

# Unitarian Church of Underwood

## April, 2012 Newsletter

The Unitarian Church of Underwood is a welcoming community of diverse people who gather to reflect, to find refuge, spiritual renewal and intellectual growth; to improve our understanding of the world; to build bridges towards peace and understanding; and to improve lives and opportunities across our communities.

### Coming Up In April

#### **Sunday Morning Services Begin at 10:30**

April 1 – Tim Hunt – The Lost Years of Jesus

April 8 – Bob Worner – Are We Nearing Extinction?

April 15 – Anthony Miltich – Musical Journey

April 22 – M State Voice Ensemble

April 29 – Michael Andregg – UUs As Catalysts for Change

#### **Sunday Morning Meetings Begin at 9:15**

April 1 – Adult RE

April 15 – Writing as Spiritual Practice

April 22 – Social Justice Committee

**Children's RE** will meet April 29, during the regular Sunday Service

**Childcare** is provided during some Sunday Services. Please contact Betsy Wells or Mary Anderson in advance.

**Annual Meeting – April 15 – Following a Potluck after Sunday Morning Service**

## More Information About Sunday Morning Programs

April 1 – Tim Hunt will talk about the “Lost Years of Jesus”; referring to the parts of Jesus’ life which are not mentioned in the Bible – from early adolescence to age 30, when he began his 3 year ministry. Did he go to the British Isles with his uncle? Did he study in India? Was Jesus a Universalist? He’ll look at what is radical and unique about the ministry of Jesus and the similarities with the teachings of other faiths.

April 8 – “Are We Nearing Extinction?” Bob Worner will look at Chaos Theory, particularly how both too little and too much change bring us to the brink of extinction. It is also Easter Sunday and that will be remembered during his talk.

April 15 – Anthony Miltich - We often use the language of metaphor and story to explain and understand our "path" on the planet. The patterns and waves of music and lyric have been central to my life experience. On Aril 15th I want to share some of my musical journey with you.

April 22 – The M State Voice Ensemble under the direction of Teresa Ashworth is an auditioned collegiate choral ensemble meeting twice a week for an hour. This group performs at college functions, throughout the area community, and in April at the Minnesota Two-Year College Fine Arts Festival in Brainerd. Students selected for this ensemble study a variety of literature, composers and musical styles. This semester we are focusing on Minnesota composers, *The Passion from Messiah* by Handel, Mozart's *Regina Coeli K. 276* and Verdi's *Va, Pensiero* the chorus from *Nabucco* (1842).

April 29 - In February, Michael Andregg of St. Thomas University discussed the causes of war. He will return on April 29, to discuss how Unitarians can be catalytic in facing the developing global crisis.

### \*\*\*\*\*BREAKING NEWS\*\*\*\*\*

The Chili Dinner fundraiser at the Community Center in Underwood on March 30, 2012, was wonderful! Great food, lots of people, and lots of volunteers from UCU. More from Ron Roller later.

## Annual Meeting

**Please be informed that an amendment to church by-laws will be considered at the annual meeting being held April 15.**

### **CHANGE IN BY-LAWS.**

The need for the change in our by-laws has become apparent in recent board meetings as we attempt to improve the use of our resources in a way that is consistent with our values, our governing documents, and sound management practices. Currently, our by-laws do not explicitly give the finance committee a role in the management of all our financial resources. We would like to change that as the finance committee is at the heart of our efforts to manage our resources wisely.

### **THE CURRENT BY-LAWS STATE THE FOLLOWING ABOUT THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Section 7. Finance Committee. This committee shall consist of the executive committee of the Board plus, at least, one congregational member and is charged with developing the annual budget, fundraising and auditing the congregational financial records annually.

### **THE PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE BY-LAWS WOULD STATE THE FOLLOWING ABOUT THE FINANCE COMMITTEE: (Change is underlined.)**

Finance Committee. This committee shall consist of the executive committee of the Board plus up to five congregational members and is charged with developing the annual budget; fundraising; recommending to the board management of all church funds; and auditing the congregational financial records annually. The congregation is charged with reviewing and voting on the proposed budget.

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### **Resolution Vote During The Annual Meeting**

On the November, 2012 ballot we will be asked to vote on a proposed amendment to the Minnesota Constitution. The exact language on the ballot will read as follows: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to provide that only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Minnesota? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_" Checking yes means that you are voting to make same-sex marriage unconstitutional in the state of Minnesota. In response to the proposed amendment, churches all across the state are passing a resolution that opposes this amendment. During our annual meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup>, our congregation will vote whether or not we should pass a similar resolution. The resolution will simply state: *We oppose any amendment to the Minnesota Constitution that prohibits marriage for same-sex couples.* If you have any questions please contact Ellen Eastby.

## Poetry Corner

### IN TIME OF SILVER RAIN (From Our Hymnal #545)

In time of silver rain  
The earth puts forth new life again,

Green grasses grow  
And flowers lift their heads,

And over all the plain  
The wonder spreads

Of life, Of life, Of life.

In time of silver rain  
The butterflies lift silken wings  
To catch a rainbow cry

And trees put forth  
New leaves to sing  
In joy beneath the sky.

When spring

And life  
Are new.

*Langston Hughes*

### UU Quote

Anybody can create community with people who believe just like they do. The true test of community rests in the ability to create it with people who disagree with us.

*Lee Barker (Unitarian Universalist, minister, educator)*

## Member Profiles:

**Budd and Marguerite Andrews** offered us a sumac drink and roasted corn kernels as Ellen and I joined them around their table on a lovely warm day in March. Not surprising, since we've recognized Budd as the Euell Gibbons of Ottertail County for years. What a privilege to interview what some in our church call our "National Treasures."

Marguerite started us off with the recently completed colorful book on the history of the "Rolling Rats Nest" or "Diamond in the Rough", or as Marguerite called it, "Grounds for Divorce". Budd purchased in 1970 a 1922/25 Federal Knight House-car, which he then spent 10 years refurbishing. Many of us have had the opportunity to see it every year following Labor Day at the Dalton (MN) Steam Show, where it is exhibited. It has been a great source of enjoyment and pride for them over the years. Budd has also restored a rumble seat Model A roadster, and there is an ancient Model A panel truck sitting in the garage waiting for him.

They cherish, and their family and friends with them, the many springs they have spent at the Sugar Bush boiling maple sap to make maple syrup. At the Unitarian Church, we always knew when the sap was running. It has been an annual festival - hours and hours and hours of labor and fun. Marguerite said that the sap is really just "the icing on the cake" – the real joy is playing in the woods with friends. Last year was the last season at their Sugar Bush, as the ownership of the land changed hands, so this year they are enjoying the woods with the Ellison sugar bush. And despite the crazy weather, the sap is running!

Budd said he got his name, Buddy, after WWI vets came home and "My Buddy" was a popular song. He tried to call himself E. Buddington Andrews, Esq. until a teacher informed him that he shouldn't be naming himself so royally. His love of working with wood started as a kid when Christmas gifts were all handmade items, usually from wood which his father would carve. The many talented Budd also embroidered dish towels to send to his cousins and aunts in South Dakota. (Four boys, but there were no girls in the family).

In WWII, Budd enlisted in the Army Air Corp. He joined a B-17 bomber crew, went to England and flew 32 missions between May and August, 1944, which included D-Day. In his work career, he taught adult education in a U of M program in farm management, worked with area farmers, and consulted them about how to make a viable farm living. While doing soil sampling for farmers, he discovered many Native American campsites and artifacts which remain a special collection, along with his rocks.

Budd isn't short on things to do. He loves rock polishing, especially petrified wood from the western Dakotas. He has discovered about 65 things growing wild around Pelican Rapids that could be used for food. And then there is his artwork. Their home is filled with interesting and original wood collages Budd has created. He says he uses his sale of artwork to fund his hobby of restoring old vehicles. His frogs have been on display around Otter Tail County, and you have seen the joy on kids' faces when playing with his wooden "dancers" at the Church Christmas Program.

Budd and Marguerite were married after the WWII. They have three children: Steve, the Otter Tail County Treasurer; Tom, who drives Bookmobile; and Kate, a psychologist, who is currently working with the County Humane Society. They remember great camping vacations with the kids, seeing both coasts and sleeping in the rigged out station wagon.

Marguerite and Budd have lived in Pelican Rapids since 1960. Marguerite is the historian of the family, the town, Camp Unistar, and certainly the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Prairie Star District awarded her the Betty Gorshe Heritage Award at Davenport, Iowa, recently. She has kept a journal and is amazed by the changes she has recorded over the years. In 1974 she started conducting taped interviews for the Otter Tail County Historical Society. She and Chris Schuelke, the Executive Director of the Historical Society, have done a historic walking tour of Pelican Rapids every year.

As she says, "My dad told my new husband that I was born asking questions." At age 14, she was questioning the teaching at the Onamia Methodist Church. In 1973, through John Gronner at the OTCHS, she learned about that little Unitarian Church in Underwood. Her first speaker was the First Universalist minister, John Cummins, and she had found her home. Budd was busy in the Congregational church, but he decided Marguerite wasn't going to quit the UCU, so he joined her. Good thing, too, or who else would take the collection? She says she was involved in everything that she was "able to stick her nose into" – getting speakers, doing the program, etc., when the church was meeting only twice a month and never in the summer. Now she is our gracious welcomer and taker of notes.

Marguerite has brought her good heart into the Pelican community. She taught English to Somali refugees for a few years. She continues to visit nursing homes in Pelican, bringing flowers in the summer and treats in the winter. "They call me the flower lady even when I'm bringing fudge." She does it because of her experience at Gillette Children's hospital. A bully had pushed her off a sleigh ride, and a knee got damaged and wouldn't hold her up. Her one visitor in six weeks was a woman from south Minneapolis (who had to change street cars to get to the hospital) who visited her and brought her a bouquet of Lily of the Valley. Because she arrived just before visiting hours were over, she had to leave, frustratingly disappointing. Marguerite learned the importance of a visit, however brief, and of leaving something. "That woman had no idea what a life-long impact she had." Gillette Hospital in 1943 was full of polio kids so they were part of her life lessons as well.

One great pleasure of this conversation was watching the joy and affection on Marguerite's face when she enumerated all of Budd's achievements, and the beaming pride in Budd's eyes when he talked of Marguerite. When Marguerite interviews people, her recently added question is, "What one word or event changed everything?" For her that word is Underwood! Here she found a place with people who knew what she was talking about and cared what she cared about. Well, Marguerite, you've changed everything for us, too. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts, you two. We cherish your presence among us.

Steph Sanderson

## New Members

On March 25, we welcomed new members into our congregation. They include:

**Janell Miersch** – I grew up as a Methodist. John and I were married in the church where I grew up in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. We were living in Milwaukee when we got pregnant with our daughter. We visited the Unitarian church downtown but joined a new congregation in Brookfield where Jill was dedicated. We moved to Wausau, Wisconsin where we found a neat old Unitarian church – our son Jeff was dedicated there. Since then we joined Unity Church in St. Paul and I was a member of White Bear UU. In the fall of 2010 I transferred to Fergus Falls as a DNR hydrologist. We found a house, settled in, then discovered Underwood UU. Lucky us!

**John Miersch** – I grew up a reluctant Lutheran. Both Janell and I found that Unitarian Universalism fit best with our beliefs (or lack thereof). I retired in 2009, so I was happy to relocate with Janell. When I am not fishing, I still do some piano repair work for people in the Twin Cities and have even found some work here. We have really felt welcomed at UUUC and have become involved before we signed the member book. We have been Unitarians for almost 40 years... and counting!

**Donn and Marlys Siems** - For many years we have had numerous connections with Unitarians and UU churches, having attended services in Minneapolis, New York, Wisconsin, and Bemidji. Our son, Dann, was a staunch Unitarian, and had on several occasions been the guest speaker at the Underwood Church. During his battle with brain cancer we found a new closeness with the Unitarian Community in Bemidji. In the 1980's Dann became friends with Budd and Marguerite Andrews when they worked together at Camp Unistar. So it was through those friendships that we felt a connections with Unitarians. One Sunday (about a year ago) we decided to attend a Sunday Service in Underwood and as the saying goes - - the rest is history. We were so warmly welcomed and realized again how much we felt at home with the Unitarian Philosophy. We are truly honored to officially become a part of this congregation.

Donn was born and raised in Fergus Falls. Marlys, born in SD and in 1953 moved with parents, Ove and Ruth Anderson, to their farm 2 miles northwest of Underwood. We met in Fergus Falls soon after Donn returned from 4 years with the US Navy. Donn had heard about a lake lot on Otter Tail Lake that was for sale for \$400.00 -- that seemed like a "good deal" so he bought it, we built a cabin, got married, raised our two sons - - Donn commuted to the Fergus Falls Journal where he worked for 38 years and Marlys "lucked out" for 30+ years found employment - just a mile from home, at Madsen Architects on Blanche Lake. Obviously, the above history made for a "pretty small world" -- which is probably why, next to enjoying life right here at home, our favorite thing to do has been to travel (usually by tent and pop-up camper). We are "minimalists" and like to "Live Simply" so that others may Simply Live".

**Haley Honeman:** Fergus Falls is Haley's hometown. Her family includes her parents, Bob and Kae Honeman, and her younger brother, Benjamin. Besides substitute teaching in the public school, she teaches theatre workshops for K-8 at A Center for the Arts and mentors a Somali immigrant in English in Pelican Rapids. Haley graduated from the U o M. Since teaching in Mexico for two years, she is particularly enthusiastic about teaching through "arts based programming." She has been a great resource for our children's RE program and you saw her handiwork in the children's December Holiday Traditions program.

A special memory of our church for Haley resulted from a Sunday service in which the speaker opined that the earthquake in Haiti was caused by the Haitians because of their voodoo practice. Haley recalls breaking down in tears, but having many people reach out to her to support her. She experiences the UCU as an open environment and admires the acceptance and non-judgment practiced here.

**Bob and Diane Johnson** have called themselves the "Reverse Snowbirds" because, after a lifetime of residences in various locales up and down the western United States, they moved last spring from California to Minnesota when they retired. Prior to that major relocation, Bob had designed and built houses and restaurants- hence the mobility- and Diane had followed a passion for gardening and, most recently, managed a shop/gallery at the Post Ranch in Big Sur.

Their 1886 house in Fergus Falls across the street from the Otter Tail River and their inclusion in their new community feels "just right." Bob has put his talents to the test by making the old house work for them and Diane has joined the garden club and most importantly, the Fergus Falls writer's group. She began a chronicle of their journey last spring, starting the blog, snowbirdredux.com, which is subtitled, "a journal of transformation, California to Minnesota."

Diane, whose entire family grew up and lived on farms south of Fargo/Moorhead, told Bob initially that it "wouldn't be California anymore" and Aunt Lil and Aunt Lilah would not understand if they "didn't go to church." They looked in the Fergus Falls phone book and discovered that there were 16 Lutheran churches! They agreed to make the rounds and "check it out" but as a Buddhist and an agnostic, they weren't too sure. Bob saw a UU church listed in Underwood and remembering that he had attended one for a short time in Long Beach, Ca, suggested they try that first.

They never went any further.

**Shannon Smith** I moved to the Fergus Falls area just over a year ago when I started a new job with the NRCS (USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service). I am working as a civil engineer in conservation engineering for farm program projects. Before living here I lived near Onamia, MN for 16 yrs, Maplewood for a few years, Eau Claire, WI for 15 years, and I grew up in Robbinsdale. Before engineering I worked for many years in musical instrument repair. I grew up playing music and I still play the fiddle with friends and sometimes with a choir. In the last eight years I have also studied and practiced energy healing, such as Reiki and other healing modalities.

I have chosen to join the Unitarian Church because the people here seem very welcoming, open and involved with this church community. In Onamia I was a member of the Lutheran church and also over the past eight years I have been committed to following a spiritual path, finding teachers pointing to God from many different perspectives.

**Wow! What a gifted group of friends. We are so glad you've joined us!**

### **UCU Website**

The Unitarian Church of Underwood has a new website. The new address is [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org)

### **Facebook**

Follow us on Facebook at Unitarian Church of Underwood.

### **Newsletter Submissions**

If you have something you would like to submit for the May Newsletter please get it to Stephanie Sanderson at [highlife@prtel.com](mailto:highlife@prtel.com) or Ellen Eastby at [eastofellen@hotmail.com](mailto:eastofellen@hotmail.com) by April 25<sup>th</sup>. We are also looking for original writings from members of our congregation.