



Unitarian Church of Underwood January 2015 Newsletter

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.

Coming up in January

January 4 - Writers Group – Resolution and Renewal

January 11 - Bob Worner, “This Sacramental Universe” - using UU Principles 1 and 7, a broad definition of sacraments and how at our best, like the universe itself, we are sacraments.

January 18 - Heather Buessler “Operation Africa”

January 25 - Candace Simar and Angela Foster; Farm Girls

Note: Prior to beginning of service at 10:20 a.m., there will be issued a “Call to Gather” to alert folks to assemble in the sanctuary so that the service can start promptly.

Upcoming Religious Education

1st Sun.: Discussion of Emerson’s Essays 9:15 a.m.

3rd Sun.: Writing as a Spiritual Practice 9:15 a.m.

4th Sun.: Bible Study 9:15 a.m.: finishing Chapter 11 of the Gospel of John and Spong’s book through page 163.

January 11 – 10:30 a.m. Children’s Religious Education & Teen session: Coming of Age.

Other Meetings:

January 7 – 5:30 p.m. Membership Committee

January 11 – 9:15 a.m. Celebrants @ church

January 14 – 6:30 p.m. Kim Embretson from West Central Initiative - discussion with the Foundation Planning Committee, Board Members and others interested.

January 18 – Board Meeting following Sunday Service

January 21 – 5:30 p.m. Speakers Committee

Note: AA Meets every Monday evening @ 7 p.m. at UCU

More about January Speakers

January 4 - Resolution and Renewal by the Spiritual Writers Group

Per Diane Johnson: "When Luke Anderson started our Spiritual Writers Group over three years ago, he stated that it would be about the "practice of the art/discipline of writing as personal and communal expression.

He went on to further define the practice – "It is often an intense process to break through clichés, old assumptions, and expectations to find authentic self-expression. It is not showmanship with language to produce a product. It is an often difficult and humiliating process to break through and discover the authentic, the truth, the spiritual. On the other hand, it is a transcendent feeling to find new insights and wholeness for oneself and with others."

On January 4th the group will have their third opportunity to share their personal reflections with the congregation. In keeping with the New Year, the theme will be "Resolution and Renewal." Luke has written the responsive reading for the program, followed by creative writings by Liz Sweder, John Miersch, Sandy Barnhouse, Rod Broding and Diane Johnson."

January 11 - Bob Worner, "This Sacramental Universe" - using UU Principles 1 and 7, Bob will give a broad definition of sacraments and how at our best, like the universe itself, we are a sacrament.

January 18 - Heather Buesseler, Opportunity Africa. Opportunity Africa's mission is to enable Cameroonian students to achieve their educational dreams in order to overcome poverty and improve health outcomes. Opportunity Africa operates on three principles. One, education is a basic human right for everyone, regardless of a person's gender, race, or socioeconomic status. Two, education reduces poverty and improves health outcomes for individuals and their families. Three, education creates stronger communities with the resources to end hunger, conflict, and poverty in Africa. Opportunity Africa was founded by Heather Buesseler and Michelle Wilson in 2007.

Heather had no idea how much her life would change when she studied abroad in Cameroon through the School of International Training in the fall of 2001. Her host families and friends she made, with who she has maintained close ties, left an indelible mark on her life with their warmth, generosity, and hospitality. Heather returned to the East Province of Cameroon the summer of 2002 to conduct research on malnutrition and dietary habits. These experiences both launched Heather's career in public health and served as her inspiration for founding Opportunity Africa.

Heather holds a Master's in Public Health from University of Washington (2010), and a B.A. from Macalester College (2003) in International Studies and Anthropology. She works for the American Refugee Committee as a Health Technical Advisor, and enjoys traveling to the world's more far-flung places and running along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, where she resides.

January 25 - Candace Simar and Angela Foster, Farm Girls. Sisters Candace Simar and Angela Foster are the authors of Farm Girls, a collection of poems and essays inspired by life growing up on a Minnesota dairy farm. If you learned to swear in Norwegian or shared a two-holer outhouse with your cousin, you'll enjoy the poetry and prose of these sisters. From memories of Norwegian ancestors and growing up on a Minnesota dairy farm to dreams of Oprah's couch and rapping with Eminem, Farm Girls will take you back to the days of rural schools, 'moon light, star light, hope to see a ghost tonight', and the auction of the family farm.

Candace Simar is a writer and poet from Pequot Lakes, Minnesota, in the heart of Lake Country. As a life-long Minnesotan, the grandchild of immigrants, Candace nurtures a passion for Minnesota History and has published a number of Minnesota based historical novels.

Angela Foster is a writer, creative writing teacher, and editor from Pine City, MN.

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” or KSA TV Alexandria, MN or online at www.KSAX.com under “weather.” You can also check the UCU website at www.ucofu.org or the Facebook page.

The Month That Was

December 7 – Stephanie Sanderson, “The Bible as History of Human Moral and Psychological Development.” Stephanie used Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Stages, stories from the Bible and religious history to walk us through the stages of moral and psychological development beginning with the **Pre-Moral Stage**: The stage of development before there is an awareness of right or wrong behavior. (Steph).

We develop within our life time and over human time. Genesis says that man is made in the image of man but it is more that man has made God in our image. Adam and Eve's wants and needs were taken care of by God. Piaget says as a babe, we do not have an identity separate from our caregiver.

In the garden was the Tree of Knowledge. The snake entices our curiosity – who could resist? Comes a new consciousness – aware of nakedness so we have stage 1 (see below and follows)

Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Stages

(Moral Development: A Guide to Piaget and Kohlberg, Duska and Whelan, 1975)

Pre-Conventional Level:

Stage 1: The Punishment and Obedience Orientation. The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference to power are valued in their own right. (Punishment and disobedience, fall of man- woman seen as responsible – thrown out of the garden, couldn't return. Ultimate knowledge is reserved for the gods or special people who act as arbitrators with the gods. Old Testament God to current mega churches- obey, good stuff will happen, be blessed, reward of heaven).

Stage 2: The Instrumental Relativist Orientation. The individual still takes certain actions or obeys the rules by judging the consequences, but now, rather than the fear of punishment, it's the opportunity of reward that is the motivation for the action. ("What's in it for me," "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" mentality).

Conventional Level:

Stage 3: The Interpersonal Concordance of "Good Boy-Nice Girl" Orientation. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or "natural" behavior. (Be nice, please others mentality).

Stage 4: The Law and Order Orientation. There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. (New Testament – Law & Order vs the challenges of Jesus who acted outside social norms of then & spoke of the God within us. The Disciples didn't get it. They had to find a new way trying to realize the message Jesus spoke in the parables.)

Post-Conventional, Autonomous, or Principled Level:

Stage 5: The Social-Contract Legalistic Orientation. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights and in terms of standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of personal values and opinion. (Inner not outer directed, a slippery slope for conventional believers. We may be thrown into a void, chaos, discomfort. The U.S. Constitution was based on personal values and opinions of the founders).

Stage 6: The Universal Ethical Principle Orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. (UU Principles – Justice, reciprocity, respect for the dignity of all. Golden Rule: Love those who hate you and pray for those who persecute you. The snake has served as a medical emblem since the time of Asclepius, the ancient Greek God of healing. What if that had become the symbol instead of the cross?)

Stage 7? – One that goes beyond and defies logic. The revelation to Moses: "I am who I am."

**"The Garden of Eden is within me.
God walks with me in the cool of the day.
Divine laughter rings through the Garden
And a thundering voice says, 'It is good!'
Let my Self arise from the quiet
Peaceful place in the Garden,
The walk with the One are my destiny.
My lion and my lamb repose together.
I taste from the Tree of Knowledge.
The snake coils in every cell, awake, knowing.
In the Garden is also the Tree of Life.
Taste of the Tree of Life,
For we are in the eternity of the present."**

Written and shared by Stephanie Sanderson

December 14 - Doris Issendorf was our special guest. She provided the opening words that included the 4 directions and a smudging. This involved lighting a small amount of sage (to disperse negative energy), cedar (to summon positive energy), and sweet grass, as she faced each direction. These words are part of her daily routine. She said, "The Creator likes songs."

-She started drumming when she participated in a drumming retreat at Maplelag resort. For several years she has made drums and led drumming circles. She has used hides from deer, buffalo, elk, cow, and bear. Each has a unique tone/quality to it.

- Drumming helped her deal with her husband's illness (cancer) and death, and with her own healing.
- She led a drumming circle at Catholic Charities (a residential facility for 'troubled' youth). The kids were engaged and enjoyed the experience. The drumming is now used in some of their therapy sessions.
- A friend of hers has led drumming sessions in a nursing home. The "regular" residents as well as the residents with memory issues participated and benefited from the experience.
- Doris expressed gratitude for joining us today because she has been busy (with selling a house, etc.) and has not led many drumming circles recently.
- She has not been trained by Native Americans. Her learning has included experiences and reading.
- She has found that not every tribe and culture embrace women drumming. Some feel that drumming is only for men.
- In September, there is a day of "drumming for peace". From 7 - 8 a.m. people in each time zone drum at 4 beats/second...to foster peace...with 10 million+ beats around the world.

Doris led us in 2 drumming sessions, each lasting about 5 minutes. The rhythm during the first was like a heartbeat, and healing. The second was much faster (4 beats/second) was to help prepare us for New Beginnings.

Following the service we enjoyed a delicious curry feast provided by John Minge.

December 21 - Betsy Wells led the service with special readings and holiday music provided by Sally Avant, Mikko Cowdery, Jen Walla, Deb Wallwork, Katy Olson, Hazen Roller Olson, Sarah Lysaker, Susan Groff, Anders Persson. Budd and Marguarite Andrews brought their dancing dolls so we could all join together on Jingle Bells.

December 28 – Kris Warhol and Norm Kolstad had assembled many pictures from the 125 years of the Unitarian Church of Underwood's history in time for its first showing at the Harvest Festival Open House in October. Norm has been described as an artist in his own right with the quality of the pictures he took for use in our church directory and other times. Kris and Norm shared and narrated their photo history with us, a really good ending to the 125th year's celebrations. And less we forget some history, see the picture below:



December Special Thanks to:

John Minge for providing what has now become our traditional Curry dinner with caroling following. John cooks for several days for his offering of a number of entrees, all delicious.

Betsy Wells for coordinating and leading the December 21 program with holiday music and special readings provided by many.

Ellen Eastby for visioning, preparing and leading a very special Christmas eve service to a full house that featured so many of our talented musicians, inspirational readings including the Biblical Christmas story told in Luke 2: 7-14 and illuminated during the reading by our hand-held candles.

Mary Worner for coordinating all the musicians featured at the Christmas Eve service: Sally Avant, Ken Hamrum, Lydia Liu, Hazen Roller Olson, Shannon Smith, Linda Winkler and Mary Worner.

Kris Warhol and Norm Kolstad for all their work on recording the history of the Unitarian Church of Underwood.

**Applications Due for
UNITARIAN CHURCH OF UNDERWOOD
EMPOWERMENT GRANTS**

UCU Empowerment Grant applications are due February 15, 2015. Complete details are in the December 14th Newsletter with the application to print or you can pick up an application at the church. Please contact Ron Roller at rollerolson@gmail.com or 1-218-495-3235 for additional information.

The Unitarian Church of Underwood is pleased to again offer funding through 'Empowerment Grants'. These grants are made to encourage church members to develop projects that will have a positive effect on our communities at large. They may be related to any number of social or environmental issues, including poverty, education, ecology, alternative energy, & nutrition, etc. 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.

Please note that the committee first recommended that if you had applied for a grant in the previous 2 years, you would not be eligible to reapply this year. However, after board discussion and committee reconsideration, the two year limit will not apply this year so you can reapply but those who have not applied before for grant funds are encouraged to do so to bring in new projects. Grant Committee members are Ron Roller, Deb Ferguson, Stephanie Sanderson, Connie Stigen and Steve Nagle.

How will you live your UU values in 2015?

UUA Stewardship & Development

Making New Year's Resolutions

[DONATE NOW](#)

As we look forward to the New Year, many of us are considering our resolutions for 2015. What will yours be? Here are some creative and meaningful ideas for New Year's resolutions that reflect our seven principles:

- 1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person**
Use these [365 Days of Love resources](#) to Stand on the Side of Love all year. Mobilize your congregation to Stand on the Side of Love for an important justice issue in your area.
- 2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations**
Commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic Selma to Montgomery March by participating in [Selma Sunday](#). Reflect on the progress that has been made, and discuss what you and your congregation can do to continue to work for racial justice.
- 3. Acceptance of one another, and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations**
Participate in a religious education class, perhaps one using the UUA's online religious curricula [Tapestry of Faith](#). Or use and share readings, meditations, music, and worship resources on the [Worship Web](#).
- 4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning**
Read and discuss great books about social justice, history, theology, and more from Beacon Press and Skinner House, available through the [UUA bookstore](#).
- 5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large**
Come to [General Assembly 2015](#) in Portland, OR, (or participate virtually) to have a say in the business of our Association. Participate in advance by encouraging your congregation to vote in [congregational polls](#).
- 6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all**
Promote world community by traveling on a service learning trip with the

[UU College of Social Justice](#). Registration is open for upcoming trips to Haiti, the U.S./Mexico border, and a new trip to Washington State to explore U.S. policy toward Original Nations with the Lummi people.

7. **Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part**

Sign up to be a part of [Commit-2-Respond](#). This coalition of UUs invites people of faith and conscience to work for environmental justice and advance the rights of people impacted by climate change.

To support all of these programs and initiatives, [make your year-end gift today!](#) Thank you for your generosity this year and next. Happy New Year!

In faith,



Rev. Peter Morales
President, Unitarian Universalist Association

Gifts They Bring UCU Board of Directors

The Unitarian Church of Underwood works without a full time minister or other administrator so many of the decision making responsibilities fall upon the Board of Directors and the current Board Chair, Ellen Eastby. The Board meets monthly and approved minutes from past meetings are included at the end of each Newsletter. A Board Member's term is 3 years with term limits of six years. Our current Executive Board includes: Ellen Eastby, President, John Miersch, Vice President, Norm Kolstad, Secretary, Dave Wass, Treasurer. Other Board Members are: Mary Anderson, Alisha Pikarski, David Sanderson, Donn Siems, Kris Warhol and Mary Worner. A Board Member either heads or is on each committee doing the back scenes work of UCU. Board Members spend a number of hours every month dedicated to serving UCU. We are grateful for their time, dedication, enthusiasm and thoughtful decision making. Many thanks!!

New Feature Coming!

In the coming Newsletters, Sarah Lysacker will be writing a new feature with biographies on many of our members/friends. We are determining a process to select who will be featured each month. Meantime, we'd welcome your suggestions on who you'd like to learn more about. Sarah will contact individuals for interviews. Each of you contribute so much to the spirit and dynamics of our fellowship. This feature will be a way to learn more about each other and about the highlights of your life story!

Habitat for Humanity Fundraiser

Pancake Breakfast

Appleby's in Fergus Falls

Saturday, January 17

See Bob Worner for Details

NonViolent Peace Force

In early December Marguarite Andrews received an email from Mel Duncan, that the NonViolent Peace Force Organization will receive 2 million Euro over the next 3 years for their project in Syria. Mel said "That process started with a grant from the Underwood Unitarians. Not a bad return on investment. Please share with my friends there."

From Bill Schulz

President and CEO

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

"The failure of a Staten Island grand jury to bring charges against New York City police officer Daniel Pantaleo, who choked Eric Garner to death for disputing the sale of loose cigarettes, will be regarded as one of the great miscarriages of justice in U.S. history.

There can be no question that (1) Garner was not even suspected of a violent offense; (2) the dispute was verbal and hence did not warrant a physical response; and (3) once Garner pleaded that he couldn't breathe, the officer should have immediately loosened his hold upon him. And how do we know these three things? Because the world saw them!

Is it any wonder that so many people mistrust the police and, indeed, the U.S. justice system itself? How much value do our justice system and our society place on the lives of people of color? It behooves all of us to look long and hard at those questions.

If you are looking for a way to take concrete action, I would urge you to **send a message to the Justice Department**. The Justice Department has announced that it will conduct an investigation into the death of Eric Garner. We need to do all that we can to make sure that this investigation is conducted fully and fairly, and that its findings are promptly released.

We must also **call on the Justice Department to investigate the much broader**

problem of police mistreatment of people of color in the United States. It can be tempting to place our faith wholeheartedly in governments and institutions, including the justice system. But those systems can sometimes fail and betray our deepest values. We must constantly work to hold our government accountable.

At the same time, we can renew our faith by joining people throughout the country who have risen up, in displays of solidarity and community, to affirm that all lives matter.

Sincerely,

Bill Schulz
President and CEO
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Puppets Delivered!!



Shan kids receiving puppets December, 2014

Bernice Johnson emailed on 12/21: “We delivered the first batch of puppets (to View School) last night. The children went WILD! They LOVED them!

Wish you could have seen the kids! This is a very bad camp, just hovels on a rutted, mud base, so it was a joy to see the children so happy. One mother was watching, and she gave me a big hug before we left. Love, Bernice”. They gave the rest of the puppets out 12/23 at their new school, Kan Kanook. “Another HUGE success!” said Bernice. For more information see: www.shanrefugeeschools.org.

Thought for the New Year

"There comes a time in life when you walk away
From all the drama and people who create it.
Surround yourself with people who make you laugh,
Forget the bad, and focus on the good.
Love the people who treat you right.
Pray for the ones who don't.
Life is too short to be anything but happy.
Falling down is part of life,
Getting back up is living."
Author unknown

Winter fun in the snow!

"Skyport Reception Committee"

John Beargrease Sled dog Marathon



Mickie Edmonds, watercolor

U Groups

If you wish to join a U Group, you are welcome at any time. Just contact Connie Stigen at dcstigen@gmail.com or phone: 218/731-1445 or Tere Mann at teremann@gmail.com or phone: 218/205-1064 or 303/641-7381. Each U Group has a chair empty at each meeting to welcome a new member.

- Battle Lake Afternoon Group – 2nd Tuesday of each month beginning at 2:45 p.m. co-facilitated by Bob Worner and Joanne Cress or Kris Warhol at the home of Ross and Mary Larson
- Fergus Falls/Underwood Evening Group – 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. co-facilitated by Diane Johnson and Carole Mitchell at the home of Sandy Barnhouse (corner of Highways 1 and 35)
- Fergus Falls Afternoon Group – the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 4:30-6:30 p.m. co-facilitated by Tere Mann and Bonnie (Bell) Albers at the home of Diana Ziesemer
- Perham Afternoon Group – the 2nd Thursday of each month co-facilitated by Mary Anderson and Mary Worner at the home of Mary Anderson.

December Topic – Forgiveness

"... often hurt other people as a result of their own pain. If somebody is rude and inconsiderate, you can be certain that they have some unresolved issues inside...the last thing they need is for you to make matters worse by responding angrily." Joel Osteen

Unitarian Church of Underwood

Approved Board Minutes for November 19, 2014

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, David Wass, Norman Kolstad, John Miersch, David Sanderson, Mary Worner, Don Siems, Alisha Piekarski, Mary Anderson, and Kris Warhol.
Absent: none. Also present: Administrative Consultant JoAnn Larson.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ellen Eastby at 6:34 p.m.

David Sanderson shared a reading/meditation.

The agenda was approved (Miersch/Siems).

The minutes of the October 26, 2014 meeting were approved as printed (Sanderson/Miersch).

Reports:

Treasurer: David Wass

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson

Program Committee: Mary Worner

Outreach Committee: Ellen Eastby

Facilities Committee: John Miersch

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson

Celebrants: no report

Foundation Advisory Committee: David Sanderson

Proceeds from a mature certificate of deposit are to be divided between a new 12-month CD for \$100,000 and a \$50,000 investment in the UUA Endowment Fund (Anderson/Sanderson).

Old Business: The roles and responsibilities of the: UCU Board, Board president, and facilities committee were spelled out and ratified (Worner/Warhol). Chair Eastby delegated Kris Warhol, Norman Kolstad, and Mary Anderson to a new policy task force to work on two policies regarding safety.

New Business: Stephanie Sanderson was approved as a Listener to assist the Membership Committee in member visits (Worner/Miersch).

Other discussion topics: assistance for a possible new UU Church in Alexandria, electric boiler, snow removal.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Norman Kolstad, secy.

