

Unitarian Church of Underwood March 2014 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 March

Sunday Morning Service Begins at 10:30 a.m.

March 2 – Tammi Kronemacher, “owning our Moral Center- Reproductive Rights Examined from a Human Rights Perspective”

March 9 – Steve Nagle, “The War on Poverty, the Local Front 1965 to Present”

March 16 – Katy Olson and Ellen Eastby, “Remembering Our Place in the Church Body” and New Member Welcome

March 23 – History Portrayals of Notable Women

Sunday Morning Meetings Begin at 9:15 a.m.

March 2 – 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. Adult RE

**March 16 - 9:15-10:15 a.m. Spiritual Writing
10:30-11:30 Kids’ Religious Education**

Other Meetings:

March 2 – 11:45 a.m. U Group Facilitators

March 12 - 12 Noon Facilities Committee

**March 19 - 5:30 Speakers’ Committee Meeting
7:00 Board Meeting**

March 28 – Annual Chili Dinner 5-7 p.m. Underwood Community Center

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

More about March Sunday Speakers

March 2: Tammi Kromenaker – “Owning our Moral Center – Reproductive Rights Examined from a Human Rights Perspective” - The right to have children, to not have children, and to parent children in safe and healthy environments is a human right. Yet, women seeking abortion and those who provide abortion are deeply stigmatized – they face harassment and judgment and are silenced by a vicious cycle of misinformation and the portrayal of providers as morally flawed. This talk will shed light on both those who seek abortion, those who provide abortion and how supporters of reproductive rights can speak to these issues from a moral and ethical standpoint.

Tammi Kromenaker is the Director of Red River Women's Clinic in Fargo, ND, the only abortion provider in the state. She has been working in abortion care since 1993. She works diligently at engaging her local community in support and maintaining an excellent clinic in a conservative state. Ms. Kromenaker is on the boards of the Abortion Care Network, the ND WIN (Women in Need) Abortion Access Fund, Plants for Patients and is on the Advisory Council of Social Workers for Reproductive Justice (SWRJ). She was awarded the C. Lalor Burdick Award from

the National Abortion Federation (NAF) and the Person of the Year Award from the Abortion Care Network (ACN), both in 2012.

March 9: Steve Nagle (rescheduled from January), “The War on Poverty, the Local Front 1965 to Present.” Otter Tail-Wadena Community Action Council had a remarkable tenure serving Otter Tail County. The project, although often controversial, had major local impacts. Sometimes, OTWCAC led the nation or the region with initiatives. The agency, once known as the "Moo Cap" for its agricultural projects, ebbed and flowed with the presidential administrations from LBJ to Barack Obama. Otter Tail Wadena CAC has now closed their doors after nearly 50 years of fighting poverty but the legacy will live on. This talk will trace the history of Otter Tail-Wadena Community Action.

Steve Nagle, an Iowa native graduated from Mankato State, began working for Otter Tail-Wadena as an outreach worker/community organizer in 1975. Eventually, Nagle served as the Executive Director until 1998 when he left to serve as the ED of a sister agency, West Central Communities Action in Elbow Lake. Nagle received a Master’s Degree in Public and Non-profit Management from Moorhead State in 1990. Nagle lives in Friberg Township near Edwards and splits time between Otter Tail County and Shoreview with his wife, Debra Carpenter. Steve has been a member of the Underwood Unitarian Church since the mid 1990's.

March 16 - New Member Sunday, “Remembering Our Place in the Church Body.” Celebrants **Katy Olson and Ellen Eastby**, with Katy providing the talk and Ellen Eastby conducting the ceremony welcoming new members with involvement by the RE Kids.

March 23: Eric and Laurel Lein – “Is This a Tour? Or a Pilgrimage?” - Transylvania, August 2001. Thinking that they had signed up for a tour, they were asked early on to prepare for a pilgrimage. Laurel and Eric will explore the qualities of our life journeys.

As teenagers, Twin Cities’ residents, Eric and Laurel Lein joined a Smithsonian archaeological team in North Dakota, looking for fossils and arrowheads. Instead of relics, they found each other and they've been together for 50 event-filled years. Recent travels include five partner church visits to the “birthplace” of Unitarianism in Transylvania, Romania, and 20 years as leaders of Heart-to-Heart inclusive retreats for couples. "Our journeys outward have taken us inward...to the site of holy ground."

March 30 - In celebration of Women's History Month, members of the church are taking turns portraying women in history.

*Please note that news and information about coming speakers is also available on our **website***

www.ucofu.org.

The Month That Was

February 2 - Nancy Voss, a Social Worker who is the Otter Tail County Coordinator on Aging, spoke on the **Advanced Health Care Directive**. Nancy stressed that it is important to have conversations with our family members regarding our wishes and to be very specific in our Advanced Health Care Directive about CPR, brain death, persistent vegetative state, revived but not maintained, organ or whole body donation and to put our directives in writing and file it with our health care providers.

February 9 – Bob Worner spoke to the 2nd UU Principle focusing on America’s Health Care System being in **critical, but not yet, fatal condition**. Of the 25 leading countries, America is the only one with no universal health care and ranks low in most of the quality health care measures. 45 million Americans remain with no health insurance. Other countries have used one of four health care models and consider health care a citizen’s right and that they have a moral obligation to care for their citizens by providing health care to all. We have a moral responsibility as a church and as individuals to support this principle and change attitudes.

February 16 –After returning from her week of study at Meadville Lombard Theological School, Celebrant and UCU Board Chair, **Ellen Eastby** “preached” to us a “sermon” she entitled, **“A Rock in Her Pocket.”** Ellen did not want to give us her first sermon she did at the training because per Ellen, “frankly, it stunk!” This one did not stink. Ellen told how her 3 year old granddaughter, Lilly took the rock she’d collected from her pocket to give to the Papa Murphy’s waitress and Ellen stopped her. Then Ellen felt terrible realizing that she took away Lilly’s joy of giving and thus, indicated to Lilly that her treasure was not good enough- the one thing she had to give to a stranger. We all have treasures and by giving, our generosity is a spiritual practice that has a ripple effect. UCU has a quarry of treasure we give. Our Sunday offering keeps us a free church and we need to treat our offerings with honor and sacredness. We each left carrying a rock in our pockets.

February 23 – Writers from Writing as a Spiritual Practice – Diane Johnson introduced the writers from the Spiritual Writing Class who had focused on Heritage and Legacy in keeping with the 125 year anniversary of our church. Stephanie Sanderson read her “Saddlebag Parson,” John Miersch read Luke’s poem, “The Silo.” Diane Johnson read Liz Sweeder’s Legacy of Values as part of the 3 year writings of her memoir of her life in Otter Tail County. John Miersch had a humorous story he’d written about “The Journey” with the characters, Al and Merle. Bob Worner had writings about his growing up in a small town in North Dakota, “The General Store” and “The Cemetary.” Rod Broding, special guest. said that our stories are who we are and we all have stories as he shared “Grace.” Diane Johnson read her tribute to her mother, “Heritage, a Tribute. And Lucy McCommon, the newest member of the writing group whose ancestors were on the 2nd set of ships to land in America, shared her thoughts on “From a Heritage of Analysis to a Legacy of Balance.”

February Kids Religious Education

In February, the RE Kids compared the 1st UU Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person, to other faith's version of the golden rule principle. They made valentines to send some of our members and decorated cookies that were shared for after service treats. **Kids RE will meet again March 16 at 10:30 a.m. during Sunday Service.**

Historical Note: Marguarite Andrews found in her church drawer a listing of the Dedication Services from May 19, 1991. There were 15 young people dedicated that date!! Per Marguarite: "Three of them had babies last spring - two for the first time." The kids included: George, Robin and Jeffrey Wells, Chanomi, Jeremy and Andrew Maxwell-Parish, Cedar Roller-Olson, Mathew Hanson-Nelson, Laurel Ellison, Sage Becklund, Megan and Kelsey Gunvalson, Andrea and Megan Liming and Kelly Bahr.

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your ideas and articles for the Newsletter to: medmonds@arvig.net and/or maryanderson8380@msn.com with assistance from Cedar Walters @ cedar.rollerolson@gmail.com. Feedback is appreciated.

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 online at www.KSAX.com under "weather". You can also check the UCU website at www.ucofu.org or the facebook page.

Directory Updates

Even though we just did our first church directory, directories have a limited life span because contact information changes. We have placed a change form in the church copy of the directory located on the table in the foyer upstairs of the church. If your address, phone or e-mail information changes from what is recorded in the directory, please note on that form your change. Periodically, we will make the changes available so directory holders can update their personal directory.

UUA New Logo

From UUA President, Rev. Peter Morales, "Our new logo, for many, will be the first introduction to who we are. It's meant to entice a person to learn more. And it's doing just that. Our random testing groups of UUs and non-UUs described emotions and images evoked by this logo with words such as brave, enlightening, warm, spiritual, energizing, having integrity, welcoming and determined. Our logo is the first innovation among many that the UUA plans to implement to better tell our story." For a look at the new logo and more of the story, check out the UUA website at: <http://www.uua.org/news/pressroom/pressreleases/293249.shtml>

Annual Chili Dinner Fund Raiser

Are you ready for a fun night out for a good cause? Bring your friends and family to the Annual Chili Dinner Benefit! This year will be the 14th annual Chili Dinner to help support the Underwood Senior Nutrition Program. This event began as a way to connect with the larger community and raise the visibility of the Unitarian Church of Underwood in the community.

This event continues to be a highlight of the year. The dinner has raised over \$15,000 over the years for the program and we hope to continue the tradition this year!

Ron Roller has been the chili master for over 10 years, but after this year is planning on turning over the reigns – and the ‘secret’ recipe!! – to someone else. 25-30 other church members also help with the chili dinner that include cooks, servers, folks to set-up and clean up. Church members also sell tickets for the dinner. Shelly Hoffmiester and Katy Olson were the master chefs the first year, with Bob Timm and Katy Olson continuing until Ron’s reign began. The chili originally was cooked in huge kettles and scorching was a problem, so the church purchased cookers to simplify the cooking process.

Approximately 150-180 people attend the dinner every year, although one year 200 people attended! We hope to exceed our goal of 200 tickets again this year. It is a great joy to serve up the chili and watch the locals visiting with each other. It is often the only time that some of us UUsers visit with residents of Underwood. So sell your tickets and come join the fun!!

The Chili Dinner includes beef chili, turkey chili, vegetarian chili, chili toppings, cornbread, veggie trays, beverages and treats.

When: Friday, March 28th 5-7 pm

Where: Underwood Community Center

Tickets: \$9 Advance / \$10 Door, kids under 5 are free, kids 5-12 are \$4

Puppet Makers

Several of us made 55 puppets to send with Bernice Johnson for the Shan refugee children this past year. Bernice says the puppets went over so well that she’s wondering if we can make another **70** for next year. Anyone interested, please contact maryandeson8380@msn.com. We have until mid-October to get them done and send them with Bernice on her next trip over to Thailand.

Community Resources

Someplace Safe

Members of the Battle Lake U Group and the U Group Facilitators, dressed in white and black, helped serve for the Someplace Safe Annual Fund Raising Tea held February 15 at Legacy Hall in Fergus Falls.



Diane Johnson, Mary Anderson, Connie Stigen, Bob Worner, Mickie Edmonds, Carole Mitchell, Ross Larson, not pictured Deb Ferguson (photo courtesy of Diane Johnson)

Someplace Safe operates Community Advocacy Programs in 10 communities, located in Big Stone, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin Counties in West Central Minnesota. Each location is staffed by local advocates and volunteers trained to offer assistance to victims, survivors, family and friends who have been affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, or general crimes.

Someplace Safe operates Parenting Time Centers that are designed to assure that children can have safe and conflict-free access to parents through a variety of services delivered by trained providers.

For Community Outreach, Someplace Safe works with various individuals and groups in our communities to help educate and raise awareness about the work they do.

Someplace Safe has stores in Alexandria and Morris that exist to raise funds and awareness for Someplace Safe services, engage communities, recycle usable goods, and provide employment and volunteer opportunities.

Someplace Safe
PO Box 815
Fergus Falls, MN 56538-0815
218-739-3486
info@someplacesafe.info PO Box 815

Membership Committee

A little over one year ago the Membership Committee was formed that is chaired by Mary Anderson and comprised of: Ellen Eastby, Bob and Mary Worner, John and Janell Miersch, Shannon Smith, JoAnn Larson and Alisha Piekarski. The overall responsibilities of the Membership Committee are to: Greet visitors each Sunday, hold New Member UU sessions twice a year, help visitors & members find places to connect within the congregation, provide packets & publications, be attentive to member needs and provide caring supports.

The former Community Supports Committee comprised of Mary Worner, Connie Hamrum and Mary Anderson is merged now as the Caring Team under the umbrella of the Membership Committee.

During the past year the Membership Committee has overseen assembly and distribution of Visitor and New Member packets, coordinated with the Celebrants for New Member Orientation and Welcoming the 3rd Sunday of March and October each year, sponsored production of the 2014 UCU Church Directory, provided cards and support to members with special needs, and served as greeters at Sunday morning services.

One of the Committee's recommendations was for Board Members to contact all UCU members to gather information on whether their needs were being served. The Membership Committee worked with JoAnn Larson to update the Membership List and the Members and Friends lists using the Members criteria described below. Per JoAnn Larson, "our lists are the most up to date they have ever been!" Not every member and friend is in the Directory so for a full list, please contact Jo. We are now in process of updating the mailing lists for the Newsletters and Marguerite's reports.

Definition of Member

The Unitarian Universalist Association assesses each congregation's "fair share" based on certified members to use for the UU Annual Program Fund and to determine each congregation's number of delegates. The Annual Program Fund (APF) is the largest source of unrestricted income for the UUA. All funding for the APF comes from the member congregations and it funds many aspects of the UUA. The UUA redistributes a portion of the total APF contributions to all nineteen districts in the form of grants. As covenantal partners, all member congregations are expected to contribute annually to the APF in support of the UUA. For 2014, the fair share assessed by UUA is \$60/certified member and for MidAmerican UUA Region, \$22/certified member for a total of \$82.00/certified member.

How to count members for this certification process has always been a challenge. We want to pay our fair share that is at a level consistent with our membership number and still remain fiscally responsible so we can meet our other budget needs to serve our fellowship and community. Last year our fair share based on a certification of 60 members constituted 11% of our budget.

UUA - How is membership defined?

"That is up to your congregation. Most congregations define members as those who would be eligible to vote in a congregational meeting, in other words, the 'voting members.' "

The UCU Policy Statement #2 Article II Definitions B. describes "A voting member is one who has signed the membership book and completed any of the following: has participated in an activity of the congregation in the past year, has made a recorded financial contribution since the beginning of the fiscal year, or expresses verbally, or in writing, a desire to remain a member."

Over the past year, the Membership Committee made extensive efforts to update our current membership list. We, like other UU Fellowships, have a number of people who attend regularly, those who attend periodically, some who consider themselves members but are unable to participate, and others who come on occasion to enjoy our featured speakers or other offerings. Board members also made contact with all those who had at one time signed the membership book and/or considered themselves a member of UCU. From the information gathered, we developed two lists: one of members and one of members and friends so as not to lose track of less active members or individuals who visit.

Then the question became, do we certify to UUA every individual listed on the membership list? All those on the membership list meet the UCU voting member requirement. However, the UUA leaves it open to each congregation how to define *certified* members.

After consideration of the of the many factors, the board determined that our criteria for certifying a member will be to list one person per household to assure receipt of one copy of the UU World magazine to each unit. For the 2014 budget year our certified number of members will be 60.

This method provides us an objective method rather than subjective judgment on activeness of anyone indicating their desire to have UCU membership status. Our fair share for dues assessment for 2014-2015 fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) will be \$4920.00, again 11% of our budget. This far exceeds the 4.3% UUA assesses to congregations of 550 or more or the 7% of annual expenses that they assess Southern Region UU congregations. We continue to await a more definitive method from UUA for our region for equitable fair share assessment.

Invitation to Join UCU

To become a member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Underwood, you indicate your wish by signing the membership book. We invite you to participate in new member orientation and the welcoming new member ceremony that is held twice a year, the next planned for March 16, 2014. Orientation for those who have recently joined will be Sunday, March 9 at 9:15 a.m. Please see JoAnn Larson for further details.

Gifts They Bring Our Greeters

A core of volunteers are there to greet us both downstairs and upstairs each Sunday morning making sure we are welcomed and recognized by name or as a newer face. They may be a member of the Membership Committee, the Perham U Group, the RE Kids or another steady door opener. Generally, you'll see Bob or Mary Worner, John and Janell Miersch, Donn & Marlys Siems, JoAnn Larson, Skylar and Jewel Swanson with Sterling and Precious Czeck, Mary Wunderlich, Sequoia Ann and the younger Luke Anderson. Marguarite Andrews with her smiling presence, Shannon Smith, Bev Backstrom or John Minge, or it might be Katy Olson or Cedar & Hart Walters. Whoever greets us, welcomes us to our service gathering, hands us the program, shows us to the visitor's sign-in book if new, we appreciate your warmth, smiles and hugs. If you'd like to join this group, get your name on JoAnn Larson's list and she'll contact you with scheduling options. Thank you, Greeters!

***"May we be reminded here of our highest aspirations,
And inspired to bring our gifts of love
and service to the altar of humanity.
May we know once again that we are not isolated beings
But connected, in mystery and miracle, to the universe,
to this community and to each other."
(#434 Anonymous from Singing the Living Tradition)***

From the Unitarian Universalist Association Of Congregations

On Saturday in January 2014, 1,500 UUs from across the country joined our UUA president, the Rev. Peter Morales, at the Moral March on Raleigh in Raleigh, NC. They marched with thousands of others, to raise awareness for voting rights, livable wages, health care, and other issues of equality and justice in North Carolina and elsewhere.

The message below is from Rev. Morales and the Rev. Geoffrey Black, UCC General Minister and President. The message is part of the *Thirty Days of Love* and reflects on reaching out in love and working together for change.

"Thanks to you and everyone who embraces the principles of love and justice, we now have nearly 20 states with marriage equality, and we continue to move closer to comprehensive immigration reform that will recognize the human worth and dignity of the 11 million undocumented individuals living in the United States. At yesterday's march, we stood side by side with the NAACP and other partners to show that we are equally committed to voting rights and access to a fair and open democracy in this country. While there is still much more to do, let's take this time to pause, reflect, and celebrate all we have accomplished together and all that we will accomplish in the future."

Women's History Month

Women's History Month is an annual declared month worldwide that highlights the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. Since 1995, U.S. presidents have issued annual proclamations designating the month of March as Women's History Month.

State departments of education also began to encourage celebrations of Women's History Month as a way to promote equality among the sexes in the classroom. Within a few years, thousands of schools and communities began to celebrate Women's History Month. They planned engaging and stimulating programs about women's roles in history and society, with support and encouragement from governors, city councils, school boards, and the U.S. Congress.

In March 2011, the Barack Obama administration released a report, *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, showing women's status in the U.S. in 2011 and how it had changed over time. This report was the first comprehensive federal report on women since the report produced by the Commission on the Status of Women in 1963. *(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)*

Here at UCU, we will be honoring women with the program at Sunday Service March 30. Meantime, we wish to recognize a couple of women significant to our congregation.

Frances Ellison April 3, 1913 – April 29, 2003

Some of you may have noticed a commemorative plaque on the door entering the sanctuary in memory of "Frances Ellison." Some, but not all of us know that upon her death, Frances Ellison, a member of the Unitarian Church of Underwood left the church a very large bequest of \$480,000. It is because of those funds, that UCU was able to remodel the church building in 2005 and to establish the funds for the Empowerment Grants awarded each year.

Frances was born in Grant County and graduated in 1930 from Herman High School. From 1931-1942, she was employed at the Minnesota Department of Health in Minneapolis. She enlisted in the Army Air Corps on December 21, 1942 and made a career of the military. Frances was the first woman in Grant County to join the service. "Letters from Home" contains the letters written by Viola (Ellison) Nelson to her younger sister, Frances, when she was serving in WWII. Seldom in those letters addressed to Frances, does the sister mention where Frances is, but sometimes congratulates her on a promotion. The book is available from the Elbow Lake Library and the Viking Book Mobile and is on display at the Elbow Lake Historical Center.

During her years in the military, Frances served a two-year tour in Panama. In 1952, she was sent to London, where she served in the Air Ministry as an exchange officer with the Royal Air Force. She had many interesting experiences working with the British under Winston Churchill. She retired from the Air Force as a Major on May 31, 1963.

She attended the University of Oklahoma and then worked at the mental health center at Norman, Oklahoma. In 1972 Frances moved to Fergus Falls and was a dedicated caregiver for her parents, Charles Sr. and Roxy (Stillman) Ellison. She had a close relationship with her nieces and nephews and their families. Ed Ellison, one of her nephews still lives in Herman, Minnesota.

Frances became a member of the Unitarian Church of Underwood in the 70's. Marguarite Andrews found in her "church drawer" a 1986 annual meeting questionnaire in Frances' handwriting:

Type of services desired: UU Ministers Social Concerns: (Frances wrote "occasionally")

Social Concerns: x

Music: x

Poetry and arts : x (all three checked by Frances.)

I would be willing to be a member of the following committees: Hospitality (coffee and Treats) X

Any other concerns or comments:

"I am a new member of the Fellowship and I have enjoyed and benefited so much from the association. The programs have been so appealing and stimulating, I can only hope for more of the same, at this point, I do not have any specific considerations." Signed with Frances' address sticker.

Frances' volunteer work included the Fergus Falls Historical Museum and introducing Great Books to schoolchildren. Her hobbies were reading, music, flowers, Twins baseball and current events. After a fall in 1999, she made her home at the Pioneer Retirement Community in Fergus Falls. Because of her health issues, Frances was seldom able to attend UCU or go on other outings during her later years.

Her nephew, Jim Nelson wrote these words: "My aunt Frances and I shared many things, including our sense of humor. I probably need not say she was my favorite aunt. She was well traveled in Europe and Central America while in the military. In the military she achieved the rank of major, the highest rank women were allowed at the time. She had many stories of her travels and the cultures thereof that she would tell us, which I very much enjoyed.

Examples:

She liked cats, as do I. She had a cat, Patty that she nursed back to health after it was hit by a car in front of her house after no small expense in vet bills. Frances told me once about being in a restaurant in France when the proprietor brushed a cat off the counter and plopped down a loaf of bread and began to cut it; no problem. I found the story more humorous because I knew Frances as a meticulous housekeeper.

When Frances and my first wife Cheryl (who died of cancer) were discussing their travels in Europe Frances said "What impressed her about Venice was the unique aroma." Cheryl said "Yes!" I said "Now you've got my curiosity up. What was this unique aroma?" Frances said "Like a sewer" Other people have independently confirmed this to me.

She said "I like baseball, I don't really care who has been arrested for a felony [pro football players were having their problems at that time] or who is using what drugs. I like baseball".

I think Frances was attracted to the Unitarian Church by a Credo that encourages independent thinking, thus the affinity for cats. Specifically to the Underwood Church because Bill Holms (whom we both enjoyed) was a frequent speaker."

Kris Warhol and other UCU friends, including then Board President, Rick Long, visited Frances at the Pioneer Retirement Home in her last years. Kris has these recollections of Frances:

"How often is enough? Sometimes I visited Frances weekly, other times, monthly. Still today, within an instant, I can recall it and still be sitting next to her. Frances' room was a light yellow with her curio cabinet filled to the brim of what remained of her extraordinary life. Books were her delight. She enjoyed history and always on her table, the current best seller novel resided. One book she had was of Abigail Adam's life. In one of her letters to her husband, John Adams, Abigail wrote: 'Remember the Ladies....I long to hear you have declared an independency... I desire you would remember the ladies and be favorable to them and be more generous than your ancestors.' Francis had a stroke and was found with a pile of books on top of her.

When Frances' sister, Viola stayed at the Pioneer, Frances came alive. When Jim Gray (another shut-in, Kris visited) recovered at the Pioneer, she became animated. She put lipstick on that noon and as I wheeled her to the dining room after the meal asking if she'd like to stop by his room. 'YES!' Jim and Frances shared being in the Service together." (Budd Andrews also remembers sharing military experiences with Frances. Budd and Frances were both in the Army Air Corps. Then it was part of the army, and later separated and became the Air Force).

"We would be in a discussion and suddenly she stopped talking. I would fill in the blanks. She was a woman of substance, indeed. She had many stories to tell from her days in London, her tour of Panama, everyday being like a visit to the farm because of the many exotic creatures found there.

Frances was open minded and a liberal thinker and opinionated! But she kept a quiet presence at the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Even her large gift was made in a quiet way that was so unexpected and so surprised us.

I am forever changed by these visits. The best and only requirement or measure of success from my visits became her smile. And then there was laughter that often filled her room like a welcomed lost friend paying respect to a divine woman."

Her legacy lives on in our ability at UCU to maintain our beautiful facility and to award Empowerment Grants each year to social justice, environment and education interests. We are most grateful as we remember and appreciate Frances Ellison.

Information on Frances was obtained from her obituary, her nephews, Ed Ellison and Jim Nelson, Kris Warhol and Marguerite Andrews, UCU members.

Letter to the Tribune

Liz Sweder had the following letter published in the Star Tribune December 27, 2013. Per Liz, “I dashed off this letter to the Tribune some time ago, a spur of the moment reaction to a column in the Tribune, where the writer seemed to be complaining because her parents and friends kept asking where she was applying or wanted to go to college. I didn’t really expect they would run my letter, and was surprised that they did.”

COLLEGE DECISIONS

Don’t mind queries; be grateful of opportunity

To Mary Patricia Ross, the author of “A teen knows the question is coming” (Opinion Exchange, Dec. 24): You don’t know me, but if you did, I might be one of those boring adults asking to which colleges you are thinking of applying. But I wouldn’t just be making small talk.

No, I would be genuinely interested. Thinking back 60 years ago to the limited options I had (or thought I had), the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis campus, was it. I lived in Minneapolis, and my parents couldn’t afford to send me to some distant private college. Although I was near the top of my class at an excellent public high school, no counselor ever suggested I apply for a scholarship. When the school counselor rounded up the senior girls for a talk, we were all advised to go into elementary education or nursing, so if we ever “needed something to fall back on” (that is, if marriage didn’t work out), we could always get a job. The current generation of women has unlimited choices! Please, please, appreciate how very fortunate you are.

Well-meaning adults truly care about you. Quite possibly, they envy you! Seize the moment, enjoy and appreciate that you are standing on the cusp of your life. Best of luck.

LIZ SWEDER, Fergus Falls, Minn.

(<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/letters/237356041.html?page=2&c=y>)

UCU’s First Woman

Board Chair

Marguerite Andrews

1985-1988

Per the history written by Norm Kolstad, Anna Kolstad (great-great aunt-in law of Norm and Ellen Eastby) was named as a trustee at the incorporating meeting of the newly founded Unitarian Church in September 1889. The group at that early date gave suffrage to women. The Women’s Alliance was organized in 1911 and made significant financial contributions including the payments, maintenance and rental of the parsonage next door and served hundreds of dinners charging 25 cents for each.

But it wasn’t until 1985 that a woman was elected President of the UCU Board. And that woman was Marguerite Andrews. Let’s explore her history.

Sometime in 1973 Marguerite found UCU. As Marguerite tells it: "I was on my journey somewhere between the Methodists and Congregationalists listening to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir that was on the radio Sunday mornings. My favorite part was five minutes of The Spoken Word by Richard Evans and his best was: "Decide who you admire, with whom you want to be and earn the right to be there." That Mormon message 50 years ago set me up for the Unitarians but it took years for me to find it.

When Underwood native, John Gronner with newly hired museum director, Sharon Voigt came to Pelican to ask if I would run for the board of the Historical Society, I got up the nerve to ask about the Unitarian Church. How could I know that John was Mr. Unitarian? He said HE believed that 'God was in you and me, Heaven is here on earth and I am my brother's keeper.' The speaker the next Sunday was John Cummins. Sharon and I went. I was hooked. We both were."

Margarite for some time became what she describes as "a closet Unitarian." Budd, at the time was a Deacon at the Congregation church and one Sunday, he donned his suit and Marguerite asked what he was doing. Budd said, "Well, it doesn't look like you're going to quit." So he joined her at UCU.

She continues: "Get speakers to come to Underwood" was John Gronner's order when I went to the Prairie Star meeting in 1978. I even tried to get the UU National President, Paul Carnes, but he had not long to live. I asked Scotty Meek of Rochester (who did come later) but when I told John I had gotten Betty Mills, he said he had wanted for years to get Betty but his board did not want a woman. Betty was so popular she came annually, and even for our Centennial in 1989; she, John Cummins and Stefan Jonasson were among our special speakers."

"One of the biggest deals for our church was when John Gronner got the NATIONAL award for any church member, the Unsung Unitarianist Award. Because he was in ill health, he sent me to the Annual gathering which was in East Lansing, Michigan and that got my picture included on the front of a 1979 UU World, receiving that award.

There I met famous Dana Greeley, who in 1961 was the first president of the combined Unitarians and Universalists into the current UU organization. When I told him that John had named his son Dana, Of course, Greeley knew this, and told me. "And if I had a son, he would have been named John." They had met as young men at a national gathering, and remained close. My memory is not the best, but I think Dana came to speak at John's memorial service in 1981. At the time, we were thinking, "and John is missing this!"

Then there is the article in the Fergus Falls Daily Journal dated January 9, 1986 on the Front Page right under the story of Reagan's freezing Libyan assets. The headline read: "**Unitarian church confounds even its members.**"

Ken Korczak, the reporter, talked to a number of members in this rather long story, but no one else but Margarite would give their names. He also included a lot of the church history.

Marguerite says: "A lot of flak came my way with the quote the paper used as the catch line: "If you were to try to pinpoint what Unitarians believe, you would undoubtedly leave someone out. There is so much diversity." MARGUERITE ANDREWS!!!" "Today, with our chalice reading every Sunday, we say about the same thing - no single belief includes us here, no disbelief excludes us - but some members at the time were shocked."

Marguerite also recently found in her church drawer "the fancy "Betty Gorshe Heritage Award" given "to recognize those who have made a significant contribution to preserving, understanding and celebrating our Unitarian Universalist History" and presented to Marguerite Andrews, UU of Underwood MN." Marguerite's daughter, Katie, in April 2010 drove her to Davenport, Iowa for the Prairie Star District meeting where she was presented the award. The certificate given further states that: "Marguerite's desire and passion for preserving our UU history includes sending a summary of the services to over 140 congregants, recording conversations with long time members of the Unitarian Church of Underwood and assembling a scrapbook. Perhaps the most significant of her work in exemplifying this award has been her involvement in writing the history of Camp UniStar while sorting through binders and boxes of information. She is an active member of the Otter Tail County Historical Society and serves as a mentor at a local nursing home. As a member of the Underwood congregation for more than 35 years, she also served on the Board and is the church's constant greeter, welcoming each new member with enthusiasm and genuine interest. She sets the standards for others and is an inspiration for all who get to know her!"

And that's our Marguerite who still continues to greet when she can and is still an inspiration to all who get to know her.

MAYA ANGELOU'S'

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE ...

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE ...
enough money within her control to move out
and rent a place of her own,
even if she never wants to or needs to...
something perfect to wear if the employer,
or date of her dreams wants to see her in an hour...

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE ..
a youth she's content to leave behind....
a past juicy enough that she's looking forward to
retelling it in her old age....
a set of screwdrivers, a cordless drill, and a black lace bra...
one friend who always makes her laugh... and one who lets her cry...

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE

a good piece of furniture not previously owned by anyone else in her family...
eight matching plates, wine glasses with stems,
and a recipe for a meal,
that will make her guests feel honored...

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE ..
a feeling of control over her destiny.....
how to fall in love without losing herself..

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...
how to quit a job,
break up with a lover,
and confront a friend without;
ruining the friendship....

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW....
when to try harder... and WHEN TO WALK AWAY...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...
that she can't change the length of her calves,
the width of her hips, or the nature of her parents..
that her childhood may not have been perfect...but it's over...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...
what she would and wouldn't do for love or more.....
how to live alone... even if she doesn't like it...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW.. .
whom she can trust,
whom she can't,
and why she shouldn't take it personally...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...
where to go...
be it to her best friend's kitchen table..
or a charming Inn in the woods...
when her soul needs soothing...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...
What she can and can't accomplish in a day...
a month...and a year...

"Stop wearing your wishbone where you backbone ought to be!" Elizabeth Gilbert. Spring IS coming. Soon the violets will bloom.



| Painting by Mickie Edmonds

U Groups

Since the inception of the U Groups three years ago, Stephanie Sanderson and Ron Graham acted as co-facilitators of the facilitators. Ron is now stepping back but Stephanie will continue her leadership role through May along with Connie Stigen. Continue to watch for evidence of the U groups' church and community projects for this study year.

March Topic: Who Am I?

"Religion survives because it answers three questions that every reflective person must ask. Who am I? Why am I here? How then shall I live?" – Jonathan Sacks

"Learn to...be what you are, and learn to resign with a good grace all that you are not." Henri Frederic Amiel

2013-1014

U Group Meets:

Fergus Falls Evening Group

2nd Tuesday of the Month - 7 p.m.

Home of John & Janelle Miersch

Co-Facilitators – Diane Johnson & Carole Mitchell

Fergus Falls Afternoon Group

3rd Thursday of the Month – 4:30 p.m.

Home of Diana Ziesemer

Co-Facilitators – Bonnie Bell & Tere Mann

Battle Lake Afternoon Group

4th Tuesday of the Month – 3:30 p.m.

Home of Ross & Mary Larson

Co-Facilitators – Bob Worner & Stephanie Sanderson

Perham Afternoon Group

2nd Thursday of the Month – 3:30 p.m.

Home of Mary Anderson

Co-Facilitators – Mary Anderson & Mary Worner

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, Norman Kolstad, John Miersch, David Sanderson, Dave McRoberts, Mary Worner, Don Siems, and David Wass. Absent: Alisha Piekarski, and Mary Anderson.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ellen Eastby at 12:19 p.m.

The agenda was approved (Wass/Sanderson).

The minutes of the December 18, 2013 meeting were approved as printed (Miersch/Siems).

Reports:

Treasurer: David Wass

Program Committee: no report

Outreach Committee: Ellen Eastby

Facilities Committee: Dave McRoberts

Purchase of a \$300 gift card for Duane Swenson as a gratuity for snow removal was authorized (Sanderson/McRoberts).

Planned giving: David Sanderson

Membership Committee: no report

Old Business: A Celebrant Policy was ratified (McRoberts/Sanderson). A determination of the certified membership count for the UUA Annual Program Fund (Fair Share) was tabled.

New Business: An offer by Lucie Shores to present a workshop was referred to the Program Committee and Celebrants. Other topics: The 125th anniversary celebration, current Goals and Objectives, and stewardship.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Kolstad