected it to be the recipient of GA contributions, which came to $90,000.

Carolyn's very full and rich life also included five cherished grandchildren. She is remembered for living her values and for her indominable spirit. She was walking with friends at Great Swamp right until five days before she died. Her family will gather together this summer privately to remember her.

This piece is written with details supplied by Dave Hurdis, the text of Carolyn's obituary and words written by Carolyn's friend Penny Hall.
Elizabeth Donovan, July 2021