

Newsletter January 2020

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.

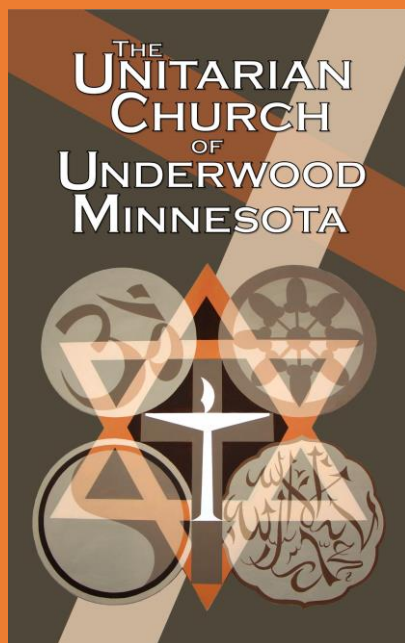
Unitarian Church of Underwood

PO Box 58, 206 North Main Street
Underwood

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: www.ucofu.org

www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org



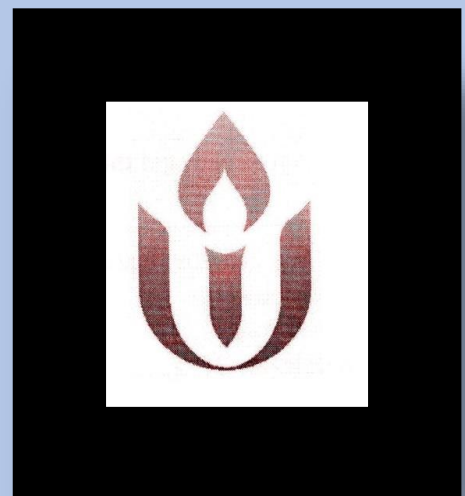
Sunday Services 10 a.m.

January 5 - Holly Diestler, "Through the Lens."

January 12 - Allison Osberg - Exploring Synthetic Waste as Material

January 19 - Anna Wasescha – "The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals."

January 26 - Dave Ellison – "Choices That Matter"



January 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 Holly Diestler, "Through the Lens." Children's RE 10-11 am #300 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15-9:45 am #300 Community Dinner Idea Dialogue 11:30 am	6 AA 7 PM	7	8 Alexandria U-Group: 2 nd Wed @ 7:00 pm @ Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg.,	9 Perham U Group @ Stan Carignan's 6:30 p.m.	10	11
12 Allison Osberg - "Exploring Synthetic Waste as Material" Adult RE, 8:45-9:45 am. Children's RE 10-11 am #300 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15-9:45 am #300	13 AA 7 PM	14 Battle Lake/Underwood U Group @ Susan Groff's @ 3:00 p.m.	15 Board Meeting 5:30 pm	16 Fergus Falls U Group @ Diana Ziesemer's @ 6:30 p.m.	17	18
19 Anna Wasescha – "The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals." Adult RE, <i>White Fragility</i> 8:45-9:45 am. Children's RE 10-11 am #300 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15-9:45 am #300	20 AA 7 PM	21	22	23	24	25
26 Dave Ellison – "Choices That Matter" Children's RE 10-11 am #300 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15-9:45 am #300	27 AA 7 PM	28	29	30	31	

Earth Day: 50 Years Beyond Planting Trees

For nearly 50 years, Earth Day has marked a celebration of conservation and environmental awareness around the world. It's also become a reminder that we should protect the Earth and reduce human-induced harm.

We refer to our UU 7th Principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. We acknowledge our Living Traditions: "Direct experience of openness to the forces which create and uphold life"; "Words and deeds...to confront powers and forces and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love"; "Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science": Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature."

And so, the Speakers Committee is pleased to have speakers in January and throughout the year that specifically inform and challenge us on conservation and environmental awareness.

Speakers Coming in January

January 5 - Holly Diestler, "Through the Lens." To see art through the camera lens using both light and shadow bring memories alive. Photography is a means of recording forever things one sees for a moment. Holly's unique approach is skillfully designed to each frame she shoots. Her subjects and events, weddings, individual portraits, families and fashion is a visual experience. Her passion capturing unscripted moments connect each individual's personality perfectly. In the Kirkbride project she profiled through the lens the importance of preserving historical structures. These photographs went statewide to galleries giving a story of why they need to be saved. Taking these photos gave value to these structures.

January 12 - Allison Osberg -Exploring Synthetic Waste as Material for Traditional Crafts. Allison is a Hinge artist and the daughter of Melody Shores.

January 19 Anna Wasescha – "The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals." West Central Initiative has a new three-year strategic plan that is grounded in the seventeen sustainable development goals that all 193 member states agreed to in 2015. These global goals are as relevant in our region as they are anywhere else in the world. Partnerships to achieve the goals is the seventeenth goal and perhaps the most critical. How can West Central Initiative work together with the Unitarian community to make progress toward a more sustainable world for everyone?

January 26 - Dave Ellison – "Choices That Matter." Dave will be talking about everyday actions we can take to reduce our carbon footprint in environmentally friendly ways.

Stay^oinformED

**Sunday Talks available via
PodCasts @ soundcloud.com/user-927528278**

**["Like" UCU on Facebook: see
www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org](https://www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org)**

Contact Wally Warhol for Sunday announcements
@ tropbrass@gmail.com or 218/205-4111.
Contact Kris Warhol @ 218/205-1644 or
mwarhol7up@gmail.com for local media
notifications.

U Group Schedule (Meetings Monthly)

- Alexandria U-Group: 2nd Wed @ 7:00 pm @ the office building of Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg., 610 Fillmore, Alexandria: Facilitators: Lee Becker/Susan Sanford
- Battle Lake U Group, the 2nd Tuesday @ 3:00 p.m. home of Steve & Linda Berg Facilitators: Bob Worner/Kris Warhol.
- Fergus Falls U-Group: 3rd Thursday @ 6:30 pm @ Diana Ziesemer's, 934 W. Linden St., Fergus Falls. Facilitator: Melody Shores.
- Perham U-Group: 2nd Thursday @ 6:30 p.m. @ Stan Carignan's. Facilitator: Stan Carignan.

Each group holds an empty chair for anyone who wants to come and join the group.

To learn more or join a group, contact Lead Facilitator:
**Shannon Smith @ shannonsmith20@gmail.com
Or 320/630-6229**

Cancellation/Postponement Due to Weather

Cancellation/Postponement Due to Weather: for weather rated announcements, tune to Lakes Radio Family of Stations – 103.3, 96.5 FM and 1020, 1250 AM. You can also check the UCU website at www.ucofu.org or the Facebook page. If you do not hear a cancellation announcement, please use your best judgment on making a safe trip to church.

Newsletter Submissions due prior to Issuance the 1st of each month

Please submit your ideas, articles and photos to:
maryanderson8380@msn.com

Editing: Stephanie Sanderson

Emailing/ mailing: Ellen Eastby and Mary Anderson

Website: Ellen Eastby

Facebook: Melody Shores

Photos courtesy of Norm Kolstad & credited others.

Credited Articles

Note: Send Announcements for church bulletin and monthly newsletter to Mary Anderson
[@maryanderson8380@msn.com](mailto:maryanderson8380@msn.com). She forwards for inclusion in the www.ucofu.org and Facebook Page.

Newsletter comes out on the 1st of each month via email. They are also posted at www.ucofu.org.

Adult Religious Edu. Classes 8:45-9:45 am Mindfulness Sitting 9:15-9:45 a.m.

2nd Sunday of the month class with Sandy

Barnhouse resumes March 10, 8:45-9:45 am.

3rd Sunday of the month, 8:45 – 9:45 a.m. – Ellen Eastby leads a discussion using the book, *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo.

4th Sunday of the month class with Bob Worner resumes April 26, 8:45-9:45 a.m.

Each Sunday of the month, 9:15 – 9:45 a.m., Stan Carignan leads Mindfulness Sitting @ #300 Sverdrup Suites.



Monthly Greeting from Board President, Kris Warhol

Ask me whether what I have done is my life. Parker Palmer has captured the essence of living intentionally and not to waste a second of our precious days. From his book, *Let Your Life Speak*, these words eloquently speak my feelings.

“Some time when the river is ice, ask me mistakes I have made.
Ask me whether what I have done, is my life.
Others have in their slow way into my thought,
and some have tried to help or to hurt;
ask me what difference their strongest love or hate has made.

I will listen to what you say.
you and I can turn and look at the silent river and wait.
We know the current is there, hidden;
and there are comings and goings from miles away
that hold the stillness exactly before us.
What the river says, that is what I say.”
William Stafford”

The year 2020 is now. What have you done that is your life? These past years have driven me to question everything. The teacher is leading onward to a deeper relationship with my truer self.

If we are to live our lives fully and well, we must take the no that closes doors and the yes that opens doors. *Kris Warhol*



Children's Religious Education

Because of bad weather, Children's RE was cancelled on December 1st and 29th. On December 8, Kris Warhol led the lesson assisted by Jaimi Anderson, newcomer with her two children.

Class began by talking about where our names came from, looking at birth certificates and making name tags like the grown-ups do, to learn the new children's names. After the opening words and sharing our joys and concerns, we did the lesson extracted from the UU World 2019 from Tapestry of Faith, "The Answer is in Your hands. Making it right."

What happens when something you do hurts someone else? Whether you realize it on your own or someone else tells you about it, you might feel regret. In the story we read the child apologizes to the songbird. In your life, who do you need to apologize to? When the child sets the songbird free did that make things right?



We enjoyed snacks and extinguished the light that we now take out into the world once again.

The children participated in the Community Holiday Celebration service on December 22. Violet, with poise, confidence and feeling played a lovely piano rendition of “Carole of the Bells.” Directed by Wally, the children led the congregation in singing “There is No One in the World Like Me” (to the tune, “If You’re Happy and You Know It”). The children also got to participate in the celebration of “Budd’s Dancing Dolls,” a 30 year plus tradition of the season at UCU.

Adult Religious Education

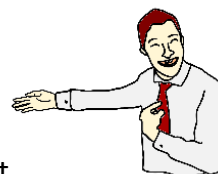
Due to decreased attendance during the winter months, Sandy Barnhouse and Bob Worner will suspend their Adult Religious Education classes held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays and resume classes in the spring. Sandy’s class on Ancient Religions using the book, *Sacred Pleasures*, will resume March 10 and continue through the summer months. Bob will resume his class April 26, using the book currently under study by the Celebrants, *Turning Point, Essays on a New Unitarian Universalism* edited by Fredric Muir. On the 3rd Sundays of the month, Ellen Eastby continues to lead the discussion from 8:45 – 9:45 a.m. using the book, *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo.

The first Sunday of the month remains open for anyone interested in leading a topic or discussion area.

Mindfulness Sitting continues each Sunday from 9:15-9:45 a.m. in Sverdrup Suites, Unit #300. You are welcome to join any Sunday.

Sunday Morning Point Person(s)

The Unitarian Church of Underwood prides itself that it is a welcoming, all-volunteer, lay-led congregation. It begins at the front door and with all the Sunday morning preparation activities, there is need for volunteers to act as “point person(s).” Beginning in January, there will be a team of “point persons” responsible to:



- Arrive by 9:00 a.m.
- Unlock the doors, turn on heat or fans and lights and run spot checks of the bathrooms, and facility and grounds.

- Open Suite #300 and turn on the heat or fans.
- Check sidewalks for ice/snow or debris.
- Welcome greeters and assign areas & highlight responsibilities.
- Be available to answer questions, trouble-shoot, fill in gaps, monitor activities prior to service.
- Fold and print programs as needed, give to upstairs greeter.
- Be attentive to member and visitor needs and requests for information about UCU.
- Check in with Kitchen coordinator, help as needed.
- Fill in as needed.
- After service and social hour, turns off heat/fans/appliances, runs final spot check, locks doors of both church and Sverdrup Suite #300.
- Confirm that candles have been extinguished, windows closed.

To volunteer as a “point person,” please contact Coordinator, Katy Olson @ katyjolson@gmail.com or 218/495-3235. Training for this important role will be provided. Please contact Katy Olson for details.

Bulletin & Announcement Information

Beginning January 2020, Wally Warhol will assume responsibility for preparing and copying the Sunday Service bulletins. Please email Wally at tropbrass@gmail.com or call 218/205-4111 with the information on the order of service, hymn and reading numbers, announcements and volunteers. Thank you to Mary Anderson for assuming these duties for the past year.

Annual Curry Dinner

Thank you, John Minge for again feeding us so deliciously! The annual curry dinner provided by John was such a success that it, and other thoughts have generated ideas of potential monthly community dinners. Join us January 5 following service to talk through these ideas and determine what will be feasible and will meet UCU objectives.

Christmas Eve Service

About 40 members and friends attended the annual Christmas Eve service conducted by Celebrant, Ellen Eastby. Carols were sung and special music was performed by Steve Berg & Linda Quistad-Berg, Ken Hamrum with the harp and Mary Worner on the piano. An original reading was written and read by Alison Francis (see below). Other readings were from Stephanie Sanderson, Mary Anderson and 6-year-old, Precious Czeck. Ellen did the message “Noticing Angels” and Bob Worner read the Christmas story from Luke 2: 7-14. This service each Christmas season sets the tone and fills the heart. Thank you, Ellen for once again coordinating this offering.

The special collection goes to two programs of MAHUBE-OTWA: 1) Emergency Needs – Helps people with emergencies that don’t fit within our programs and 2) Upward Mobility Incentives. Podcast link @ <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/noticing-angels-ellen-eastby-december-24-2019>.

An Annual Christmas Eve Drive Down Summit Avenue

I wake early on the morning of Christmas Eve. The dark inky December sky shares pin prick stars with early risers. As we pack the car and check for any last forgotten things, the sun does its part, quietly bringing light to this, the darkest time of the year. We are off to St Paul. Merry Christmas.

I love the hustle and bustle of the cities during the holidays. The way walkers bob and weave, coat collars and scarves up around our ears, feet darting and sweeping on snow dusted and icy sidewalks. Up and over snow drifts to shops and homes, to and from cars and buses. Have you ever seen December bus exhaust illuminated by brake lights on Selby Avenue? These are some of the things I love about a city Christmas.

I love the family and the familiar of Christmas. I love the food and celebration. I even like the stress a little, it too, familiar. It is the stress of too much. Too much to do, too many gifts, too many commitments and hidden under all of it, enough joy in the too much to keep doing it year after year.

I love the darkness too. I love the darkness which creeps up on us each fall and suddenly, with the help of daylight savings, falls about our lives like cold November nights. We come home to a dark house and with the flip of a switch, bring light to the darkness. With a carol, sung together each Sunday; Hark the Herald Angels sing and Oh, Come All ye Faithful, while lighting the weekly Advent candle, we bring light to the darkness. In darkness, meeting up after work and before dinner, we drive to a parking lot Christmas tree stand illuminated by stringer light bulbs and flood lights and pick out the perfect tree. Finally, all home together, we dress the tree with beautiful bobbles; handmade, homemade and handed down, all illuminated with Christmas lights, bringing light to the darkness.

And so, it is Christmas Eve again and I am home in St Paul. We drive home from the Christmas pageant with which I have marked each passing Christmas since 1976. We drive home, down the fine avenue, quiet now with so many already snuggled into their traditions. A soft snow is falling and as is custom, we take the long way home, driving slowly in quiet darkness, our route lit by the many beautiful white luminarias lining sidewalk and stairway; welcoming those for whom these houses are home and bringing beautiful Christmas light to the darkness for those of us who share this quiet tradition of making an annual Christmas Eve drive down Summit Avenue. *Written by Alison Francis*

More Thank You's

Thanks to John & Janell Miersch for their winter solstice house-warming party and to the Roller-Olsons' for the great New Year's Eve party.

Thank You to All of You at the UU Church

Thank you so much for all the love & support you provided our mom, Liz Sweder, over the last years and for the music, officiating and treats provided for her celebration of life. Meg Hanson & Betsy Clarke

Neighbor News

Sverdrup Lutheran Church has a new interim pastor – Rev. Doug Stave. His wife, Doreen is a Physician's Assistant for Sanford. They have two adult children and 5 grandchildren. He grew up a farm kid. After years as a special education teacher, he got back on the roster as a pastor to now serve in Underwood. If you happen to meet Rev. Stave and his wife, be sure to welcome them to the community.

Notes from December Speakers

December 1 – “My Journey into My Native American Heritage” with Falcon Gott. Podcast link at <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/my-journey-into-my-native-american-heritage-falcon-gott-december-1-2019>

Attendance: 13

December 8 - Larry Peterson spoke on “**Breaking Barriers: Harvesting LGBTQ Stories from the Northern Plains.**” Podcast link found at: <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/breaking-barriers-harvesting-lgbtq-stories-from-the-northern-plains-larry-peterson-dec-8-2019>

John Minge again prepared a delicious curry dinner that was enjoyed by the many in attendance following the service. Thank you, John!

Attendance: 56

December 15 – Kyle Richards spoke on **New Visions of Health Care.** Podcast link found at <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/a-holistic-approach-to-medicine-kyle-richards-12152019>

Attendance 47

December 22 – Community Holiday Celebration with special music and readings. Podcast link @ <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/christmas-program-christmas-program-december-222019>.

Attendance: 44

December 29 – Church cancelled due to bad weather.



My, how the Unitarian Church of Underwood has grown and changed!

As Membership Committee chair, member of the Record Committee and Stewardship Committee, past Board Member and Board President of two years, a sociology/psychology major and a sharer of stories, I find fascinating the history of the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Its changing membership, diversity of personalities, learning/thinking styles and spiritual and life experiences all capture my attention and so I offer some of my perceptions and conjectures as to where we are today.

In 2020, the Unitarian Church of Underwood begins its 131st year of existence. Periodically, we may need a reminder of our history and reaffirmation of the church's purpose and mission.

The church began in 1889 when Norwegian immigrants established with Articles of Incorporation, the *Den Fri Kristine Menighed* (The Free Christian Congregation). The Norwegian founders, both men and women, were seeking a free church – free of dogma and separation from church/state oppression. They lived in the immediate area of Underwood, Minnesota and worked primarily as farmers and businessmen. They were progressive for the times and with determination established a church of free thinkers. Norm Kolstad, direct descendent of the early founders has been rigorous in keeping those historical records.

We have limited history on the mid-20th century years other than the annual meeting and board minutes and some letters between members. We do know that these were difficult years in which the small number of members valiantly sustained the church and obtained visiting ministers of varying denominations to conduct Sunday services. Even as the early founders were meeting their own demise, the church survived.

A "Constitution" or Articles of Incorporation was amended and adopted at the annual meeting, March 17, 1974. They stated that the purpose of the now re-named Unitarian Church of Underwood was: *"to serve a fellowship of seekers after truth, bound by no dogma, restricted by no creed, following the dictates of their own conscience. The purpose of this fellowship is to bring religious liberals into closer acquaintance and cooperation. Relying upon reason as our guide, and upon freedom as our method, we seek to grow in understanding of ourselves and of our neighbors and to serve our community."*

Over the 70's, 80's and 90's the church drew new free thinkers. Those here yet today, tell us stories from that era. Some tell that during the first of their attending years, there were people with strong atheist beliefs who dominated the culture of the church, primarily focused on intellectual and political issues of the day. They discouraged ritual, music, references to "God," traditional Christian religious beliefs or even making a pledge of money because it "reeked" of required "tithing." That culture dominated for a time and then began to shift with incoming

younger, family-centered, liberal-progressive members seeking like-minded individuals and spiritual enrichment. Today, the congregation is more inclusive, less dogmatic, and very respectful of the covenant that we pledge to each other in the candle lighting: "No single belief includes us here, no disbelief excludes us."

During those former years the small group met twice/month September-May with no or reduced summer services. Families with children met downstairs for children's religious education activities while adult members met upstairs for discussion and/or lectures. At one time, with the Roller-Olson, Wells, Ziesemer and other children, Children's Religious Education numbered 17 kids!

Records show that as of 2008, there were 45 members with the Unitarian Church of Underwood, 25 of whom are still actively involved in the church. Since that date, joining members have come and gone, but most have stayed. In fact, over the past 20 years, we have doubled in numbers and are now stabilized at 93 voting members with added friends who attend regularly. The majority are quite active in the church through regular participation in Sunday services, church events, and financial giving.

We can easily recognize the growth in numbers, but do we recognize what this has meant: not only has the membership changed but the church's organizational structure and culture have changed with it.

Because of the previous smaller member numbers, decision-making and planning were "group-centered." The group met at coffee, talked together, decided together, did it together, moved on together to the next thing. In this small congregation of 15-25, everyone knew each other and knew most/all of what was happening. Over the years the growing and changing membership pushed for music, an order of service, more comprehensive organization and more purposeful long-term planning. There has always been a Board of Directors (Trustees). However, the church's organizational structure as defined in the early 2000's has expanded to now becoming more "leader-centered," yet still lay-led and almost totally dependent on volunteers.

The Board of Directors is still the final decision-making authority but much of the work is spread out and performed at the committee, task force, team or individual levels moving from "group centered" to yet democratically motivated, "leader-centered." The cognitive pieces to fulfill the UCU's overriding mission are completed under: **Program, Community Outreach, and Facilities**. This is a church that embodies our beliefs in that the spiritual offerings under **Program** tie to living our UU principles both within the church community and **Outreach** to our local communities and beyond, and that the church **Facility** provides us a welcoming, sacred space to come together.

The 2005 remodeling to make the building accessible provided a more beautiful, better functioning, yet sacred space for the incoming 21st century seekers and finders of Unitarian

Universalism. The acquisition of Sverdrup Suites in 2016 allowed us to expand the Children's Religious Education Program and provide a quiet place for Mindfulness Sitting.

Those joining in the last 20 years if not already Unitarian Universalist, come from no religious or traditional religious backgrounds looking for meaning. Pushed and inspired by current social/environmental justice and political concerns, this latest emergence actively engages in intensified social and environmental justice actions.

Comers since 2008 have doubled the church membership from the 45 from 2008 to 93 today. Now, rather than finding this church through a friend who attends or word of mouth, visitors courageously coming through the doors may know no one. They found UCU through their web search. Some are already established in church volunteerism and others are still getting acquainted and preparing for or considering increased involvement. But whenever or whoever enters, they are welcomed, included, assimilated – responding to the words of the chalice lighting: *“No single belief includes us here; no disbelief excludes us. Our celebration of life and common search for meaning bind us together.”*

Recognizing we were already growing and in determining its continuance, a Plan to Grow Task Force met in 2015 and from the membership surveys conducted, concluded that the desired attributes for a viable future were establishing goals to:

- *Grow visibility of the church*
- *Grow interpersonal relationships*
- *Grow inclusiveness*
- *Grow in Spiritually*
- *Grow links and action with the community*
- *Grow with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) on social justice and environmental issues*
- *Grow in membership numbers.*

Those vision attributes were incorporated into the goals and objectives of the Strategic 5-year Plans of 2013-18 and 2018-23. The latest Plan is currently under review by the Board of Directors, Committees and others for adjustments to the 2020-2021 annual goals and objectives. The Board of Directors will be seeking input from the membership with discussions to be scheduled. Watch for further information on these opportunities to dialogue.

Goals and objectives are reviewed and re-established each year to define what the church is, what the church wants to be and how to go about accomplishing its ongoing mission: *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.*

Next month we'll explore further what the Unitarian Church of Underwood is and what we want it to be. We welcome your input!

Submitted by *Mary Anderson*

Membership Committee Chair

UCU Monthly Newsletter Writer/Editor/Publisher

With thanks for contributing thoughts from: Alison Francis, Susan Groff, Norm Kolstad, Katy Olson, Bonnie Showers, Betsy Wells, Diana Ziesemer

Living Out Our UU Principles

Unitarian Church of Underwood

Empowerment Grant

Application Time!

Applications Due January 31, 2020

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF UNDERWOOD EMPOWERMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

From Kayak building for Boys & Girls Club, to POPS @ the Farmers Market to Shan Schools in Thailand, \$95,000 has been distributed in Empowerment Grants by UCU since 2007. The Unitarian Church of Underwood is pleased to once again offer funding for distribution of the 2020-21 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. The deadline for grant applications is **January 31, 2020**.

Complete details and the application form are in the December newsletter. Applications are also available at church. See Ron Roller for details.



Ten Highlights of 2019

- 1. Engaged more than 3000 people in climate conversations, trainings, and faith community events.**
- 2. Convened 25 students for our first Youth N' Power summer camp!**
- 3. Mobilized people of faith for Global Climate Strikes.** MNIPL helped to mobilize people of faith to attend 17 statewide events, with an estimated 500 faith community representatives at the 6000-person Twin Cities strike.
- 4. Partnered with Indigenous allies to powerfully call for #NoLine3.**
- 5. Expanded our Greater Minnesota networks and partnerships.**
- 6. Supported solar energy projects at Red Lake Nation.**
- 7. Recruited 100 people for community-owned solar energy.**
- 8. In September, more than 100 gathered for our second annual gathering at the Headwaters,** in partnership with RISE Coalition and Honor the Earth.

9. **150 supporters attended our first gala-style fundraiser.** Save the date for our 2020 fundraiser at the Science Museum on March 5th!
10. **Mobilized people of faith for strong Minnesota climate policy.**

Thank you for your role in making this an impactful year!

****[Double your donation to MNIPL by December 31st.](#)**

***Mark your calendars for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2020 – this will be a massive climate action week nationwide!

We are Part of the Larger UU



SAVE THE DATE FOR REGIONAL ASSEMBLY 2020



Regional Assembly 2020 will be held at **The Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockford, Illinois on Saturday, April 18, 2020.** Our keynote speaker will be [Taquiena Boston](#), Special Advisor to the UUA President for Institutional Inclusion, Equity, and Change. The day will feature worship, the annual business meeting, lunch, keynote presentation, and select workshops. The annual business meeting and keynote speaker will be live streamed for those who cannot attend. On Friday evening, April 17, The UU Church in Rockford will graciously host an evening gathering for those in town. **Registration opens January 2020.**



Dear Unitarian Church of Underwood,

As 2019 ended amid busy holiday activity and remembrances of the past decade, I feel so much gratitude for my family, friends, and colleagues and for each Unitarian Universalist and UU congregation living out their values in our very troubled world. And honestly, I am concerned for the future of our country. Our democracy is deeply broken and so many are suffering. As we share stories of resilient hope and rituals affirming our interconnection over the winter holidays, I ask you to join me in supporting the UUA's new UU the Vote campaign. You can learn more about this values-based electoral justice effort and find many ways to meaningfully connect with the campaign at the uua.org website.

Yours in faith,

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

UUA President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Approved MINUTES
November 20, 2019, BOARD MEETING

Board members present: Kris Warhol, Ron Roller, Tim Lanz, Bob Worner, John Minge, Shannon Smith, and Connie Stigen. [Note: Bob Worner left meeting before it was adjourned.] Board members absent: Darryl Booker and Allison Francis. Others present: Susan Groff.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 P.M. by Board President Kris Warhol.

1. Kris opened the meeting by reading the Board covenant.
2. The proposed Agenda was approved by consensus after adding as an agenda item "discussion/direction re disclosure of board meeting minutes before their approval".
3. The minutes for the October 2019 board meeting were approved by consensus.
4. Disclosure of board meeting minutes before their approval: After some discussion, the motion to not publish the monthly board meeting minutes until after they had been approved by the Board. (Shannon/Bob)
5. Treasurer's Report: Ron Roller presented a balance sheet and a profit and loss statement for the Church through October, 2019. Generally speaking, Ron said that everything looks pretty good.
6. Stewardship Committee proposal to put \$200,000 into an endowment fund: This issue was forwarded from the October 2019, board meeting. Ron stated that it is his opinion that the operational guidelines for this fund that was prepared by the ad hoc foundation committee are a good set of guidelines. There was some question as to whether or not there is a legal requirement that no less than 5% of the fund has to be distributed annually. Ron will contact

the UUA in Boston for an answer to this question. This proposal will be tabled until the next board meeting.

7. Sanctuary windows: Darryl reported that the windows should be completed in three to four weeks.
8. Job descriptions: Two proposed descriptions for the administrative position that the Board seeks to fill have been prepared. One comes from Katie Olson and the other comes from Mary Anderson. Ron said that he has been told by Mary Anderson that the Board needs to study this issue more carefully before it is ready to approve a job description. Sue Groff said that she likes the idea of hiring an executive director. She thinks that the needs of the church are more than just clerical. She said that the position could perhaps include responsibility for children's religious education. She also thinks that the person who is hired should be in church most Sunday mornings. A motion to implement Katie Olson's proposal of having a Sunday morning "point person" was discussed briefly and approved. (Shannon/Kris). Ron said that he'd begin working on this right away.
9. Children's RE: Kris reported on what has been done to organize children's RE. She's excited by what has been happening in recent months in children's RE, and she's encouraged by the number of volunteers who have been involved in this.
10. Board training suggestion: Mary Anderson has suggested that there be a board training event in January 2020. It would focus on board orientation and reviewing and updating the current Five-Year Plan. It was decided (by consensus) to defer the board training component until after the annual meeting in March. Ron said that he would work on reviewing and updating the Five-Year Plan. He, Connie, and Shannon will form a task force on this and try to find members of the church who are not on the Board to be part of this task force. Among other things, the task force will solicit input from committee chairs. During this discussion, Kris said that there are about 90 certified members of the Church.

[The meeting was closed at this point to consider a personnel issue. No minutes were taken during this part of the meeting.]

11. After the meeting was re-opened, there was considerable discussion regarding the vacant administrative position—i.e., how to proceed on this issue. It seemed to be the opinion of some that this is not an emergency and that the Board does not need to move quickly. One question was whether or not to open the position to members or non-members or both. During this discussion, Kris announced that she had withdrawn from a bunch of church committees so as to be able to pick up some of the slack that has resulted from not having an administrative person working for the church.
12. Bookkeeper position: The Board decided, effective December 1, 2019, to pay Terre Mann \$50 per month for her work as the Church's bookkeeper and to reimburse her for her out-of-pocket expenses (John/Kris). There was some discussion regarding the adequacy of that amount. It was noted that the Board could, if it so desired, reconsider the amount at the annual meeting in March as part of the budgeting process.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted this 17th of December 2019.
John Minge, Secretary