



The Unitarian Church of Underwood is a welcoming community of diverse people where our celebration of life and common search for meaning bind us together.



(Photo courtesy of Susan Groff, October 2015)

December 2016 Newsletter **Unitarian Church of Underwood**

**206 North Main Street
Underwood**

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: www.ucofu.org

www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org



December 2016						
◀ November						January ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Katy Olson: Finding Peace in a Noisy World Adult RE – The New Jim Crow Child Care	5 AA 7 pm	6 NO Battle Lake U Group meeting in December	7	8 Perham U Group 3:30 pm @ Louise Lovdahl's	9	10
11 Maggie Meehan, MLK's Letter from a Burlington Jail Children's RE Adult RE – Ancient Religions Curry & Carols	12 AA 7 pm	13 Speakers Committee 5 pm @ church	14 Alexandria U- Group 7:00 pm @ Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg	15	16	17
18 Childrens RE Program Mindfulness Sitting 9-10 am	19 AA 7 pm	20 Fergus Falls U Group 6:00 pm @ Tere Mann's	21 Board Meeting 5:30 pm	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 5 pm 
25 Kris & Wally Warhol - "Rastafari, Peace on Earth." No Adult RE NO Child Care	26 AA 7 pm	27	28	29	30	31

More about December Speakers

December 4 – Celebrant, Katy Olson, "Finding Peace in a Noisy World." Finding peace in a noisy world; What the Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali's Yoga Sutras can teach us about how to transcend the tumult of human experience into Inner Peace. I will be speaking to the living tradition that we share of; Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which calling us to confront the powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love. And the principle of justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

Dec. 11: Maggie Meehan, reading Dr. MLK's letter from a Birmingham Jail. Curry dinner and Caroling following service.

Dec. 18: Betsy Wells & Kris Warhol, "12 Days of Christmas" w/ RE Kids. During this intergenerational program led by Kris Warhol and Betsy Wells, we will celebrate the season by exploring some of the roots of this and other well-known Christmas carols. And yes, we will be singing. Hopefully, Budd's dancing dolls will be joining us.

Christmas Eve Service



December 24 @ 5 p.m.

Celebrant, Ellen Eastby will lead the Christmas Eve service, Star of Wonder, with readings and songs of the season.

December 25 - Wally & Kris Warhol will lead a celebration of **"Rastafari, Peace on Earth."** There will be readings and quotes from Haile Selassie: "The idea that we can attain lasting peace by uniting as equals with human rights has been taught for thousands of years." Wally, playing the steel pan, will provide accompaniment to a number of Reggae songs. This will be one fun Christmas morning celebration. Please join us!

January 1 – Mel Duncan, NonViolent Peace Force Founder & Director.

Christmas Spirit Meditation By Donna Morrison-Reed

Fill your heart like a vessel with the Christmas spirit. Take the time to let your vision clear and your concern deepen. Allow your heart to overflow with all the authentic gifts that this season has to offer.

The blessings and the wealth of Christmas can overflow from each of our hearts, if we take the time to fill our hearts first. We are a world of materially rich people who are spiritually impoverished by our very wealth. The signs of that impoverishment are all around us. They push and shove to get our attention, especially at this time of year.

But let us stop the rush and allow the spirit of the season to enter our being. Let us clear our vision and deepen our concern. Let it move us away from an isolating concern for self to a relationship of love and care and wonder and joy with all of life around us.

From: <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/110074.shtml>

Monthly Adult Religious Education Classes

1st Sunday Adult RE, 9:15-10:15 a.m. – **John Minge** leads a discussion of *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander with references to *The Third Reconstruction* by Rev. William Barber. For follow-up information as to what has happened since Michelle Alexander wrote *The New Jim Crow*, see: <http://www.citylab.com/crime/2016/09/life-after-the-new-jim-crow/502472/>.

Note: This class will meet January 1, 2017.

2nd Sunday Adult RE 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. – **Sandy Barnhouse** will lead studies on “Ancient Religions” (formerly “Women’s Spirituality”). Men and women are invited and encouraged to attend.

3rd Sunday Mindfulness/Quaker Quiet, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Ellison Room

4th Sunday Adult RE, 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. **Note: The December class will not meet on Christmas Day.** **Bob Worner’s** class will continue the study of the New Testament using John Shelby Spong’s book, *Biblical Literalism: A Gentile Heresy* with the emphasis on the Book of Matthew. For January, we are doing parts IV & V, pages 145-210 of Spong’s book.

Children’s Religious Education

Katy Olson and Betsy Wells will lead Kids RE on the 2nd Sundays of each month at 10:30 a.m. with the next class December 11th practicing for the Childrens’ Christmas Program on December 18.

Child Care

Child Care is provided on the Sundays when there is no Childrens' Religious Education. Thank you for bringing your children. They are vital to our church and are a joy to us all. **Note: Child Care will not be provided on Sunday, December 25 but children are especially invited for the intergenerational program on December 18 (practice at Kids RE on the 11th), the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services – well, really all the time!**

U-Groups

U Group Schedule

- Alexandria U-Group: 2nd Wed @ 7:00 pm @ the office building of Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg.: Facilitators: Lee Becker/Susan Sanford
- Note: The Battle Lake U Group will not meet in December. In January, they will resume meeting the 2nd Tuesday @ 3:00 p.m. Facilitators: Bob Worner and Joanne Cress. When Joanne and Luke are gone for the winter, Kris Warhol will co-facilitate with Bob and the group will meet with a host to be announced.
- Fergus Falls U-Group: 3rd Tues @ 6:00 pm @ Tere Mann's, 1319 N Park, Fergus Falls; Facilitators: Dianna Ziesemer/Connie Stigen/Mary Worner
- Perham U-Group: 2nd Thursday @ 3:30 p.m. @ Louise Lovdahl's, - 42720 490th Ave., Perham; Facilitators: Stan Carignan/Louise Lovdahl

Each U-Group holds an empty chair for anyone who wants to join with a group.

December Topic: Resistance.



Curry Dinner and Caroling December 11, 2016

John Minge, assisted by the Perham U Group, will once again provide his curry dinner featuring authentic Indian cuisine. John came to love and learned to cook these foods after visiting India many years ago. Following the dinner, there will be opportunity to singing songs of the season. Please join us!

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your ideas and articles for the Newsletter to: maryanderson8380@msn.com. Editing is provided by Stephanie Sanderson and emailing/mailling is provided by Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson. Mickie Edmonds usually provides one of her paintings each month for our

appreciation! When you have photos of a UCU event and are willing to share, please forward them to Mary.

“Like” UCU on Facebook: see www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org

Note: The monthly Newsletters are included and many other items of interest are updated regularly and can be viewed at: www.ucofu.org.

Cancellation/Postponement Due to Weather

Cancellation/Postponement Due to Weather: for weather related announcements, tune to Lakes Radio Family of Stations – 103.3, 96.5 FM and 1020, 1250 AM or online at www.lakesradio.net under “News.” You can also check the UCU website at www.ucofu.org or the Facebook page.



Completion of UCU Manual Guide

One of the Goals and Objectives of the Strategic Plan Goals 2013-2015 was to define the various roles and responsibilities of the various and ever increasing committees. A further goal and objective was added in 2015-16 and continued under the 2016-17 plan to: **Develop policies, to keep the church running smoothly. The policy manual will be available to the Board and congregation.**

- *The Board will develop policies as needed.*
- *The policy manual will be kept up to date at all times.*

Wahoo!! After countless hours, much pressure on the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors to review existing policies and adopt needed policies; work of each committee to review/establish procedures; drafting of standard forms, etc., etc., etc., there now exists a

Unitarian Church of Underwood Governance and Policies and Procedures Guide Book.

The Guide consists of 195 pages, but now has in one place the information that was previously contained in all the strategic plans, operational plans, some written policies and the heads of long-termers and scattered in the files at church or in the homes of several members. The Guide is in an on-line form and has hyperlinks to referenced sections. We will provide information soon on how to access the on-line version. To save precious paper, only one hard copy has been made for the church office.

The Board gave Board President, Mary Anderson, applause and thanks for gathering the materials and writing the Guide. Thanks go, also to the Board of Directors and all the committees who reviewed the materials. Special thanks to Norm Kolstad and JoAnn Larson for editing this voluminous work!! Now, the trick will be to keep it “up to date at all times.”

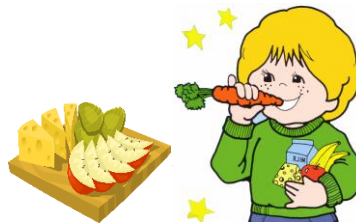
Coming Very Soon!! **2017 Edition of Church Directory**

The new directory will include the pictures and contact information of the earlier 2014 Directory, plus pictures of new members/friends and added/changed contact information for many. Please see Mary Anderson or JoAnn Larson to reserve/purchase your copy at \$10/copy.



Greeters are always needed for Sunday services. Please contact JoAnn Larson @ redswilds@gmail.com or @ 218/405-0752. This is an easy and fun way to serve and to get to know other UCU members and friends.

Help with Children's RE. Please contact Katy @ katyjolson@gmail.com or 218/495-3235 or Betsy Wells @ betsyanddougwells@gmail.com or 218/736-4469 if you are able to assist with Children's Religious Education.



Sign Up to Bring Treats, Set-up, Serve and Clean-up – It is no secret that we like our treats after services so if you wish to bring some for all to enjoy, please sign the list on the kitchen counter. On your sign-up day, come ½ hour early to sit out your treats, make coffee and arrange dishes, etc. Enjoy the time visiting behind the counter as you serve and clean up after. Treats for the freezer are always welcome to fill in for those Sundays when no one does sign up. On the Sundays of freezer treats, jump in to help set-up, serve and clean-up. Some of the best visiting and fun times go on in the kitchen!!

Cards for Incarcerated

Anyone interested in sending Holiday cards to incarcerated individuals through the CLF Holiday Card Project, please contact Ellen Eastby at eastofellen@hotmail.com or at 218-731-0803. There are very specific dos and don'ts so it is very important that people talk to Ellen before they start getting cards ready.



Thoughts on the Meaning of Democracy

The strongest democracies flourish from frequent and lively debate, but they endure when people of every background and belief find a way to set aside smaller differences in service of a greater purpose.

BARACK OBAMA, press conference, Feb. 9, 2009

Although our interests as citizens vary, each one is an artery to the heart that pumps life through the body politic, and each is important to the health of democracy.

BILL MOYERS, *The Nation*, Jan. 22, 2007

Modern democracies will face difficult new challenges--fighting terrorism, adjusting to globalization, adapting to an aging society--and they will have to make their system work much better than it currently does. That means making democratic decision-making effective, reintegrating constitutional liberalism into the practice of democracy, rebuilding broken political institutions and civic associations. Perhaps most difficult of all, it requires that those with immense power in our societies embrace their responsibilities, lead, and set standards that are not only legal, but moral. Without this inner stuffing, democracy will become an empty shell, not simply inadequate but potentially dangerous, bringing with it the erosion of liberty, the manipulation of freedom, and the decay of a common life.

FAREED ZAKARIA, *The Future of Freedom*

Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Democracy is a charming form of government, full of variety and disorder, and dispensing a sort of equality to equals and unequal alike.

PLATO

Democracy, like liberty, justice and other social and political rights, is not "given", it is earned through courage, resolution and sacrifice.

AUNG SAN SUU KYI, *In Quest of Democracy*

When I am president, I will work to ensure that all of our kids are treated equally and protected equally. Every action I take, I will ask myself, 'Does this make life better for young Americans in Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Ferguson, who have as much of a right to live out their dreams as any other child in America?'

DONALD TRUMP, Campaign 2016

Read more at: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes> and at http://www.notable-quotes.com/d/democracy_quotes

Singing the Living Tradition

From arrogance, pompousness, and from thinking ourselves more important than we are, may some saving sense of humor liberate us. For allowing ourselves to ridicule the faith of others, may we be forgiven.

From making war and calling it peace, special privilege and calling it justice, indifference and calling it tolerance, pollution and calling it progress, may we be cured.

For telling ourselves and others that evil is inevitable while good is impossible, may we stand corrected.

God of our mixed up, tragic aspiring, doubting and insurgent lives, help us to be as good as in our hearts we have always wanted to be.

Amen.

Harry Meserve

Green Gossip

Solar Task Force Report: The green committee met on Wednesday (10/12/16). The issues discussed were the following:

1. The rooftop solar project. We have decided to apply for the Minnesota solar incentive grant. This is a lottery, but if we are accepted we could see a \$8,000 to 9,000 decrease in project cost over a 10-year period. We will be asking Synergy systems to submit our application and there is no application fee. At this time, our chances of being accepted are about 25-30%. The deadline is January 30, 2017. See the caveat below*.
2. A major part of this project going forward will be our ability, as a non-profit organization, in getting the federal solar tax credit. Non-profits cannot claim this federal credit of an additional 30% credit over 5-7 years that, along with the possible MN incentive program, really drops the cost of our system dramatically. However, we can use a proxy owner to sponsor ownership of the system, thus allowing them to take the federal tax credit. That owner, or 'patron' can then sell or gift the system back to the church when the tax credits and incentives are completed.

Thus, the immediate question becomes: who from the church, member and/or friends would be interested in investing as this/these patrons?

There are numerous examples of how this works, as any non-profit uses the proxy system to decrease their solar projects costs. An example would be a \$28,000 system would be eligible for a 30% tax credit over approximately 5-7 years (\$7,000), then a \$8-9,000 state incentive payback over 10 years, decreasing the cost of the system to \$12-13,000 over the 10-year period.

3. *To apply for the Minnesota solar incentive grant lottery, **we must name those patrons.** Yes, there are companies that do this for non-profits, but they do it for fees and percentages. We will explore with some other churches how they may have done this.

So, if we wish to apply for the 2017 lottery due January 30, there is some urgency to getting patrons. Otherwise, we would have to wait for the 2018 lottery. Each year there are more applicants so the percentage chance of receiving the funds decreases dependent upon the number of entries. So far, those entries are more limited.

4. We are also considering energy saving options in addition to or aside from solar. We looked at a possible energy audit of some sort and are still collecting more data on the church facility. Generally, a professional energy audit will range from \$600-900. We know that there are some obvious areas where that we improve energy savings, i.e. increased insulation, window replacement, etc. So, we are postponing a professional energy audit until we have determined remedial fixes.

Bottom line is that to proceed on solar installation in a cost effective, monetarily responsive manner, we are interested in knowing of likely investors. **Please consider becoming a patron.** Please contact Ron Roller at 218-770-0374 or at: rollerolson@gmail.com to get further details.

Information provided by Ron Roller, Green Committee/Solar Task Force Chair

Churches United for the Homeless

Shelter Update: October 2016 Numbers

123 households housed in 2016

95 Sheltered

17 Children

75 Households

Length of Stay - 49 days

Fargo Force night for Churches United for the Homeless is Saturday, January 21st! Tickets are \$15 with \$5 going back to Churches United for the Homeless!

Bring the family and join us! Promo Code : CUFH

It is also "Hero" night to honor our military.

Churches United for the Homeless
(218) 236-0372
1901 First Ave. North

November Speaker Notes

November 6 - Cathy and Tina Stone presented the program entitled: **“Elements of Paganism”**. Cathy spoke first. She was raised Catholic, but while she is spiritual she is not religious. Since being with Tina, she has become in tune with the Elements, esp. the wind and trees.

Tina expressed gratitude for being able to speak openly, at UCU. She grew up Lutheran, but never felt comfortable even though she went through the motions, including participating in confirmation. A college friend suggested that she explore Paganism. Through this she found out where she belongs. She shared with us some of the basics of Paganism.

When she reads or recites readings such as the opening “Evocation of a Witch” she feels at one with the universe, past, present, and future. She said that the Creator has given us all that we need through the Elements. There is some variation in the identities of the Elements. Tina recognizes water, fire, air, earth, and spirit, and each is assigned a cardinal direction, a time of day, a season, colors, land forms, and qualities:

1. Air – east – dawn – spring – yellow – hills, towers, peaks- breathing (centering), intellect and communication
2. Fire – south – noon – summer – red /crimson/orange – desert, high plains – success, competition, will and passion
3. Water – west – twilight – autumn – blue/indigo – lakes, rivers, etc. – love, friendship, affection, healing, restoring, compassion
4. Earth – north – midnight – winter – black/ brown/dark green– caves, mountains, forests – secrecy and wisdom, perseverance, birth and death, grounding

These four are necessary for physical life and

5. Spirit (is a 5th integral, essential Element)– bight white/purple/black - space, connection and balance, joy, unity, goddess, cycle of life

During Tina’s talk, there was a streaming of photos depicting the elements provided by Cathy.

Attendance: 40

November 13 - Michelle Anderson, Rural Program Director for Springboard for the Arts, speaking on **“Rural Creativity in a Globalized World.”** Michelle has her Master’s Degree in Cultural Sustainability.

Michelle had recently returned from Salzburg Global Seminar at its home at Schloss Leopoldskron, a palace formerly owned by Max Reinhardt. The palace had been confiscated by the Nazis prior to Reinhardt’s escape to the US. After the war and after his death, the palace was donated to Global Seminar by his widow. This Seminar was a world-wide gathering of current and future leaders to solve issues of global concern. Michelle was one of 5 Minnesotans who attended with only two being from rural areas.

Based in St. Paul and Fergus Falls, Springboard for the Arts is an economic and community development organization for artists and by artists. Artists are creative people of all types. The goal is to help artists make a living and a life, to mobilize them, and to have communities tap into their artists' creativity.

There is:

- Individual Creativity
- Creative Placemaking (co-create – the artist with the community)
- Cultural Democracy (mechanisms to thrive and recognize the cultural policies)
- Cultural Sustainability – (the ability to sustain language, community, identity).

Michelle showed many examples of the integration of art with the community from: Michael Strand, a potter in ND, distributing cups he'd made to all the households in Dwight, ND and Dwight, NB – showing that someone cares; to the Pine Ridge bus in SD that helps distribute the art of the 79% of artists who work from their homes; to an installation artist in Alberta, Canada who charges developers \$500/hour just to consult with him on the use of his property; to Restorative Radio that is dealing with the problems of mass incarceration by providing stories from home to those incarcerated for an easier return to their communities; to a combination of rural/urban artists using Navaho art on blighted structures.

One art/community collaboration is in Bemidji on truth and reconciliation. They are using the Objibwe language on public sign-ways. The New York Mills Culture Center invited locals to bring rocks and plants in the building of their labyrinth. Haley Honeman, a member of this fellowship, was supported in her residency at Kirkbride for an impressive art project. Use of Kirkbride is encouraged and has led to mental health and equity artist collaborations with the community.

For further details, see: <http://springboardforthearts.org/jobs-opportunities/hinge-residency/>

Attendance - 70

November 20 - Program: Sue Wika, instructor at MNState and initiator of the Deep Roots Farmer Development Program under the Sustainable Farmers' Association (SFA) introduced the three students who received scholarships under the UCU Empowerment Grants this year.

Cassie Ducher – farms with her husband, also a participant in the Farm Skills 101 course, and gave us four responses to what the consumer can do to support the new farmer:

1. Refrain from grocery store shopping when possible and buy locally from your farmers.
2. Learn to cook whole chickens.
3. Eat and enjoy the flavors of healthy foods.
4. Get a chest freezer so you can store the quantities of seasonal foods produced.

Cassie noted UU Principle 7 – how supporting young farmers is aligned “with the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

Taya Schulte felt like Goldilocks and the three bears regarding the various sizes of farms she'd worked. She had been a student of anthropology and marveled at how hard it was for humans to get food to their tables. She learned from hard work at various size farms, a farm in Shelly, MN, a permaculture farm in the Colorado mountains where water was scarce and a large scale organic farm that sold to restaurants with 50-60% of produce probably wasted because of blemishes, etc. She worked with the Hope Community in the Philips neighborhood of Minneapolis and is now on a new project to link urban farmers in that neighborhood. Her goal is to build inclusive COMMUNITIES.

Shamus Fitzgerald tried a lot of things, including a 3-month stint farming in Mexico. He came back to MN because of MN water, the illness of his mother, the lack of money, motivation. He had no job and no money until a high school mentor introduced him to a farmer, also like Cassie, on the Anoka sand plain. He had to bus there and then bike or walk 9 miles. After the crew and then a sole worker left him, he was the lone worker. He, for three years ran the place, a provider of food for restaurants. He admitted he had a "naïve and romantic" idea of farming but his energetic spirit overcame those. As all new farmers, he faces the economic barriers of little income and surmounting the obstacles of marketing.

All three students expressed their appreciation to UCU for the scholarship help they were given.

One response from the audience: Give your customers, with some finesse, the opportunity to pay more than the competitive price, but a fair price for your product.

Attendance: 56

November 27 – **Mary Jimmerson** used UU Principle #1 to describe the "**Use of Service Dogs for PTSD.**" Mary had with her, her service dog K.D.Colt. She explained that PTSD can be caused by experience in war, domestic abuse and sexual abuse and can affect anyone. Service dogs and handlers like to fit in and not stand out. Service dogs can help a person with their routine. K.D. wakes her at 5:30 – now 4:30 time change. Gives physical and emotional support. AEI is gold standard for Service Dogs. Dogs and humans are matched. Your dog can watch your back AND front; they can clear a house.

Training a dog takes 1 – 2 years. Dogs must be clean and well groomed. Because Muslims do not touch dogs, their service animal is sometimes a miniature horse. In airplanes, service dogs and their person are usually boarded first.

The German Shepherd is a good breed for a service dog as they have an appetite for working. Service dogs can be used for small children with autism. Service dogs can cost \$20,000.

Attendance: 31

Applications due January 30, 2017 for

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF UNDERWOOD EMPOWERMENT GRANTS

The Unitarian Church of Underwood is pleased to once again offer funding for distribution of the 2017-2018 **Empowerment Grants**. These grants are made to encourage church members to develop projects that will have a positive effect on our communities at large. These projects may be related to any number of social or environmental issues, including poverty, education, ecology, alternative energy, & nutrition. The projects may be of varying time and cost, but all will be initiated and managed by the requesting applicant(s). This is an excellent opportunity for church members to make an impact on an issue they feel strongly about in the community around them.

Starting in 2007, we have given over \$75,000 to a wide variety of charitable organizations. Recent recipients include Fergus Falls Farmers' Market, POPs program; Habitat for Humanity; Wadena County 4-H Horse Project; the Nonviolent Peaceforce; Schools for Shan Refugees; and Deep Roots Farmer Development scholarships.

The deadline for grant applications is **January 30, 2017**.

Criteria for 'Empowerment Grant' requests:

- 1) Must be proposed by Unitarian Church of Underwood (UCU) members.
- 2) Must be compatible with the UCU mission/vision statement. (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).
- 3) Must address one of the seven Unitarian Universalist principles.
- 4) Must be non-discriminatory.
- 5) Projects will not provide direct services to individuals or families - the project may help area charities and non-profits that provide direct services.
- 6) Requests may be for total funding or may be for matching funds.

Note: Matching fund requests will be given priority. The rationale for this criterion is to double the impact of UCU initiatives, and to encourage members to get involved with issues and work at raising funds.

Example: The chili dinner raises \$1,000 for the senior nutrition program. This \$1,000 could be matched by an additional \$1,000, thus giving the nutrition program \$2,000.

- 7) The project being funded must be under the direction of an approved, not for profit (501c-3) organization.
- 8) Projects/groups that have not received previous funding will be given a higher priority for funding.
- 9) All grant recipients must agree to/sign an 'Empowerment Grant' contract. This includes progress reports and final report as per contract.

The next funding cycle will be for twelve months. The application deadline for the next funding period is January 30, 2017. If you are interested in pursuing an 'Empowerment Grant' you need to fill out the application at the end of the Newsletter or pick up one at church. The application must include a timeline for your project and a specific budget for the cost of the project. Please make six copies of your application for review. It would also be a good idea to talk to a member of the 'grant committee', that will be accepting applications.

The committee will review all applications and recommend or not recommend project requests to the church board of directors. The review criteria are also included at the end of the Newsletter. Grant selections are determined in February-March, given Board approval in March with funds distributed sometime in April.

Grant Committee members are: Deb Ferguson, Steve Nagle, Ron Roller, Stephanie Sanderson and Connie Stigen. Please contact Ron Roller at 218-770-0374 or at: rollerolson@gmail.com for further information and/or assistance.

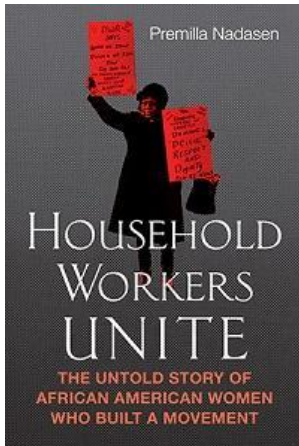
The application form is at the end of this Newsletter or you can pick one up at church.



inSpirit

Your Search for Truth and Meaning Begins Here

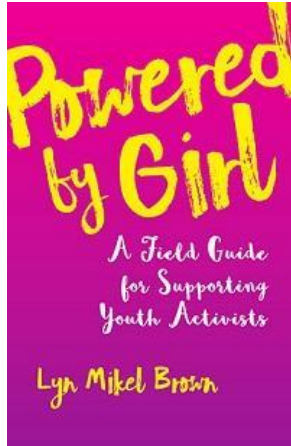
Honor the accomplishments of female leaders and reformers and support new generations of young activists with these essential and empowering reads.



***Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built A Movement* by Premilla Nadasen**

Telling the stories of African American domestic workers, this book resurrects a little-known history of domestic worker activism in the 1960s and 1970s, offering new perspectives on race, labor, feminism, and organizing.

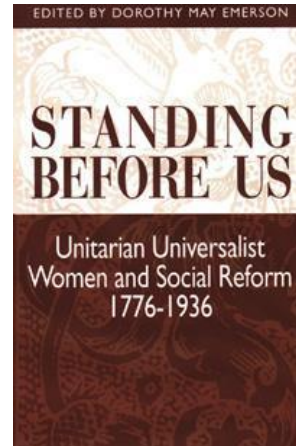
[Purchase today.](#)



***Powered by Girl: A Field Guide for Supporting Young Activists* by Lyn Mikel Brown**

A playbook for working with and training girls to be activists of their own social movements. Drawing from a diverse collection of interviews with women and girl activists, *Powered by Girl* is both a journalistic exploration of how girls have embraced activism and a guide for adults who want to support their organizing.

[Purchase today.](#)



***Standing Before Us: Unitarian Universalist Women and Social Reform* edited by Dorothy May Emerson**

This long-awaited collection contains 160 years worth of letters, essays, stories, poems, and speeches by Unitarian and Universalist women. The reformers and leaders represented here write and speak eloquently for social justice, religious reform, and an end to slavery and prejudice.

[Purchase today.](#)

Standing Rock Resistance

As many of you are aware, Sandy Barnhouse journeyed to Standing Rock in early November. A number of you made donations and the Board of Directors approved so that these proceeds were forwarded directly to the Standing Rock Tribe. **Sandy's full story of her trip is at the end of this Newsletter.**

Mikkel and Tudy Cowdery have also made special efforts to collect items for the Protectors. Mikkel provides the following information:

"Here's the information everyone needs for sending money or warm clothes to the folks at Standing Rock. It comes from an article in the current issue of UU World. This article about the

Dakota Access pipeline and other articles can be found in longer form at www.uuworld.org/news. This looks to be an ongoing effort where supplies and cash will be needed for some time to come.

Make checks payable to: **Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Donations.**

Donations can be sent to :

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Attn: Donations

P.O.Box D – Building #1

North Standing Rock Ave.

Fort Yates, ND 58538

or to:

Sacred Stone Camp

P.O.Box 1011

Fort Yates, ND 58538

You can also contact the protectors at:

sacredstonecamp@gmail.com

or by phone at

701-302-2238

The **Bismarck UU** is also a drop-off site for contributions and donations to the protectors. Their address is: **818 E. Divide Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58501** and the phone is: **701-223-6788**.

The minister there, Karen Van Fossan, has three recommendations for UUs who want to support the Standing Rock protesters: Raise awareness of the issue wherever you are; encourage people to travel to Standing Rock to bear witness; and build solidarity at home to organize actions to stop the pipeline.

Other than the above, the definite arrival of winter has made the needs of the protectors more pressing than before.

“Tudy and I have assembled a large package of gloves, mittens, warm clothing and other supplies. If we have someone traveling out that way who would be willing to haul and drop off our package, please let us know. You can reach us at mick@midwestinfo.net or 320-859-35356.” - *Mikko Cowdery*

Also, the MidAmerica Region of the UUA is receiving donations to support small travel stipends for those able and willing to travel to North Dakota in solidarity with the Standing Rock resistance. To donate, please go to: [https://www.midamericauua.org/ MA/standing-rock](https://www.midamericauua.org/MA/standing-rock)

The Bismarck-Mandan UU Fellowship and Church is supporting the protesters of the Dakota Access Pipeline that is proposed to go under the Missouri River just a few miles away from Standing Rock Nation. If you've been following the news on the Dakota Access Pipeline, you

are aware of The Sacred Stone Camp near Standing Rock. A group of citizens led by Native Americans is protesting the Dakota Access oil pipeline, which is routed to cross the Missouri River just north of Standing Rock Reservation. All pipelines eventually leak as they age and thus will contaminate the water of the Missouri River.

Hundreds of people are coming from all over the country to express their concerns with the pipeline. This pipeline was originally proposed to cross the Missouri River a few miles north of Bismarck, North Dakota but was nixed because of possible water contamination. Please see this article (first paragraphs) from the Bismarck Tribune newspaper

http://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-and-regional/pipeline-route-plan-first-called-for-crossing-north-of-bismarck/article_64d053e4-8a1a-5198-a1dd-498d386c933c.html

Our Bismarck-Mandan UU Church is a drop-off site for donations for the Sacred Stone Camp to support concerned citizens on site; a list of needed supplies can be found at www.sacredstonecamp.org.



Unitarian Universalist Solidarity With Standing Rock

November 28, 2016

A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Ones,

Many of us watched in horror as we saw [live-feed footage](#) of militarized police shooting water cannons, concussion grenades, tear gas, and rubber bullets at the peaceful Water Protectors in below-freezing North Dakota temperatures [last week](#). In time since the attack, we have learned that more than 300 people were injured, including [one young woman](#) whose arm was nearly blown off after a concussion grenade exploded on it. And, on Friday, the Army Corps of Engineers issued [a statement](#) saying that they will be evicting everyone from the camps at Standing Rock sometime after December 5.

Meanwhile, the camps at Standing Rock continue to be self-sustaining, peaceful, prayerful, powerful places. They are led by indigenous leaders fiercely committed to one another and to the sacred earth. They welcome in visitors from around the globe who continue to travel to show solidarity and support for the #NoDAPL resistance movement. They continue to spread the word about this struggle for indigenous sovereignty, and against the rampant corporate greed and unquenchable thirst for oil that push the Dakota Access Pipeline forward.



Let us be clear: the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and the Water Protectors are resisting the same insidious forces of indigenous genocide, colonial hegemony, and land theft that have been in play since the first Europeans arrived on this continent. The Dakota Access Pipeline [was rerouted](#) to the tribe's sacred land when the white citizens of Bismarck would not accept the risks inherent in its construction upstream from their own community. The militarized police colluding with corporate interests -- and the lack of courageous intervention by elected officials -- is the same story of racism and white supremacy that faces communities of color and indigenous peoples not only throughout United States history, but throughout our nation all the time right now, today. As Unitarian Universalists, we are compelled by our faith now, more than ever, to show up in solidarity however we can in solidarity with those who struggle for justice, and in resistance to the interlocking, oppressive systems that disregard human life, self-determination, and the health of our precious earth.

Many of you have reached out to ask how you can be of support to the Water Protectors, and to our Unitarian Universalist kin at the Unitarian Universalist Church & Fellowship of Bismarck/Mandan, who have been on the ground at the [Oceti Sakowin camp](#) for months and such consistent supports to the movement there. We are in close touch with Rev. Karen van Fossan, the minister at UUCFBM, and she has passed along several calls to action and recommendations for acts of solidarity from indigenous leaders at Standing Rock. They are listed below, and there should be something every one of us can do, no matter what our resources or capacity.

Friends, there is so much work to do, but your faithfulness and your commitment keep me going. Together, we are so powerful. Thank you for your generosity.



In faith and solidarity,

Rev. Ashley Horan, Executive Director

TRAVEL to Standing Rock for the December 4 Interfaith Day of Prayer

The Water Protectors have consistently asked all people of conscience to consider showing up in person to show solidarity with the #NoDAPL movement, and keep the world focused on the struggle there. In particular, Chief Arvol Looking Horse, Spiritual Leader of the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota nations, has issued a call for all people of faith and conviction to come to Standing Rock for an [Interfaith Day of Prayer on December 4, 2017](#).

MUUSJA will be helping to coordinate caravans of Unitarian Universalists from around the state for the December 4 event. If you are interested in connecting with other UUs planning to attend, please [fill out this Google form](#) - you can indicate where you'd like to leave from, and if you need a ride or would like to offer one to others. Once we determine the interest, we will help ensure that folks connect with each other and can make plans for traveling. We will also likely be sponsoring a large van that will leave from Minneapolis, with spots available for clergy and/or lay people both from the Twin Cities and around the country.

If you are planning, or considering, a trip to Standing Rock, please read the [four documents linked here](#) about how to prepare for, be respectfully and helpfully present at, and return from the camps.

DONATE MONEY to Support the #NoDAPL Movement and the Water Protectors

MUUSJA asks that Unitarian Universalists contribute to making it possible to answer the call of indigenous leaders at Standing Rock who have invited Unitarian Universalists to maintain a consistent presence there, AND to directly funding Native-led resistance by the Water Protectors.

To that end, we ask that you contribute to the [UU Presence at Oceti Sakowin Fund](#) (for the "yUUrt," a semi-permanent structure at Standing Rock that houses visiting UUs and any others who need a place to stay), **AND make an equal or greater contribution to the [Oceti Sakowin Camp Fund](#)**, run and managed by the Water Protectors. While we do not know exactly when and if a forced eviction will happen, we have been told by our partners on the ground that both of these funds are still going to be operational and are good candidates to which to send financial resources.

SEND WINTER SUPPLIES to Oceti Sakowin Camp

Again, while we are not sure if/when a forced eviction of the camps will come, we know that the Water Protectors are planning on maintaining a presence for as long as possible. They are still in dire need of many winterizing supplies, as detailed on the [Oceti Sakowin Camp donation page](#). If you have any of these supplies and would like to send them along with UUs who will be

traveling to Standing Rock this week, please [email MUUSJA Executive Director Rev. Ashley Horan](#).

CALL Your Elected Officials and DAPL Executives

It is imperative that we work together to keep pressure on the people who have the power to halt the pipeline, and to keep the Water Protectors' struggle in the public eye even though the media has been largely ignoring the story. [Click here](#) for a list of suggestions of strategic contacts, and spend a bit of time letting the powers that be know that we are in solidarity with Standing Rock.

ORGANIZE a Vigil, Worship Service, or Special Collection in Your Congregation

We have heard consistent requests from the Water protectors to "remain constantly in prayer" for them and their sacred land. Many Unitarian Universalist congregations around the country have committed to holding special vigils or services on Sunday, December 4, at the same time as the Interfaith Day of Prayer is happening; they have also committed to taking a special collection at these gatherings and sending that money to Standing Rock. If there are already vigils or local solidarity events happening in your community, organize a contingent of supporters from your congregation to attend together. If you organize an event on your own, reach out to other congregations and faith communities to join you.

Whether it is a congregation-wide event, or a small gathering of supportive people gathering, our prayerful attention and spiritual support for our kin at Oceti Sakowin matters.

EDUCATE Yourself & Your Community

Native and indigenous history has been intentionally and systematically erased from our American history books, and most of us have very little context for and understanding of what is happening at Standing Rock as the latest of a centuries-long story of domination and resistance. If you are just beginning to learn about Standing Rock and the #NoDAPL struggle, check out the [#StandingRockSyllabus](#): a compendium of readings, articles, photos, and a timeline that help draw the larger picture of this moment into historical context.

As you seek out other sources of information, especially those, ask yourself: Who is telling the story? What pieces of their social location influence how they see and tell this story? Are Native voices present and centered in the narrative, and their perspectives honored as true?

MUUSJA - The Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance

900 Mount Curve Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403
651.769.3062

Unitarian Church of Underwood

Approved Board Minutes for October 16, 2016

Board members present: David Sanderson, Mary Anderson, Bob Worner, Kris Warhol, Connie Stigen, Norman Kolstad, and Alisha Piekarski. Absent: David Wass, Stan Carignan, John Miersch. Also present: Administrative Consultant JoAnn Larson, Katie Roller-Olson.

The meeting was called to order at the church by Board President Mary Anderson at 12:14 p.m. Mary Anderson shared a reading/meditation.

The agenda was approved (Worner/Sanderson).

The minutes of the September 21, 2016 meeting were approved as printed (Warhol/Stigen).

Reports:

Executive Committee: Mary Anderson

Treasurer: printed report.

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson

Finance/Stewardship Committee: David Sanderson

Facilities Committee: Katie Roller-Olson - work proceeding on air quality, drainage, and noise problems. A quote of \$1902.00 for purchase of noise abatement panels from Surface Inc. was accepted (Sanderson/Stigen). The Facilities Committee will proceed to obtain quotes to address the moisture problems for future Board action. Lift repair in progress.

Sverdrup Suites: Mary Anderson - letter to tenants, rent increase.

Safety Committee: Norman Kolstad shared new forms for liability waiver and photo release.

Community Outreach: Kris Warhol & Bob Worner - The fiscal year 2018 church budget is to include \$2.00 per UCU member for membership in Churches United for the Homeless (Worner/Sanderson). Also discussed: Green Committee, Thanksgiving event.

Membership: Mary Anderson - new visitor card, directory update progress.

Unfinished Business:

A comprehensive guide/policy manual is under review.

MUUSJA workshop, possible regional workshop in the fall.

New Business: none

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 5:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Kolstad, secretary

Unitarian Church of Underwood (UCU)
Grant Committee

Application for Empowerment Grant

(please add more information on additional sheet(s) if needed)

The application deadline for the current grant cycle is **January 30, 2017.**

Name: E-Mail:

Address:

Name of Project:

Description/Purpose of Project:

.....

How does project relate to mission/principles of the UCU?

.....

.....

Project Timeline:

.....

How will funds be used? Please attach a sample budget:

Does project/funding request involve matching funds?

.....

Progress Report:.....

.....

.....

Follow-up Report (on completion of project):

.....

.....

.....

Submit with six (6) copies.

Please contact Ron Roller at rollerolson@gmail.com or 1-218-495-3235 for additional information.

Selection Criteria

Unitarian Church of Underwood (UCU)

Grant Period_____

Empowerment [Grant Ranking Scorecard](#)

A. Is the project proposed by a UCU member? *If no, the grant does not meet criteria for consideration.*

B. Does the project address one or more of the 7 Unitarian principles? *If no, the grant does not meet criteria for consideration.*

If yes, assign points between 1-3. 3=high correlation to UU principles, 2= medium correlation to principles, 1= low correlation to UU principles

C. Will project be managed by UCU member?

If yes, assign points between 0-2. 2=100% managed by UCU member with high level of member involvement, 1=managed by other entity but has some UCU participation, 0= no UCU member involvement.

D. Is the project non-discriminatory and inclusive? *If no, the grant does not meet criteria for consideration.*

If yes, assign points between 1-2. 2=highly inclusive and non-discriminatory, 1=somewhat inclusive and non-discriminatory

E. Will project funds be matched?

If yes, assign 1 pt. If no, assign 0 pt.

F. Does the project provide direct services to individuals or families?

<u>Grant Application Names:</u>	<u>Total score</u>	<u>Requested</u>	<u>Approved</u>
---------------------------------	--------------------	------------------	-----------------

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Note: The highest point score can be 8, the lowest point score can be 2.

Sandy Barnhouse's Story of her Trip to Standing Rock

To Standing Rock

To the Sacred Stones Camp

To Rosebud, and Chub Blackbear

I was there for a very short while, Tuesday, October 26, 2016.

It was a day of cold, bitter wind and chaos—the breaking of camp. And rain—four hours of car wash rain across North Dakota all the way home.

Although I tried to have no expectations, I soon realized that I did have them. Nothing happened as I expected and everything happened as it was supposed to.

During the several hours I was there, the atmosphere was crazy and chaotic. There had been more than 100 arrests the Monday night before, and again there would be as many the next day, Wednesday. The day I visited was between these two; everyone was focused on moving the camp farther up Hwy 1806 and finding a rain coat.

It took me longer than it should have to arrive at the camps. This is because I was advised on-line to take the longer, circuitous route to the sites, which spirals in from Mandan; AND because I was intimidated by the seven police cars with lights flashing at the “T” where Hwy 24 meets 1806. Five to seven police were on the road, signaling turns, etc., and stopping motorists. I knew I was supposed to turn left here, but I turned right instead, and decided to go to Ft. Yates.

I had become agitated when I realized the easily recognized bunch of sage, wrapped in plastic and placed on top of all the contributions I had packed, gave me away as a Lakota sympathizer. I was fearful of the police and worried they would stop me and search my car. This was a new experience: feeling like I should have disguised my intentions better.

I drove all the way to Ft. Yates (about 40 miles) and realized this was where I could do what I had forgotten to do in Mandan—buy some good cuts of meat. Everything was beginning to unfold as it was supposed to, even though the hours were passing quickly.

Earlier experiences had taught me a few traditions regarding approaching the people of First Nations. I had put down tobacco in my garden before cutting the sage. I had bound the stems with a red string; I had made a sincere string of prayer ties one evening and brought it along. I brought a bag of tobacco to offer, and I had the funds to buy meat and offer it.

Soon I saw that I was supposed to come to Ft. Yates and see the grocery store with the milk sales. A gallon of milk was \$6.85. There were several shelves full of large milk containers with prices near \$7.00 per gallon and on each price sign it was noted whether that type of milk or milk product was eligible for the W.I.C. program. In other words, whoever was running the store was skimming the taxpayers by marking up the milk. Reservation residents were, in effect, paying full price for the milk and getting no benefit from W.I.C. (Something wants me to believe the profits were going to a general reservation fund, but I don't know this).

So, that was the reason I was diverted by my fears to go to Ft. Yates—so I would read those signs. I bought a gallon of milk and several choice pieces of beef, for a total of \$30. I used some of the cash Alisha had given me the morning before, just as I was bringing things out the door and putting all the donations in the back of my car. She also paid for the tobacco, which I'd picked up in Moorhead.

People had handed me cash and told me to use it for the trip. Joanne and Luke, Mikko, Mary and Alisha had separately told me to use it for some of the expenses.

Whatever was left after gas and offerings went into the contribution fund, which will be sent to the Ft. Yates legal defense fund. The total I handed over to David Wass for this was \$437, or similar, after expenses. I used some of the contribution for expenses, and paid some of my own.

In addition to other clothing and blankets, Luke Anderson had contributed a nearly-new down jacket. Lee sent clothing, a newish sleeping bag, and several thick, 100 percent wool blankets. Tere had contributed coffee and canned goods; Ron and Barb Graham had nearly cleaned out the cans from their cupboards; Carole Mitchell brought a bag of canned food; Maggie contributed a down-filled blanket and some cash; John and Janell gave me several blankets and items of clothing. Then, Alisha, a working girl, brought a large plastic zipper bag (the size

that wraps a king-size bedding set) stuffed tightly full of food, blankets and clothing, in addition to a sizable cash gift. By herself, she gave a huge amount.

I drove north from Ft. Yates, a very run-down little town with tiny, overgrown houses, and returned to the blinking check point that had initially intimidated me. An officer signaled me to stop and asked me where I wanted to go. I froze for a moment, because I couldn't find the words, "Sacred Stones Camp." The name "Standing Rock" was sitting in front of my mind file, and it was the wrong term. I was struck by the realization that the officer was Lakota or Mandan, and his face softened. "You wanna go to the camps?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied. He then waved me off and pointed northerly up the road. "About two miles," he said. That was the entire ordeal. I began to be less fearful.

I came to the site, crossed the Cannonball river, and drove along the edge of the main camp, noting tipis were set up, along with plastic tarp-wrapped structures, and various commercial nylon tents, the field entirely enclosed by barbed-wire fences. Having been inhabited for more than six months, the area was worn and torn, and still somewhat organized. Young Lakota men stood at the entrance and sometimes could answer questions. I asked for the Rosebud camp, since I know people there, from several decades back. They sent me back across the river and Rosebud was on the southern shore, a small, narrow space, with two or three "kitchens" (large tarp-sheltered spaces where food is stored and prepared). I asked if I could unload a few things, and someone pointed to one of the tents.

Most of the people there were Euro-American and reminded me of '60s activists; I didn't feel I was getting clear instructions, so I brought several bags of canned goods into the tent and unloaded them on several shelves. Coming out, I was conscious that I had parked my car in the wrong place, so I pulled away and crossed the river again.

I began to feel like a privileged yuppie on a phony, staged trip to clear my own conscience. I became self-conscious about my bright orange Prius, and the fact that I had packed clothing in a large box that had shipped a dozen wine bottles for a wine club labeled "Wall Street Wine." I know in my heart I'm not a yuppie, but I had brought a lot of signals that I was. And, I also saw how very sheltered I am.

This time I drove all the way into the Sacred Stones camp, although I had misplaced the map I had picked up at Meadow Farm Foods and there were no more available. Down the lane, I stopped at a tent where coats were hanging, and the floor was stuffed with folded blankets. I got out, opened the doors, and began to bring a box of clothing to the tent. At that moment, two older Lakota men came to help me and began unloading the soft goods. I quickly scooped up several things of my own—my computer bag and a coat—and put them into the front seat. Immediately the two men were grabbing large bundles of blankets and clothes, and closing them against their bodies to take them into the tent.

Then it was time to find the right place to put the remaining food, including the milk and meat. One man pointed to a large, green tarp tent and said there was a place “behind it” where I could leave food. When I got to the other side, there seemed to be only an accretion of everything imaginable—water jugs, old tires, wet coolers holding various items, piles of moldering clothing, piles of folding chairs, but no apparent place to put down a box of canned food. I had decided to just leave it on the ground and have faith it would be picked up, when a young man came up to the back of my car and asked if I had any food.

Of course I did, but I didn’t know where to leave it. For a moment, I imagined that because this man had a pick-up truck he was here to help move the camp. So, I let myself believe that by putting the food in his truck, I was getting it to the right place, where ever it would end up. I couldn’t actually say no to him. He pointed to his wife and baby in the truck. “I see you have some milk. Can we have it for our baby?” Of course they could. He eyed the two remaining bags of canned goods. “I’d like to take those too,” he said, and he loaded them into the back of the truck.

I was wishing there were some central place where I knew the food would be going to the *mni wiconi*. Yet here was a man who might just be loading up his monthly groceries. Could I refuse him? I couldn’t be dishonest. He asked if I had any meat and I said yes, since that was all that was left to be given away. I gave it to him and he thanked me, and I thought, “How am I supposed to do this?”

So, all except the cash was forfeited within the confines of the two camps, and I looked around, with the cold wind stinging everyone, and noted there was no sweat lodge being used anywhere today, even though there was some worship

going on inside a large tent where school-age kids were beating drums and singing. I only heard them. I was prepared to attend a sweat lodge, but this was a day of chaos and regrouping, and many of the people had been arrested the night before—likely much of the leadership—so everything was helter-skelter, hit-and-miss.

I drove out of the camp and continued north, as I was told the new camp was farther up the road. Soon I came to the barricade, which was open, and where two dozen people, mostly First Nations, were standing around talking to each other; and out in the field beyond the chain-link fence, tent and tipis were going up.

The people, most in their 20s, were friendly, wrapped up against the cold, cheerful and exuberant. They talked about the arrests, that more than half had been sent as far away as Fargo, since the Mandan/Bismarck jails were full. I asked if I could take a picture of the barricade, and they were happy to let me. “Tell our story,” some were saying. “Here, take a picture of my pretty face. Show them I’m here.”

A Euro-American woman in her 60s (somewhat of an “old hippie”) got out of a car with a few others and came up to hug one of the young Lakota women standing at the barricade. “We’re leaving now,” she said. I got the story that she’d been there since early September. I felt embarrassed that I had already decided I couldn’t stay there myself. I had come not knowing what I would find, and I had begun to learn my limitations that day. I had left my tent and sleeping bag at home on purpose, because I was afraid I’d be tempted to give them to the camps, and I wanted to keep them for another season, maybe come back later. I saw my selfish nature, and the limits of what I was prepared to do.

Rumors were it would be \$1,000 to get out of jail for each arrestee, and I wasn’t prepared for that. I was prepared to give what I had brought, and what friends had given me to bring.

As we stood there I noticed that many were listening more closely to a tall, good-looking man in his late 30s, who seemed to have a few more bits of knowledge of the situation. At one point, I asked him aside and told him how I had given up the

food to someone who might not be leaving it at the camps. I was “concerned” that our contributions got to the right place.

Then, at the same time, we both said, “It really doesn’t matter (does it?).” He had a wife and baby to feed. He probably had other relatives to feed with his grocery shopping spree. The food would reach the people who need it. It really didn’t matter. Someone here would eat. Support would be manifest in the right place.

I had no end of trouble with my I-phone camera. It wouldn’t leave video mode. As I got back into the car I began to blame the spirits. I went farther on and came to a fence covered with the banners of all the Nations who had traveled there, including a large flag of Norway. I wished I’d brought one of our nylon banners from the church to place there. I stopped, realizing I hadn’t unloaded the prayer ties, sage and tobacco. This was the place to leave them, and I did, draping the ties over the top fence pipe with others that had been left there. I was alone while I did this and some strange satisfaction settled in.

No one saw me doing this, and that was a good thing. I realized that since I was unwilling to be arrested, and too timid to brave the cold, these people no longer needed me, although they had been grateful for the gifts, and open-soul friendly, as always. It was time to leave, after only about three hours.

I was sad to go so soon and felt like I had left without giving myself to them. But as I approached the town of Mandan I began to realize that everything had happened as it was supposed to. My car was supposed to break down 50 miles from Fargo because of the four-hour carwash I had driven through, and I was supposed to lose the little *zipper bag of thumb drives and photo chips I had intended to leave at home, but accidentally brought along. My camera was supposed to get goofy at the wrong moment, and I was supposed to leave my \$80 computer charger at the home where I’d spent the night. It was all tech related and it was the influence of the spirits who recognized that I wasn’t really ready to be there.

This is the way your thoughts begin to form when you visit the First People. It’s very spiritual out there and I’m not finished. It was a scouting trip, so I’ll know next time what to prepare for. *Sandra Barnhouse*

*The outcome of this loss was a gift. Only a day after I realized the zipper bag was missing, I began to figure out ways I could recover the several books I had been working on, with too much ignorance about backing them up properly (with the new ways people are doing that), and I realized that all the editing I'd done on my big novel all summer, now lost, had been going nowhere anyway, that I still have a printed version of the original and should approach the book with a full rewrite, page by page, an entirely new file. "Everything happened the way it was supposed to," I told everybody, and I felt lighter and freer, even though I had lost nearly all the creative work I'd done for the past five years. I regretted the loss of some of it; I also found parts of it here and there on my computer, both photos and text.

I settled into this, as part of the lesson. I figured the zipper bag had fallen out of my computer bag, into the back when I'd dumped everything into the front seat so they could get to the blankets in my car. It got scooped up with clothing and I visualized it buried in that packed, temporary tent that was probably taken apart by now. It didn't matter anymore. "So what?" I would say, and I had loads of new ambition. I realized that I wasn't devastated; I was resilient. This was my full spiritual lesson from the trip. The spirits work on you in very strange ways.

Ten days ago, the spirits returned the zipper bag, which appeared on a shelf in my utility room, where I occasionally hide my computer. All was recovered, except the charger; and my car turned out to be OK. I haven't checked the camera to see what I got. If I find anything, it will be shared with this story. *Sandy Barnhouse*

Many thanks to Sandy for making this trip and for sharing with us her experiences.