



Unitarian Church of Underwood

June 2015 Newsletter

www.ucofu.org

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.

Beginning June 7 through August 30, Summer Sunday services begin at 9:30 a.m.

June 7 – Skye Livingston, “Finding and Defining Home”

June 14 – Bernice Johnson, Update on the Shan Children and Mary Anderson, “Can I Call Myself a UUer?”

June 21 – Betsy Wells leading “Honoring Fathers, Memories and Lessons”

June 28 – Outdoor service with Flower Communion and program about “Why We Worship Outdoors,” UU Principle #6, followed by a potluck. Please bring a flower and potluck dish to share. Please bring a chair if you like. Childcare will be provided. **Younger Women Gathering** following the service.

Note: Prior to beginning of service at 9:20 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.

Note: Religious Education and Children Religious Education and Coming of Age classes will resume in September.

Other Meetings @ church:

June 17 – Board of Directors at 6:30 p.m. at church

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

More about June Speakers

June 7 – Skye Livingston - “Finding and Defining Home.” The home is a place we often take for granted. Despite its prevalence in our lives, we spend little time assessing what elements of a home space are necessary, which have the greatest impact, and why. For the past year, artist Skye Livingston has lived “home-free”—traveling from one artist residency to another on a search to understand the home’s impact on the psyche and how to find comfort and stability during a period of constant change. Principles 1, 4 and 7.

Skye Livingston is an interdisciplinary artist working with textiles, paper, and organic materials. Born and raised in Dallas, TX, she completed her BFA in 2012 at the Kansas City Art Institute where she double majored in Fiber and Art History. She has received several awards and grants for her work and has exhibited in group shows nationwide and completed several solo and two-person shows in Kansas City. At the moment, she is nomadic, maintaining her studio practice at artist residencies across the country.

June 14 – Update on the Shan Refugees by Bernice Johnson and “Am I Really a UUer?” UU Principle #3 by Mary Anderson. Bernice will give us her yearly update on the Shan School and the students we help sponsor through the Empowerment Grant awarded the Shan Schools for the second year.

Mary Anderson is the second presenter in the U Witness Series. Mary sometimes questions whether she’s a real Unitarian Universalist – she thinks of Unitarian Universalists as highly intelligent, deeply committed to social and environmental issues, strong on meditation and avid participants in discussions, more than decision makers. None of that fits her so she’ll share what she is – “a doer.”

June 21 – “Honoring Fathers, Memories and Lessons”

Everyone is invited to bring a photograph of and a brief story to share about their fathers. Betsy Wells will lead this service.

June 28 – Outdoor service with Flower Communion and program about “Why We Worship Outdoors,” UU Principle #6, followed by a potluck. Please bring a flower and potluck dish to share. Please bring a chair if you like. Childcare will be provided. Following the program the Younger Women are invited to sit together to further get acquainted and exchange ideas and information. Child care will also be provided for this extra hour.

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your ideas and articles for the Newsletter to: maryanderson8380@msn.com. Editing is provided by Stephanie Sanderson and emailing/ mailing is provided by Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson. Mickie Edmonds 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.

There is a questionnaire/survey at the end of this Newsletter to gather your feedback on the church report and monthly Newsletter. Please complete it and return to maryanderson8380@msn.com. Inserts of the survey will also be available at church. Feedback at any time is appreciated.

Handicap Accessible Parking

Please be aware that the curb immediately in front of the church entry has been painted blue to designate handicap accessible parking for those with handicap parking stickers. Please extend every courtesy to assure that persons in need are accommodated.

Ride Share

If you have a need or are interested in ride sharing to Sunday service, Jen Walla is willing to help coordinate drivers and riders. Please contact Jen at fargohomegirl@gmail.com or

701/306-5884. It not only saves on gas but allows you time to visit and get to know your fellow folks from UCU.

The Month That Was

May 3 - Bob Worner spoke on **Living in a World of Pain, Principle #2, Justice, equity and compassion in human relations**. Compassion is when you have justice and equality.

We cannot ignore the suffering of the world: hurricanes and earthquakes.

Suffering may come and go, or overwhelm everything else. We do not ignore suffering of others. We know about the losses, the death of a child, a divorce, or those without the wherewithal to make ends meet.

A 1985 study asked 'How many friends can you confide in?' Average said three.

A similar study in 2004 got the answer of zero! 25 percent of homes are single people. What do they come here for? Some come in pain, sour on other churches with desperation and with hope that someone will see and understand.

We cannot ignore the suffering of others. But we have been "carefully taught" to say nothing about our suffering – it is not appropriate to share pain. Bob referred to the song from the movie, South Pacific: "You've got to be taught Before it's too late, Before you are 6 or 7 or 8, To hate all the people your relatives hate, You've got to be carefully taught." (People who have eyes or skin color different.)

To share, to show compassion, we must trust- to open ourselves, we must feel safe, hear no judgment, have our expressions held in confidence, for others to hold us as worthy of the full measure of love.

Think globally; act locally. Bring justice and equity and compassion not by acting superior but by standing beside. How to go about this? It is scary to have no one to confide in.

Our U group study for May is "What I believe about human nature." Is it good or bad. Are humans born with empathy? Do animals show empathy. A dog can be a warm comfort. If the dog can, I can.

Bob just re-read the Greek tragedies by Socrates during a February vacation. Many thousand Greeks attended the annual performance of the Greek playwrights and regarded it as a civic duty. It was held on sacred ground to "educate our emotions:" to experience emotions through the play, the tragedy, the foul acts and finally, compassion for the main character. It was a collective spiritual ritual & art of listening.

We are learning better to listen – through our U groups, by the offer of Steph Sanderson who has been chosen as a listener. When in need, call & arrange to meet with Steph. Through the

plans for a Mindfulness group. We are honing our listening skills – the silence, to hear pain, not to wallow. We can live with pain but suffering can stop us in our tracks– can't get outside ourselves. We can offer “salvation,” a term that did not exist at the time of Jesus. The Hebrew definition of salvation is “rescue from dangers.” Even better is the Greek: “to be made well.”

Bob quoted from Victoria Stafford who'd conducted a joint dedication/funeral for a set of twins, one of whom had died. A funeral and a dedication were held for twins; the dedication for both of them, the funeral for the baby that had died. There was despair and joy in the circle of ritual created, a spiritual presence, a gathering of community. Suffering and joy are inseparable, you don't have one unless you have the other. We cannot ignore the pain of the world. In the midst of empathy and joy, hear one another and the world.

May 10 - Margaret Carignan – “Spiritual Journaling, a Pathway to One's Inner Truth.”

Margaret is a teacher, a quilter, a sewer, a yoga instructor. Her life-long search has been for the truth. Truth has been debated since the beginning of time. What is truth? A fact that has been verified or in accord with fact and reality.

Half of her relatives were Catholic like her folks but the other half were Lutheran; each thought the other was doomed. She had advised her grandson that when you tell the truth, you don't have to remember what you said. “Grandma, that's sure the truth!” said William who had a tendency to exaggerate.

By doubting, we lead ourselves to questioning. By questioning, we find our way to truth. Her upbringing was mostly, “that's just the way it is. Just learn it and live by it.” That did not work for her. She found too many contradictions. She started college at 28 when she already had 5 kids, thinking she was old. Through her studies, she found out about myths, that myths were passed on, written down and then accepted as fact. She went through a lot to learn to live as she understood rather than what was expected to be/to think.

She learned last year at the Karin Herring writing workshop here at UCU that writing is a discipline and used her book, “Writing to Wake the Soul” setting aside time and a place to write in a composition book Stan gave her of her grandson's, including his sketches. She applied the same discipline to her meditation-to sit and things came up inside for her to write about. Our lives are constant thinking – a needed pathway to tap into self and then to believe it. She found the UU church in Escanaba, Michigan and found a community to belong to. The only journey that counts is the journey within. It is the most important into where and who we are.

March 15 – **Rev. Stephan Jonasson's** talk was entitled “**Life is Now Prevailing.**” As he and his daughter traveled here in the rain from Minneapolis, he thought about the difficulty of travel back in 1888 where 150 in the area came out to hear Kristofer Janson, Norwegian poet laureate and early Unitarian founder. Janson came to the area to explore the “yeasty heresy.” Afterwards a young farmer wrote him that his visit meant that here now on the prairie, “life is now prevailing.”

May 17, 1814 the Norwegian constitution was signed and is celebrated yet today in Norway and by Americans of Norwegian heritage as Syttente Mai. By 1889, the celebration became one that was a family focused, citizen driven peaceful event. There are parallels between a constitutional government and a coveted religious community. They come together with respect, care and hold each other accountable.

Janson gave up his pension and his title of Norwegian poet laureate to work in the United States for 12 years with the mission to preach the liberal gospel. He helped organize and continued to visit the Underwood Unitarians. There are now 14 Unitarian centers in the Twin Cities and we can think that Underwood helped lay that groundwork. UU's are stronger in Minnesota and Wisconsin, coming in just behind New England and Transylvania, where it originated. "Life is now prevailing."

Stephen's daughter, Heather, recently graduating with her BA and being awarded a full scholarship to the Ottawa University in music for her MA, played her flute beautifully for the special music.

Florance Thompson, proud of her Norwegian heritage, dressed in costume and provided items for the Norwegian décor for the tables.

May 24 – Diane Johnson, "Agora-the Interdependent Web of Community w/in the Farmers Market" UU Principles 6 & 7. Diane began, "I wish Dave McRoberts were here so he could tell about other Farmer's Markets besides just the one we have in Fergus Falls."

Lyn Brand, Diane's partner putting together and doing much of the work with the FF Farmer's Market, was here this day also lending her support to Diane.

Diane had 4 goals for the Farmer's Market basing them on the UU principles:

- Provide a place where the community can purchase local, healthy food.
- Provide a venue for small local growers and artisans to sell their products.
- Put "local money" back into the community.
- Aid the ecological footprint by minimizing the need to truck, warehouse and refrigerate goods across the country.

Then, at the end of this past season they realized that they had a fifth goal which was extremely important - to create a space for the community to meet with friends, interact with social, political, spiritual, and artistic interests, while providing that place and platform for organizations to fund-raise, promote, and inform.

After the first year just about when they were about to give up, they got help from Janet Lindberg who works with WIC and understands the importance of healthy food for families. Janet connected them to other farmers' markets and associations. Now they even accommodate EBT cards and credit cards.

Diane's marvelous slides showed how the whole project has grown from a few stands to a string of booths and with music on many days. They brought to light the life of the market. Children have become a big part of these events.

Diane likened the market to the "Agora" meaning the market place, the gathering place. The word "agoraphobia" means the fear of getting out. She also thinks of this church as an agora – a gathering place.

In 2015, the Fergus Falls Farmers' Market will be held on the Otter Tail County Human Services front lawn Wednesdays and Saturdays. All are invited to come.

May 31 - Linda Winkler and Lydia Liu, Foreign Exchange Students, Principle #1, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. The two young women for the past school term attended Perham High School and lived with host mom, Mary Anderson. They each presented the speech they gave for the speech contests: Linda from Germany: "Every Truth has Two Sides" based on extracts from the book, Empty Chairs by Annalee Woodstrom; Lydia from Taiwan: "I Come from Taiwan," an original oratory based on Lydia's frustration on how many thought her Chinese. The girls again played special music as they have done at UCU several times: Linda on baritone saxophone and Lydia on violin and piano. The ladies summed up by saying what this year has meant to them. They depart for their homes on June 6 so we had special treats during coffee hour to say good-bye.

Mohawk Prayer – words from Gary Snyder

*Gratitude to Mother Earth, sailing through night and day
And to her soil: rich, rare and sweet.
In our minds, so be it.*

*Gratitude to Plants, the sun-facing, light-changing leaf and fine root-hairs;
Standing through wind and rain, their dance is in the flowing spiral grain.
In our minds, so be it.*

*Gratitude to Air, bearing the soaring Swift and the silent Owl at dawn.
Breath of our song, clear spirit breeze,
In our minds, so be it.*

*Gratitude to Wild Beings, our brothers and sisters,
Teaching secrets, freedoms, and ways; who share with us their milk;
Self-complete, brave, and aware.
In our minds, so be it.*

*Gratitude to Water: clouds, lakes, rivers, glaciers,
Holding or releasing, streaming through all our bodies' salty seas.
In our minds, so be it.*

*Gratitude to the Sun: blinding pulsing light though trunks of trees, through mists,
warming caves Where bears and snakes sleep;
He who wakes us.
In our minds, so be it.*

*Gratitude to the Great Sky
Who holds billions of stars – and goes yet beyond that,
Beyond all powers, and thoughts, and yet is within us-
Grandfather Space and grandmother Mind
Within us and among us: a song of gratitude.
So be it.*

Summary of Adult RE Classes

Bible Study of the Gospel of John - Bob Worner led the class on John's gospel and the accompanying book John the Mystic. It proved to be an interesting study of the authorship and purpose of John writing to late first Century Jews who followed Jesus and who were being expelled from the Synagogue. He speaks to those who wished to return, to those wavering, and to those with unquestioning belief in Jesus. He not only points out the "Jews" as wrong (leading to centuries of persecution), but that Jesus is THE WAY to new life. He sees the crucifixion less as sacrifice for the sins of the world as the moment of Jesus' exaltation and the resurrection not as a physical event, but symbolic of new life available.

There were in attendance as many as 9 participants and as few as three, probably averaging five. Spong's book made it come alive. Now we are thinking about a study for the next year. If you have ideas, contact: Bob Worner @ 218/826-6998.

Gathering of Younger Women of UCU May 3, 2015

A number of younger women of UCU met May 3 to learn about each other, the offerings of UCU and express ideas on how/where they might be further involved. Many ideas were generated for these women, both with and without children. We agreed that for these get-togethers, child care is critical, considerations should be given to a central, convenient meeting location and to the limitations on both time and finances. But, what a great opportunity this is to form community and to support and learn from each other.

Plans are being laid for a gathering of younger women following the June 28 Phelps Mill Sunday service. (See above). We're also thinking about a UCU women's fall retreat and just being a part of the events that UCU already offers or participates in. Watch for announcements in the bulletins, email notices and the monthly Newsletters.

If you wish to be part of these gatherings and need more information, please contact: Mary Anderson @ maryanderson8380@msn.com or 218/346-6638 or Katy Olson @

katyjolson@gmail.com or 218/495-3235 (the “older women” organizers!). If you consider yourself an “older women” interested in mentoring or support for these younger women, please also contact Mary or Katy to offer your services.

Interest Questionnaire

An interest questionnaire given to the younger women will be made available for all members to complete and to hand out to newcomers indicating longer term interest in UCU. The purpose of the form is to tell what UCU offers and get information on areas of interest from the person completing the questionnaire. This will help direct individuals to what is currently offered and guide UCU on providing new offerings. Look for it soon in the church bulletins and on the near-by tables upstairs.

Roadside Clean-up

Dave McRoberts, a friend and JoAnn Larson completed the spring roadside clean-up over two days in mid-May. Thanks to the three of you!! That was a big job for so few people. The next roadside clean-up will be in October.

Underwood Community Rummage Sales Coming June 6, 2015

Time to clean out your closets, do some of that downsizing, rid yourself of clutter and contribute your cast-off treasures to the UCU Rummage sale, part of the Underwood Community All City Wide Rummage Sales, scheduled for June 6 from 8 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We are counting on you to drop off your contributions of clean, saleable, household items Friday, June 5 from 4-7 p.m. If you want to help Kris Warhol in any capacity, she'd welcome the help. Contact Kris @ 218/826-7540 or kriswarhol17@hotmail.com.

Centennial Park Remodel Fund Raiser - Sunday, June 14th. Lion's pork chop dinner. We should get that in the June newsletter. The details are still being planned, but it sounded like they were thinking about a noon dinner that people leaving church

Services to be Held in Memory of Mary Frances Broderick Lundeen (December 6, 1930 – May 18, 2015)

A memorial service for Mary Lundeen will be held at the Unitarian Church of Underwood Saturday, June 13 at 11:00. The service will be conducted by Bob Worner and a catered lunch will follow. Mary died May 18, 2015 at her home in Tucson, AZ. Mary was born in East St. Louis, IL, on December 6, 1930. After the Depression, the Broderick family moved to Fargo, ND, where she graduated from Sacred Heart Academy in 1948. She went on to Merryville College and in 1952 earned a bachelor's degree in English from North Dakota Agricultural College. Mary taught English in Fort Morgan, CO, for two years. She then moved to Fergus Falls, MN, where the young teacher met William Frederick Lundeen. They fell in love and married on January 5, 1957, at St. Anthony's Church in Fargo, ND. Mary and Bill were not parted until his death in 1998. The

couple raised six children and, in their later years, enjoyed spending time together in Mexico and Tucson. Mary spent her summers at Otter Tail Lake and spent her winters in Tucson. When she was younger, she enjoyed swimming, sailing, weaving and cross-country skiing. Throughout her life Mary enjoyed painting, playing bridge, reading and traveling.

Mary is survived her brother, her six children and give grandchildren. For more information see: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tucson/obituary.aspx?pid=174907174>

Family Friendly Bike Ride Fund-Raiser June 16 following Sunday Service

Individuals and families are invited to join a family-friendly bike ride along Whiskey Trail following Sunday Service, June 16. The trail can go as far as 25 miles or you can bike a shortened version. Ron Roller, Katy Olson and Susan Groff are the planners. Funds raised will go to the Shan Refugee Children.

Underwood Lions to Host Pork Chop Dinner 11 a.m. -2 p.m., June 16

To raise funds for the re-do of the Centennial Railroad Park Playground, the Underwood Lions will host a pork chop dinner from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. on June 16 at the Underwood Community Center. If you are not a bike rider or want to wait for your riders, or just want to get a good meal, this is a good place to spend the time and dollars.

Sunday Service Child Care

In response to the need for child care during Sunday services, Jewel Swanson (12 1/2 years old) and Mary Wunderlich (12 years old) have committed to look after any children whose parents want to be upstairs to attend the service and be free of their children for the hour. Jewel is the 2nd oldest of 4 children and Mary is the 5th of 7 children. Last year, both girls took the class to be certified as babysitters and that, along with their many siblings, brings them experience in dealing with younger children. If parents want to rotate supervision at alternate times, it will work well. Adults remain readily accessible upstairs should the need arise.

To resupply or refresh materials for children's activities, there is a need for gently used toys, books, children's DVD movies, field equipment (balls, Frisbees, etc.) so if you have such that you'd like to donate, it would be appreciated. You may leave the items with JoAnn Larson or Cedar Walters.

Treats & Kitchen Duty Lots of Opportunities!

You are invited to sign up any time to bring treats for coffee following each Sunday Service. Or you can help stock the kitchen—bring dated cookies, breads, etc. for the freezer; cheese and crackers, & teas. There is also a need for snacks for the children during the child care hour. You can also help out in the kitchen, setting up beforehand, cleaning up after. Our kitchen crew is

now composed of Anne and Luke Andersen and Maggie Meehan, Lee Hamness, Chandes Brandt and Susie Adams. It is work but it is fun and a good way to greet everyone from behind the counter. The monthly sign-up sheets for treats are on the counter near the right end of the kitchen serving window. You are encouraged to find a partner to bring treats with you as the numbers staying for coffee are rapidly increasing from was around 40 to now near 60.

New Member Invite

We celebrate the addition of new members twice a year, usually the 3rd Sunday in March and October. However, you can become a new member of UCU at any time by signing the silver book. Please see JoAnn Larson, Administrative Consultant, on becoming a member and the many ways you can become involved with our UCU community.

The Ellison Room

Up until now, the room upstairs has been called various things: “the narthex,” “the foyer,” “the upstairs room that is not the sanctuary.” It now, with Board approval, is named the “Ellison Room,” in memory of Frances Ellison, former member of and a large benefactor to UCU. The plaque with her name will be repositioned to designate the room. For more information on Frances, see the March 2014 Newsletter at www.ucofu.org.

U Groups and Invite to Summer U Group

The four 2014-2015 U groups have completed the seasonal series of lessons and all of their church and community projects. The latest being the packaging of the One Veg- One Community Packets by the Fergus Falls/Underwood Evening Group & Friends - Thank you Everyone! The Battle Lake U group served their pancake breakfast raising funds for the Centennial Park upgrade. If you didn't see the jar to make your donation, see Kris Warhol, who will happily accept your gift.

If you are interested in trying out or continuing in a U Group, the U group facilitators will offer a summer U Group for June-July-August, to meet once monthly. The location will be dependent upon where those interested live so we can meet at a centralized, convenient location. Or if you are interested in a different time frame – say June through October (avoiding the Minnesota winter months), we'd entertain your ideas and interest in starting that group. Please contact Connie Stigen at dcstigen@gmail.com or phone: 218/731-1445 or Tere Mann at teremann@gmail.com or phone: 218/205-4931. Also, if you are interested in being a facilitator, let Connie and/or Tere know.

The U group facilitator's organizational meeting for season 2015-16 will be held July, 21st at Mary Anderson's home in Perham. Sign-up sheets will be available in late August for sessions to begin again in September.

May Topic: “What I Believe about Human Nature.” “Emerson was an optimist about a lot of things – about the goodness of human nature, and the goodness of the universe as a whole,

among other things. But he was also an optimist about our ability to know the truth. Emerson's basic message is that if we will just be self-reliant, if we will trust our deepest instincts and most basic beliefs, we cannot go wrong." George Miller

Unitarian Church of Underwood 2015-16 Board of Directors

We have three new Board members: Lee Becker, Stan Carignan and Diane Johnson and three elected to 2nd terms: Mary Anderson, Norm Kolstad, and David Wass. The new slate of officers was selected by the Board members at the Board meeting, May 20. They are as follows:

- President – John Miersch
- Vice President – Mary Anderson
- Secretary – Diane Johnson
- Treasurer – David Wass

Also, under the by-laws, each of the following three areas must have a Board member as Coordinator:

- Program:
- Community Outreach – Kris Warhol/Stan Carignan – co-chairs
- Facilities: John Miersch/Kris Warhol – co—chairs

There are a number of committees, task forces or teams under each of the above areas. We have one hired staff: JoAnn Larson, Administrative Consultant. The rest of the work of UCU is up to volunteer members, including other administrative type work and the Celebrant ministry.

To get to know your ten Board members better, here is information about each of them and about our administrative consultant.

Now President, John Miersch, with his wife, Janell, have been Unitarian Universalists for over 40 years. After living in St. Paul and attending the Unity Universalist Church for a number of years, they moved to this area where John retired to "fish." They have been at UCU since Dec. 2010. John was previously on the Board of Directors for the District Planning Commission in St. Paul and on the Board for Aikido in the Twin Cities, a non-profit organization that primarily uses volunteers to train this type of martial arts in a supportive, family atmosphere. He is currently on the Fergus Falls Public Arts Commission. John was past UCU Board Vice President. John also serves as one of the Service Leaders and has been part of the Spiritual Writing Group, having shared his writings both as a speaker and in the Newsletter. He is also on the Membership Committee and is Chair of the Facilities Committee, a role he will now be sharing with Kris Warhol, Co-Chair. John believes that the future of UCU is dependent upon the foundation we build for it.

Mary Anderson, Vice President, has been a member of UCU since 2010, having attended from sometime in 2006. She just started her second term on the Board of Directors. Mary was a supervisor/manager for the Department of Public Services prior to her retirement in 2003. She served on the Advisory Board of Dads Make a Difference, a paternity education program for

high-schoolers, and on the Board of Directors for Minnesota Fathers and Families Network, a collaborative network of government and non-government agencies serving families. She brings to the Board, her organizational and collaboration experience. She is currently chair of the Membership Committee, a U Group facilitator, table decorator, UCU Newsletter Editor, and member of the Safety Plan Task Force. She was past chair of the 2013 Area Fall Workshop Committee, the 125 Year Anniversary Celebration Committee, and has had her fingers in a lot of other pies. Mary sees the ongoing growth of UCU as “both exciting and challenging as we continue our dependency on the wonderful volunteers of the church. I am especially excited about the number of younger individuals and families finding their way to UCU. There is opportunity for each person to connect with others with their interests and join in to make a difference to all of us individually and collectively, ever-keeping in mind our UU Principles.”

Diane Johnson, Secretary: After moving to Minnesota 5 years ago, the Johnsons decided to check out the Unitarian Church and it immediately seemed a perfect "fit."

Since "retirement." Diane has been active in Master Gardeners, Garden Club, Lake Region Writers Network, Fergus Falls' writing group, and the FF Farmers Market, as well as acting as a U Group Facilitator, member of the Speakers Committee, and co-leader of the Spiritual Writers Group. Diane states that “UU has become the heart of my social, cultural and spiritual life and as it evolves, so do I.”

Dave Wass tells us only this: “I'm in my 4th year on the board. Susan and I live just north of Underwood on a farm that we now rent out. I was on the building committee for the new addition. That's enough.” We all know there is much more to Dave's story. He came to UCU with his wife, Susan Groff back in the 1980's. They signed the membership book in 1989. Now in his fourth year on the Board, he continues to serve as Treasurer, a position without term limits. David often gets linked to jobs Susan, the Janitor, signs him up for, including mowing and hauling out the trash. He is a behind the scenes player and assumes many roles – for that we appreciate him!

Lee Becker – new to UCU along with her husband, Reid, as of September 2014, Lee was asked to be on the board with “little background in the UCU, but was encouraged to serve on the Board with the proviso that I can bring a newcomer's perspective. I can do that. My past spiritual experiences have evolved around an interest in the contemplative traditions of the Christian and Buddhist faiths. I am also very interested in social justice issues and caring for the earth. I bring those interests to the UCU Board.

I hope to see thought provoking conversation and inspiring fellowship in my future at the UCU.”

Lee will serve as Program co-chair with along with Mary Worner who has served in that role for the past 3 years and will be there to guide Lee as she takes on these new responsibilities.

Stanley Carignan found UCU after searching the web and has been coming regularly since. Hear it from Stan himself: “I have only been at UCU for a year, but I feel I have known many of the people for a long time.

I have spent my whole adult life in some type of military status starting with enlisting in the Navy after High School and staying for eight years, becoming an Infantry Officer with the Minnesota Army National Guard for 10 years, and spending the last 15 years as a Civil Affairs Officer. The military is the single greatest melting pot in America, where people of all races, ethnic backgrounds, and religious beliefs come together for a common purpose of defending our nation. That experience has shaped my thinking about the need for a just and equitable society where we all sacrifice and we all benefit. I will graduate from the U.S. Army War College in July with a Masters in Strategic Studies and that experience has led me to believe that much of the root causes of war and conflict stem from inequity and injustice. I would like our nation to spend more of its national security effort in alleviating those causes vice trying to kill all those that pose a threat to us.

I believe that the UCU can have a vital role in the social justice discussion in our community and our country. I would like to see us as shining light on the prairie, known for its radical defense of what is right. I would like us to become a mirror for the country so that we reflect what is best about America. I want us to jar our citizens from their comfortable consumerism to realize that the choices we make have rippling effects across the globe and can radicalize the millions of "have-nots" who simply want their share of the good life. There are the millions who simply want to raise their children in peace, with a healthy meal, and a decent home, and a stable future. We are a great and dynamic society that continues to innovate and solve complicated and vexing issues. I believe we have it in us to create a more just society and world. As-Salaam-Alaikum."

Stan and Kris Warhol will co-chair the Community Outreach Committee and they look to have some more exciting projects centering on Social Justice in which members and friends of UCU can play a contributing role. Stan is also on the Speakers Committee and the Foundation Advisory Committee.

Norm Kolstad and his wife, Kathy, started attending the UCU regularly in about 2007. As Norm tells it: "I also have fond childhood memories of attending UCU events with my parents and grandparents." Norm, in fact, was confirmed at UCU.

He goes on: "My board experience includes the Underwood School Board, the Boards of Lakes Country Services Cooperative and Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative, other school-related boards and several farm co-op boards, all of which I have found to be rewarding.

I believe much of the vitality now in the church can be traced to good leadership, to hard-working committees, and to board governance practices and policies. I believe the current board is dedicated to building on these foundations to make the UCU even more of a "beacon on the prairie," as it was once called."

Norm served as Board Secretary for the past 3 years. He served on the Safety Plan Task Force and will continue when it becomes the Safety Committee. Norm has made extensive records to collect and preserve the history of the Unitarian Church of Underwood going back to its very

beginning in 1889. He is a descendant of those early founders. His work served well as we often referred to his records when we celebrated 125 years in 2014. His narrative history is part of the 2014 Church Directory.

Alisha Piekarski is serving the 2nd year of her second term on the Board. Alisha helps with the Children's Religious Education program and has served on several committees including: Outreach, Membership, and the Child Care Pilot Project.

Alisha started attending UCU services in 2010, when Luke Anderson was board president, and became a church member in 2011. Alisha says she's had "the honor of participating in several U-groups, which I might add is a great experience. The same welcoming feel and spiritual insight you gain on Sundays only deepens when you gather with like-minded people and simply share your thoughts and feelings in a loving U-group.

In the past when the church had a spurt of projects going on, I had the opportunity to participate in the Green group; we brain stormed ideas of how to be more environmentally friendly on a personal level and as a congregation. Also, I participated with the Social Justice group which focused on equal rights.

The experience I bring to the board, could be my lack of experience since I am in my 20s and am on the younger side of Board members. I like to think I bring a fresh pair of eyes to the table.

In the future I see UCU expanding, especially with such a great addition of offering child care each Sunday that started in May. I also foresee Unitarian values expanding in Underwood and surrounding communities mainly through community activities such as dinners, fundraisers, the empowerment grants, the harvest festival, parades, the adopt a highway clean-up and other projects. It really is beautiful when neighbors, who may not agree about certain beliefs, can still come together for a cause or to simply celebrate in unity and peace."

As to what part I see for myself in the future, I don't know yet, but most likely I'll still be around enjoying what UCU has to offer. What I do know is I'm happy to be a Unitarian Universalist."

Dave Sanderson is a retired physician. Dave serves as chair of the Stewardship Committee and the Foundation Advisory Committee.

He is currently on his second trip to Haiti on a medical mission in collaboration with the Nazarene Church of Fergus Falls. The UCU provided an Empowerment Grant to help purchase better lab equipment for their clinic in Haiti. Dave is enjoying the ability to better identify the needs of his patients on this trip. I'm sure he will have more stories to tell.

Making Fergus Falls a "Bicycle Friendly Community" is one of Dave's major interests, and he chairs or participates in groups participating with the city and other Fergus organizations to achieve that end. He continues to serve on the Prairie Wetlands Foundation Committee and was a founding member of that entity.

Steph and Mary have taken the liberty of writing this piece for him. Dave will be home from Haiti just in time to read it in the newsletter!

Kris Warhol – Joined with her husband, Wally, in 1998 and served as UCU Coordinator for eleven years until 2011. She was also UU district liaison for ten years until the program disbanded. After a hiatus of a couple years, Kris is now back and seeing a wealth of talent and experience. “On the horizon....are fabulous opportunities to welcome all those looking for a church home. I have been a Unitarian all my life and didn't know it until I married one. Enthusiasm and boundless energy create in me the passion to be useful in our church.” Kris says that serving our congregation now as a board member is a privilege and that she is looking forward to five more years of fun. “Our historical church is a refuge for all beliefs.”

Kris will co-chair Community Outreach and Facilities. She is also on the Speakers Committee and readily shares her history of UCU and her connections in the community at large.

JoAnn Larson has been our administrative consultant for the past four years. Jo averages 12 hours/week and among her many duties is to sit in on the Board meetings. Most of Jo's other allotted time is spent preparing for and “trouble shooting” Sunday mornings. Jo is our “go to” person to first find out the answer. If Jo doesn't know, she will know who knows. She prepares the bulletins, follows up with speakers, helps with communications, both within and outside the church, welcomes and greets newcomers and helps get them connected. What we know is – “go to Jo!” Jo is on the Membership Committee also gives volunteer time to help with the Children's Religious Educations program. Oh, and most importantly, she keeps up with and tries to stay ahead of her four year old daughter, Sequoia Ann.

Unitarian Church of Underwood Annual Meeting Minutes April 27, 2014

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, Mary Anderson, John Minge, Dave McRoberts, David Wass, Donn Siems, Mary Worner, John Miersch, and Norman Kolstad. Absent: Alisha Piekarski. A total of 29 people attended.

The meeting was called to order at 11:18 a.m. by Chair Ellen Eastby. Ellen Eastby offered a meditation/reading.

The agenda was approved (John Miersch/Dave McRoberts).

The minutes of the 2012 annual meeting were approved as corrected (John Miersch/Dave McRoberts).

Reports:

President: Ellen Eastby

Treasurer: David Wass

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson

Program Committee: Mary Worner

Outreach Committee: Ellen Eastby
Facilities Committee: Dave McRoberts
Membership Committee: Mary Anderson
Stewardship Committee: David Sanderson
Planned Giving Committee: David Sanderson
Nominating Committee: Susan Groff and Bob Worner

Old business: none

New business: The Nominating Committee put forth the names of Alisha Piekarski and Kris Warhol for three-year terms to fill the expiring terms of Alisha Piekarski and Dave McRoberts. Chair Eastby called for further nominations to the board. A motion passed to cease nominations, electing Alisha Piekarski and Kris Warhol to three-year terms (Katy Olson/Teri Mann).

A fiscal year 2015 budget was presented by David Wass on behalf of the Finance Committee. The budget was ratified by the congregation (Bob Worner/Dave McRoberts).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Norman Kolstad, secretary

Unitarian Church of Underwood Board Minutes for April 15, 2015

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, Norman Kolstad, Mary Anderson, John Miersch, Mary Worner, Alisha Piekarski, Kris Warhol and Don Siems. Absent: David Wass and David Sanderson. Also present: JoAnn Larson.

The meeting was called to order by Board President Ellen Eastby at 6:31 p.m.

Mary Worner shared a reading/meditation.

The agenda was approved (Anderson/Warhol).

The minutes of the February 18, 2015 meeting were approved as presented (Miersch/Siems).
The minutes of the March 18, 2015 meeting were approved as presented (Warhol/Anderson).
The minutes of the March 31, 2015 special meeting were approved as presented (Miersch/Siems).

Reports (printed reports attached):

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson
Program Committee: Mary Worner

Outreach Committee: Kris Warhol
Facilities Committee: John Miersch
Membership Committee: Mary Anderson
Celebrants: no report
Foundation Advisory Committee: Mary Worner

The suggested revisions to the Foundation Operational Guidelines were accepted (Worner/Anderson). The Board endorsed the following resolution to be presented to the membership at the annual meeting (Kolstad/Worner):

Whereas, stewardship involves the faithful management of the gifts of time, talent, and money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

Whereas, we can support the mission and work of this congregation through charitable gifts; and

Whereas, it is the desire of the congregation to encourage, receive, and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion expressed by the wishes of the grantors;

Therefore be it resolved, that the Unitarian Church of Underwood Foundation be established and follow the Operational Guidelines as approved by the Board of Directors on 15 April, 2015.

Old Business: The Administrative Consultant contract for the 2015-16 year will include an increase in time to 12 hours per week and an increase in compensation to \$11,000 per year (Miersch/Anderson). Participation in the Amazon Smile charity support program was approved (Kolstad/Warhol). A proposed fiscal year 2016 budget was approved (Anderson/Warhol). The 2015 Annual Goals document was approved (Warhol/Miersch).

Other topics: annual meeting, electric boiler, ad in tourist brochure, hymnal purchase, and the safety plan.

New Business: Bob Worner and Stan Carignan were chosen as delegates to the regional UU Assembly (Warhol/Siems).

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Kolstad, secy.

Unitarian Church of Underwood

Annual Meeting Minutes April 19, 2015

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, Mary Anderson, Kris Warhol, Alisha Piekarski, David Sanderson, David Wass, Donn Siems, Mary Worner, John Miersch, and Norman Kolstad.
Absent: none. A total of 33 people attended.

The meeting was called to order at 11:06 a.m. by President Ellen Eastby.

The agenda was approved (Janelle Miersch/Micki Edmonds).

The minutes of the 2014 annual meeting were approved as corrected (John Miersch/David Sanderson).

Reports (printed reports attached to minutes):

Treasurer: David Wass
President: Ellen Eastby
Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson
Program Committee: Betsy Wells
Outreach Committee: Ellen Eastby
Facilities Committee: John Miersch
Membership Committee: Mary Anderson
125th Anniversary Committee: Mary Anderson
Safety Plan Task Force: Mary Anderson
Stewardship Committee: David Sanderson
Foundation Advisory Committee: David Sanderson

Old business: none

New business: The following resolution passed (Stephanie Sanderson/John Miersch):

Whereas, stewardship involves the faithful management of the gifts of time, talent, and money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

Whereas, we can support the mission and work of this congregation through charitable gifts; and

Whereas, it is the desire of the congregation to encourage, receive, and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion expressed by the wishes of the grantors;

Therefore be it resolved, that the Unitarian Church of Underwood Foundation be established and follow the Operational Guidelines as approved by the Board of Directors on 15 April, 2015.

A fiscal year 2016 budget was presented by David Wass on behalf of the Finance Committee. The budget was ratified by the congregation as presented (Luke Anderson/Kris Warhol).

The Nominating Committee put forth the names of Mary Anderson, Norman Kolstad, and David Wass for re-election to three-year board terms and Lee Becker, Stan Carignan, and Diane Johnson to fill the expiring terms of Ellen Eastby, Mary Worner and Donn Siems. No further nominations were offered and the slate was accepted by the membership (Micki Edmonds/Maggie Meeham).

The concept of utilizing photo-voltaic solar panels is to be studied by a new task force who will report their findings to the membership at the 2016 annual meeting (Katie Roller-Olson/Maggie Meeham).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Norman Kolstad, secretary

UCU Newsletter & Church Report Survey

Please complete the following questions to give the UCU reporters and Newsletter editors a better idea of what you like and what you'd like changed in/about the weekly church reports and the monthly UCU Newsletter.

Receive Newsletter via: E-mail attachment
 Mailed copy
 Copy picked up at church

Read the emailed Church Reports:

- Sometimes
- Regularly
- Never
- Only if I missed the Service
- Don't receive them (To get on email list to receive, fill in email address): _____

Newsletter Features liked (check all you like):

- Monthly speaker schedule
- Monthly religious education and meeting schedule
- "The month that was": summary of previous month's speakers
- Detailed information on upcoming events
- UUA or MidAmerica Region shared information
- U Group information
- Board minutes
- Special readings
- Writers' Works
- Art features from Mickie Edmonds

- Photos accompanying articles
- Tributes

Suggestions for changes in format, information, features, etc. _____

Other comments:

Submitted by: (optional): Name _____

Church Reports written by Marguerite Andrews or Mary Anderson or Betsy Wells. Newsletter by Mary Anderson, edited by Stephanie Sanderson, art by Mickie Edwards. Mailings by Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson.