



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



(Photo courtesy of Susan Groff, October 2015)

***March 2016 Newsletter***  
**Unitarian Church of Underwood**

206 North Main Street  
Underwood

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org)

Email: [ucofu@ucofu.org](mailto:ucofu@ucofu.org)

| March 2016                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                              |                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |              |
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| ◀ February 2016                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                              |                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                              | April 2016 ▶ |
| Sun                                                                                                                                                                      | Mon                                                                | Tue                                                                                                                                                                | Wed                                                                                                          | Thu                                                | Fri                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Sat          |
|                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                    | 1                                                                                                                                                                  | 2                                                                                                            | 3                                                  | 4                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 5            |
| <p>6 Adult RE 9:15 Prophets led by John Minge (LL) Child Care</p> <p>Talk – Katy Olson<br/>“Membership – What Does It Mean?”<br/>New Member Welcoming</p>                | <p>7</p> <p>AA 7 pm</p>                                            | <p>8 Battle Lake U Group @ Susan &amp; Dave’s 3:00 pm<br/>Foundation Advisory 5:30 pm @ church</p> <p>Erhard/Fergus Falls U Group @ Carole Mitchell’s 7 – 9 pm</p> | <p>9 Alexandria U Group 7 pm @ Widseth, Smith &amp; Nolting Office Bldg</p>                                  | <p>10 Perham U Group @ Mary Anderson’s 3:30 pm</p> | <p>11 Church reserved<br/>Private Piano Salon 4:30-9pm</p>                                                                                                                                                   | 12           |
| <p>13 U Kids &amp; U Teens RE 10:30-11:30<br/>TALK- Kakac &amp; Kildegaard<br/>“Women on the Prairie” songs &amp; poems</p>                                              | <p>14 Worship Committee 9:30 am @ Susan Groff’s</p> <p>AA 7 pm</p> | <p>15 Fergus Falls U Group @ Tere Mann’s 6:00 p.m.</p>                                                                                                             | <p>16 Speakers Committee 5:30 pm @ church<br/>Finance Committee 5:30 @ church<br/>Board 6:30 pm @ church</p> | 17                                                 | 18                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 19           |
| <p>20 Mindfulness Sitting 9-10 am<br/>Child Care<br/>Talk: Stephanie Goeger Sandahl<br/>Wellness</p>                                                                     | <p>21</p> <p>AA 7 pm</p>                                           | 22                                                                                                                                                                 | 23                                                                                                           | 24                                                 | 25                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 26           |
| <p>27 Adult RE 9:15-10:15 am<br/>Old Testament - Bob Worner, (LL)<br/>Children’s RE – U Kids 10:30-11:30 am<br/>TALK – Kevin Jagoe-<br/>“Community Can Be Holy Now”-</p> | <p>28</p> <p>AA 7 pm</p>                                           | <p>29 U Group Facilitators @ 7 pm @ Connie Stigen’s</p>                                                                                                            | 30                                                                                                           | 31                                                 | <p><b>Notes: Meeting dates should be sent by the 28<sup>th</sup> of each month to be included in the next Newsletter to:</b><br/> <a href="mailto:maryanderson8380@msn.com">maryanderson8380@msn.com</a></p> |              |

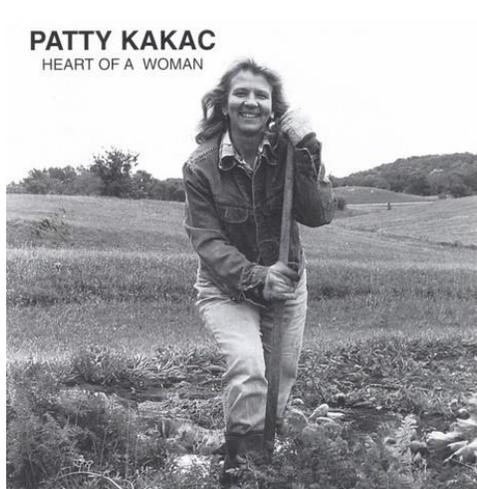
## More About March Speakers

**March 6 – Katy Olson, “Membership; What does it mean?”** Katy will explore what it means to be a member of the UU's? How she came to be a Unitarian Universalist and her personal journey into the heart of this church. “Why I am proud to define myself as a UU.” **New Member Welcoming by Ellen Eastby and John Minge, Celebrants.**

**March 13 - Patty Kakac & Athena Kildegaard, "Women on the Prairie in Song and Poetry."** Two of our favorites, singer/songwriter Patty Kakac and Poet, Althena Kildegaard will explore and celebrate the lives of women on the prairie through song and verse. Join these two talented women for a program of creative work inspired by history and story.

Patty Kakac has been singing and writing professionally since 1978. Her instruments include: guitar, autoharp, harmonica and piano. She has performed throughout the upper Midwest both as a solo performer, as well as with other musicians. She has produced and recorded 5 albums that have been played around the world. Her music has been used for numerous plays and videos as well as a PBS documentary.

Athena Kildegaard is the author of four books of poetry: *Rare Momentum*, *Bodies of Light* (a Minnesota Book Award finalist), *Cloves & Honey* (a Midwest Book award finalist) and *Ventriloquy* (forthcoming March 2016). Her poems and other work has been published in journals around the country and Canada. She teaches at the University of Minnesota, Morris.



**Athena Kildegaard**

**March 20 - Stephanie Goeger Sandahl MA**, Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor with Generations, Inc Counseling Associates. Her topic will relate to cultivating wellness.

**March 27 – Kevin W. Jagoe, “Community Can Be Holy Now”**- Where do we UU's find the holy during this season of renewal? How does modern life connect to religious experience? Come to listen to one humanist seminarian's thoughts about these questions during this Easter season.

Kevin holds a BA in anthology and criminal justice as well as a Masters’ in Nonprofit Management from Hamline University in Saint Paul. He is a graduate of the Humanist Institute with a Certificate of Humanist Studies and Leadership and is currently studying for his Master of Divinity at Meadville Lombard Theological School. Kevin is an active member of First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis where he also serves as Youth Director. He helped found Hamline University’s Values in Action Program, the first to bring the program developed by the Humanist Community at Harvard to another campus. He currently volunteers with the American Humanist Association as the LGBTQ Humanist Council Coordinator and serves on the Board of the Unitarian Universalist Humanist Association. He also currently serves as an intern for Justice & Religious Leadership at the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA).

## **The Month That Was**

**February 7 – Services cancelled due to weather.**

**February 14 – “What is Love?” with a number of readings.**

**Dancers by Stephanie Sanderson**– the Old Appaloosa and the fiery Spanish mare – from the thin, arthritic old man to a Lord – can it be love?

Poems of love read by **Katy Olson**

**Diane Johnson** shared writings from her blog and treasures from her treasure chest – a box of carved ivory and tortoise shell that she received from her godfather. “A heart is not judged by how much you love, but how much you are loved by others.” (from her son, Kevin).

*Teach Me to Love* by Louise Knight Wheatly Cook read by **Liz Sweder**: “Ambition ruled my life, I longed to do great things, that all my little world might view and whisper, ‘Wonderful! Today I have but one petition, Lord - teach me to love.’”

*Love First* by Rebecca Parker read by **Mary Anderson**: “What we need is a revolution in our values...We need to love from the start – not as an emergency strategy when everything has gone wrong.”

**February 21** – Ellen Eastby’s inspiration for her talk, *May Our Spirit of Love Surround You* came from the song that we sing to our children every Sunday morning as they leave the sanctuary.

The words are: "Go now in peace, go now in peace, may our spirit of love surround you, everywhere, everywhere, you may go.

She started by telling a few stories about the joy and laughter that children bring to the church community.

She was interested in having perspectives outside of her own experience of the relationship between the church community and children. As she was googling she found a UU World parenting blog by Michelle Richards. Michelle wrote two books, *Come into the Circle: Worshipping with Children* and *Tending the Flame: The Art of Unitarian Universalist Parenting*. Michelle has lots of good information about Unitarian Universalism and children. Her blog can be found at: [www.uuworld.org/hashtag/parentingblog](http://www.uuworld.org/hashtag/parentingblog).

Ellen went on to talk about the word spirit, which had more than 30 different dictionary definitions. As an introduction to the word love, the story of 4 year old Billy was told. He said, "When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You know that your name is safe in their mouth."

Love is a complex emotion that means different things to different people. Writer C. Joy Bell C. believes that "it should be a privilege to be able to say 'I love you' to someone...A privilege is earned...you have to earn the right to be believed."

Rudolph W. Nemser felt that "...A child is a man in potential, the flower whose unfolding takes place under the careful tutelage and shelter of love. And upon each of us, parents, sponsors, teachers, rests the obligation for this love." He went on to say, "Love with understanding, knowing that within each child are you and I and all humanity."

Ellen raised the question: if each one of our kids is carrying a piece of us with them, what piece will that be? And if within each child is all of humanity, are we giving enough of ourselves, of our love, to counteract the truly horrific aspects of humanity?

She also said that we need to ask ourselves, is the way we show our spirit of love enough to have earned the right to tell our kids that we love them, as C. Joy Bell C. philosophized? And to make it more personal she invited the congregation to ask themselves, "Is the way I show my spirit of love enough to have earned the right to tell our kids that I love them?"

Asking these questions puts in to perspective the seriousness of loving children. It is an awesome responsibility. "And if all of this is a little daunting, think of our payoff. We get to see our children grow. And amaze us. And delight us. And, okay, occasionally disappoint us." Loving children brings us tremendous joy.

## Celebrating and Dedicating our Children



Baby Shower for John Henry Christopher Mertz with parents, Jen Walla and David Mertz

**February 28 - Betsy Wells** read an edited version of a talk that David Brooks gave at the Aspen Ideas Festival in 2014, entitled “The Road to Depth: Thinking about What Character Is”. The entire talk, on video, can be found at: [www.aspenideas.org/](http://www.aspenideas.org/). Just search for David Brooks “The Road to Depth” ...Also, if you google David Brooks “The Road to Depth...” The following link will come up, which will take you to the text version: [\[PDF\]The Road to Depth Thinking about what Character Is.](#)

### Summary:

Inside each of us are two sides of our nature, which are sometimes in conflict with each other, but with which we strive for balance. One is the “resume” side, called Adam I by Soloveitchik. This is the external Adam who wants to build, produce, accomplish things. The other is called Adam II, which is the “eulogy” side of us. This is the internal, moral part of us.

Our society nurtures Adam I. How can we develop Adam II? Often we see Adam II reflected in people that we would describe as “deep.” We all can identify people that we think of as “deep” people – Pope Francis, Ghandi, etc. Several questions/answers can help us to define what this means:

How does depth happen?

*-It develops over a lifetime, by the decisions we make.*

Where is this depth?

*It is not in the cerebellum or frontal cortex, but is in a metaphorical moral center; the soul.*

What is it that we admire about people who are “deep”?

*They possess a moral framework, and are aesthetically beautiful. They reflect virtue, which simply means “having your loves in the right order.”*

How can we develop depth?

- -by love which connects us to others, reminds us that we are not in control of ourselves, and humbles us.
- -by suffering in which you realize that you are not in control, you are thrust outside of yourself, and it thrusts you toward morality
- -by internal struggle with our own weaknesses
- -by obedience/commitment – how we choose to respond to problems around us
- -by acceptance which is unearned, unmerited acceptance of ourselves; grace

*“Nature is full of genius, full of the divinity; so that not a snowflake escapes its fashioning hand.”*

*-Henry David Thoreau*

## Save These Dates!

### March 6 – Welcoming of New Members

To become a voting 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 6, 2016**. Please see JoAnn Larson for further details.

**April 1 - Annual Chili Dinner**, Please plan to volunteer to help, bring store-made desserts, sell tickets, and hang event promotional posters around the area. Thank you!!

### April 3 – Seedling Orders Due

### April 17 – Breakfast, Abbreviated Service and Annual Meeting

**April 24 – Pat West on Climate Politics – From Understanding to Strategy Service**  
– Sunday speaker with guided discussion following treats.

**April 29 – May 1 – MidAmerica Regional Assembly in St. Paul Early Bird Registration by March 31.**



Regional Assembly 2016

## The **WHO** in the New Era of Unitarian Universalism

April 29 - May 1 • St. Paul, MN

[MidAmericaRegionUUA.org/ra](http://MidAmericaRegionUUA.org/ra)

We'll be at the [InterContinental Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront](#)  
11 East Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55101

Mark your calendars now for April 29-May 1 and plan to attend the Regional Assembly in St. Paul.

We are asking the Board to approve funds to pay the early bird registration fee by March 31 of \$175.00/adult or child. We will book one hotel room for the two nights so that we have a gathering place and an opportunity to invite others to network. **We are hoping to get a large contingency from UCU so we can both represent UCU and bring back great information. If you want to attend, please contact Connie Stigen or Mary Anderson. Connie and Mary will act as coordinators for registration, logistics, etc.**

**Amounts eligible for UCU reimbursement will be dependent upon the number who sign up! So let us know quickly so we can make the budget request to the Board!!**

### Theme and Keynotes

#### Regional Assembly 2016: The WHO in the New Era of Unitarian Universalism

Who will we Unitarian Universalists need to be, to be relevant? How will we get there? Who will be joining us on this journey?

The key note presenters will be:

**Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen** – Leadership Development Associate for Youth and Young Adults of Color at the UUA.

**Rev. Jeremy Nickel** – Minister of the Mission Peak UU congregation in Fremont, CA.

**Kenny Wiley** – UU World senior editor and Director of Faith Formation

They will each present highlights of their own work as they look forward to the future of Unitarian Universalism. There will be conversations with each other, and they will take questions from participants.

And, as always at Regional Assembly, there will be worship services to inspire us and workshops to stimulate our thinking, along with plenty of opportunities to have fun with new and old UU friends.

There will also be a “virtual” banner parade with submitted photos of banners and churches. To be a part of the parade we can submit our photos by April 1.

The assembly will be held at the InterContinental St Paul Riverfront, 11 East Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul. If you don't have friends or relatives to stay with, you can book at the special rate of \$129/night. (Please let Mary or Connie know). There is also a special parking rate of \$12/day.

## **Prophetic Partners: A Capacity-Building Workshop for UU Justice Leaders**

MUUSJA in collaboration with MidAmerica Region is sponsoring a lunch and workshop for the afternoon of April 29, from 12:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the Unity Church-Unitarian, 733 Portland Avenue, St. Paul. Space is limited so register early.

### **Registration**

- **Casual Lunch + Workshop Registration – \$40.00 (USD)**

Registration fee includes a casual buffet lunch (soup, salad, beverage & dessert), to be served between 12-1pm, and access to full workshop, 1-4pm.

- **Workshop Registration ONLY – \$25.00 (USD)**

Registration fee includes participation in program ONLY, 1-4pm.

**For complete information on the assembly and workshop, see:**

**<https://www.midamericauua.org> and [muusja@org/event](mailto:muusja@org).**

### **CALLING ALL WRITERS!**

We invite anyone in the congregation to contribute an original piece of writing for our next Program on the Principles (to be scheduled). We will be creatively addressing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Principle – “Justice, equality and compassion in human relations.” This is similar to the 1<sup>st</sup> Principle, which centers around the inherent worth and dignity of every person, but takes it into a broader understanding that might encompass larger groups of people.

Our program usually includes about 5 contributors, with pieces being 2 to 5 minutes long. We also invite you to compose the Opening, Closing, and Responsive readings. There will be a pre-program meeting (to be scheduled) where we share our writings and decide which would be most suitable. Any questions – contact Diane Johnson, [dbjohnson1938@gmail.com](mailto:dbjohnson1938@gmail.com), (218)736-9001.

*Bridge of Stars*  
*By Stephanie Sanderson*

*Before me sails a bridge of stars,  
Arcing up,  
A brilliant crescent - like a bride's crown  
In the cobalt heavens.  
Glittering points of light  
Puncture the dark emptiness of space.  
I stand at the edge of eternity.  
Come, brave souls.  
Together we walk the starlit way,  
Into life and back.*

**U Groups  
Someplace Safe Tea**



**Alisha Bell, Judy Carpenter, Diane Johnson, Tere Mann, Janell Miersch, Kaleigh, Connie Stigen, Heather Czeck, Carole Mitchell and other servers.**



**Someplace Safe Tea Table**

For their third year, several of the U Group Facilitators and others served at the Someplace Safe Fund Raising Tea on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Again, the tea was determined a huge success!! As part of their covenant, each year, each U group selects a church project and a community project.

#### **2015-1016 U Group Schedule**

- **Battle Lake Afternoon Group** – 2nd Tuesday of each month resuming in March at Susan and Daves @ 3 p.m. (see above). Co-facilitators: Bob Worner, Joanne Cress and Kris Warhol
- **Fergus Falls/Erhard Evening Group** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at the home of Carole Mitchell, 33928 County Highway 27, Erhard. Co-facilitators: Diane Johnson and Carole Mitchell.
- **Fergus Falls Evening Group** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 6 p.m. at the home of Tere Mann, 1319 N Park, Fergus Falls. Co-facilitators: Bonnie Bell Albers and Tere Mann.
- **Perham Afternoon Group** – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month @ 3:30 p.m. at the home of Mary Anderson, 455 5<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Perham. Co-facilitators: Mary Anderson and Mary Worner.
- **Alexandria Evening Group** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month 7 p.m. at the office building of Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg. Co-facilitators: Lee Becker, Connie Stigen, Tere Mann.

There is always an empty chair left open for anyone who wants to join with a group.

**March Topic:** "Spring Equinox--Yin Yang"

## **Blankets Delivered**

Fourteen blankets made by the women of UCU were successfully delivered to Someplace Safe, Mahube-Otwa, four of our kids and to a single dad raising his 3 year old daughter. Warm givings! Plans are beginning for the next gathering of U Women!

## **Empowerment Grant Awards**

**2016-17**

Ron Roller, Chair of the Empowerment Grants, reports that the committee will be meeting soon to review the applications and forward their recommendations to the Board of Directors. Applicants will be notified and the grant dollars will be granted sometime later in March. Stand by for the more information!



## **Not just Green Gossip but Fact – The Green Team Sponsoring Sugar Maple Seedling Offer**

Let's Celebrate Earth Day, April 22, AND Arbor Day, April 29. How? Plant a tree! Even a tree seedling, nurtured with care, will make a difference the day it is planted.

Order your own Sugar Maple Seedlings, 6-12", by Sunday, April 3. The Order Blank will be posted on the Bulletin Board. Order more than one at \$1.00 per seedling! Judy Carpenter will collect payment when you order OR upon delivery. The trees will arrive in May.

## **Newsletter Submissions**

Please submit your ideas and articles for the Newsletter to: [maryanderson8380@msn.com](mailto:maryanderson8380@msn.com). Editing is provided by Stephanie Sanderson and emailing/ mailing is provided by Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson. Mickie Edmonds usually provides one of her paintings each month for our appreciation! When you have photos of a UCU event and are willing to share, please forward them to Mary.

**Remember each edition of the Newsletter and much more is carried on the web site at [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org).**

## **Ride for Refugees**

Plans are currently underway for a community bike ride in July to raise funds for the Shan refugees' schools founded by Bernice Johnson under a 501(c)3. Continue to watch for information on the ride details. For the most current information on the Shan Schools, see the recent newsletter at: [www.shanrefugeeschools.org](http://www.shanrefugeeschools.org)

## Happenings with our UU Neighbors

Some of our UU neighbors send this editor their monthly newsletters and we return it with the UCU monthly newsletter. It is always interesting to see what other UU's are doing and to borrow ideas! As extracted:

**Unitarian Church of Willmar** –“The demographics of our community have continued to evolve. With the new wave of immigrations and the ugly reactions we have seen, opportunities present themselves. Our board has been working with Family Promise, the Isaiah group, the local ministerial association, and directly with Somalis, Latinos, and others to help make a new community of tolerance and cooperation.

Others may choose to take the “Know Your Neighbor” pledge: ‘Our strength as a nation comes from the ability to hold true to our own faith and values while defending the religious freedom of our neighbors. I pledge to get to know my fellow Americans of all traditions and systems of belief and to share my own. Moreover, I will speak out against hatred and misinformation against others when I encounter it.’

**Social Justice Committee** – Summarized by Kay Slama, Social Justice Chair. UUCW has been a Welcoming Congregation for many years, although this has referred mainly to our support of GLBTQ people. There is interest in increasing our contacts with our area Muslim (mainly Somali) people and in making them feel welcome in the Willmar area, especially given negative political and other comments and events.

For more information [Download the "My Neighbor is Muslim" study](#), a Primer on Islam that was put together by MN Lutheran Social Services

### And from Northwoods @ Pine River:

“MUUSJA Online Social Justice Meetings: Dec. 10 and Jan. 14

On Thursday, Dec. 10, Melissa attended online social justice meeting organized by the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA). At this "Convening Call," we discussed building partnerships in our social justice work:

- Common goals, uncommon beliefs - possible allies may include people who disagree with us on other issues but share a common interest in change on a particular issue.
- Congregational discernment - figuring out who we are as a congregation and what we want to focus on.
- Community asset mapping - an important step in the process that involves identifying institutions that already exist, relationships we already have, and any possible allies/resources in the community.
- Followership as a spiritual discipline - when working with disadvantaged groups of people, we need to be willing to follow their lead and prioritize what they prioritize, find ways to help with things they need help with in their own efforts for social justice, not necessarily what we think they need.

These online meetings are a great way to connect with people from the 21 other UU congregations around the state, find out what they are doing in their social justice work, and share what we are working on.”

Or check out some of our other neighbors - **Fargo:** <http://www.fmuu.org/fmuu-spirit-newsletter/>  
**Bemidji:** <http://headwatersfellowship.weebly.com/>

**St, Cloud:** <http://uufstcloud.org> and <http://www.spiritoflife>

## inSpirit

Your Search for Truth and Meaning Begins Here

Black History Month was an opportunity to not just look backward, but to also look forward and respond to the call for racial justice. Showcased here are some excellent and timely works on this constellation of issues by black women authors and editors.

***Ferguson and Faith* by  
Leah Gunning Francis**

This moving reflection on activist response to the shooting death of Michael Brown demonstrates that being called to lead a faithful life can take us places we never expected to go.

***Voices from the Margins*  
edited by Jacqui James,  
Mark Morrison-Reed**

This remarkable collection of reflections and meditations from Unitarian Universalists of color has become a treasured resource for worship and for personal exploration.

***The New Jim Crow* by  
Michelle Alexander**

A powerful examination of racism in the American criminal justice system. Selected as the 2012-2013 UUA Common Read, Unitarian Universalists across the faith movement are still being moved to action by its insights.

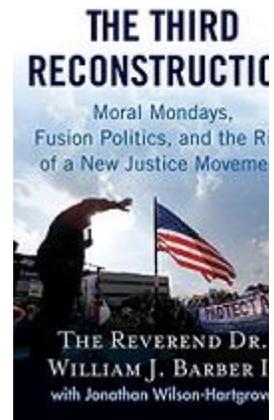
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## UU Reads: *The Third Reconstruction*

Beacon Press wants to help you connect with other UUs through books. Each month, they feature a #UUReads title about a topic that is meaningful to UUs. These books will prompt great discussions in your book club, congregation, or with your family and friends.

*The Third Reconstruction* by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II chronicles the story of the Forward Together Moral Movement that gained national attention through “Moral Mondays” and draws on Rev. Barber’s decades of experience in the Southern freedom struggle. Rev. Barber explains that Moral Mondays draw attention to the anti-democratic forces bent on serving special interests. *The Third Reconstruction* is about more than politics and religion. It is about resurrecting the possibility of democracy in the 21st century and saving the soul of America.

*The Third Reconstruction* is now available at the [inSpirit UU Book and Gift Shop](#) at a 15% discount using the code **TRFeb16**. Read an excerpt from *The Third Reconstruction* in the [UUWorld Winter 2015 edition](#)..



## Heart's Ease



Painting by Mickie Edmonds

***"Midway in our life's journey I went astray from the straight road and woke to find myself alone in a dark wood. Ah, how hard a thing it is to tell what a wild, and rough, and stubborn wood this was." Dante "The Inferno"***

A response written by Deb Wallwork.

"There comes a point where you realize that things may not be happening the way you hoped, that the world is darker than you ever dreamed.

We are all travelers, and our ultimate destination is death. We're all heading toward increasing irrelevance and disappearance. We have this one chance to make a difference in this world.

The earth, this world of astounding diversity and curiosity, this manifest world, is all we can know of God Incarnate. This is the body of Creation. At every level – however distant and enormous, or infinitely tiny—it's a weave of Wonder, a container of mysteries.

Each one of us is a child of this Creation, a manifestation of thousands of years of coincidences. To be alive is to be a miracle.

There will always be people whose response to a butterfly is to tear its wings off and turn it back into a struggling worm. But we can stand against them.

We need to wake up to this, our moment of Wonder to the ultimate mystery of Creation. To make a world that is safe for butterflies and other living beings is to make a place for the sacred in our lives."



Dear Fellow Unitarian Universalists-

Over the last few years, the [UUACCC](#) (Unitarian Universalist Alliance of Camp and Conference Centers), has been working with Carey McDonald, the Outreach Director for the UUA, on how our UU Camps and Conference Centers can better communicate with our congregations so that UU's throughout the world can become more aware of the opportunities for fellowship beyond the walls of the congregation.

One of the surprising things we have learned is that many UU's are not even aware that we have camps and conference centers and how much they mean in the lives of UU's who do

know. We are hoping you can help us take a small first step in changing that.

We would very much appreciate it if you could do whatever you can to share the article below in your congregation's newsletter, email blasts, or other forms of communication.

In Fellowship,

Dan Gottfried

[UUACCC](#)

Executive Director, [Unirondack](#)

### **Beyond the Walls of Our Congregation**

As Unitarian Universalists, we often find ourselves wishing we could live in a world that more closely reflects our values. We want more of what we share within the walls of our congregation to exist outside the walls. Many of us dedicate our lives to creating small pockets of community that reflect our values.

It can come as a surprise to many Unitarian Universalists that there is already an established network of such communities throughout the United States and Canada. It's our Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference Centers. And they have formed an alliance to help spread the word, the [Unitarian Universalist Alliance of Camp and Conference Centers \(UUACCC\)](#).

Each center is a unique place, often located in a spectacular natural setting. Most operate year-round or close to it, offering retreats, conferences, and summer camp experiences that reflect our UU values. They offer similar experiences to the summer institutes and assemblies but because they are center based they are able to do so on a continuous basis throughout the year with a great many opportunities for learning and growing in community.

Adults and families are often surprised to learn what a wide range of opportunities for fellowship, self-discovery, and learning Camp and Conference Centers provide throughout the year. And all take place in natural settings of unparalleled beauty.

For those of us with children, the centers that offer summer camp experiences for youth are especially important. It can be challenging for our children to find peers who share their values, and a place to belong where they can live those values. Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference Centers are often a home away from home for young people.

In the words of a camper from [Unirondack](#), a UU summer camp in the Western Adirondacks of New York State:

" You taught me to seek out the innate goodness in every human being. You taught me that there is no fully good person, and no consummation of evil...that everybody is a rainbow. You just have to pick which colors to see...You taught me how to love. You taught me that love doesn't have to be between man and woman...that any two people can love each other. Love is holding hands, love is sitting together, reading together, singing together, holding each other up, holding each other back, and letting each other go. Goodbye [Unirondack](#). I love you. And now I'm ready to

go love some more."

Transformative UUnique experiences like this young person describes are an everyday occurrence at our Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference Centers. There is something for everyone: youth, families of all kinds, and adults. Visit the [UUACCC](#) website to find links to UU experiences beyond the walls of our congregation.

***Note: Members and kids from UCU have in the past attended Camp Unistar located on Cass Lake near Bemidji. Inquiries are being made to U Teens to determine who might be interested in attending camp there this coming summer. And it is not just for kids but for FAMILIES too!***

## **Unitarian Church of Underwood Approved Board Minutes for January 17, 2016**

Board members present: John Miersch, Mary Anderson, Diane Johnson, Dave Wass, Lee Becker, Stan Carignan, Dave Sanderson, Kris Warhol, Alisha Piekarski, Norm Kolstad. Also present: JoAnn Larson

The meeting was called to order by President, John Miersch at 11:40 a.m. Lee Becker shared a reading meditation.

The agenda was approved (Kolstad/Sanderson).

The minutes of the November 18, 2015 meeting were approved (Anderson/Becker).

### **REPORTS:**

Treasurer: David Wass reported that the November collections were "up." The budget will be affected by the purchase of the new boiler. Insurance rider was approved (Miersch/Wass).

Administrative Assistant: Jo Larson will need a new computer.

Program Committee: Lee Becker cited the attendance figures. Stated that together, the Worship, Facilities, and Music committees will decide about organ placement.

Outreach Committee: Kris Warhol reported that inviting MUUSJA minister could help define our social justice actions and how social justice might be a more integral part of our organization.

Facilities Committee: Kris Warhol mentioned pricing on air conditioners and addressed whether it was needed or not. Spoke to window treatment and organ repair. She commended Lee Hamness for replacing many of the light bulbs with LED's at his own expense.

Speakers Committee: JoAnn Larson, upcoming meeting.

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson reported there are 70 households in congregation, addressed the women's group, and addendum to the directory.

Safety Committee: Norm Kolstad, Dave Sanderson will do AED demo at Feb. Board meeting.

Stewardship Committee: no report

Foundation Advisory Committee: Dave Sanderson addressed brochures, legacy gifts, and the necessity for an extra safety deposit box – Kris Warhol will investigate.

Solar Task Force: John Miersch, Committee hasn't met lately.

Green Sanctuary: Mary Anderson - Committee is taking immediate action with brochure on local farmers markets and CSA's in keeping with land stewardship program and continuing education.

Worship Committee: JoAnn Larson - met once for a broader review of Sunday service. Thank you to Ellen Eastby for overseeing sound. Mary Anderson said a Technology Task Force has been charged to look into sound issues; recording service; enhanced website.

Plan to Grow: Mary Anderson went over survey results regarding number returned (44 per cent), types of responders, areas of concern, "likes," "dis-likes," improvements suggested. Board discussion and suggestions – putting ads in newspapers; posting committee reports in church; hiring an executive director to carry out board wishes; need to review reasons and ways to change.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Motion to approve formal adoption of email vote to approve Christmas Eve collections to go to Prison Ministry. (Kolstad/Carignon).

Mary Anderson with assistance from Norm Kolstad will put together the roles & responsibilities – one of the 2015-16 Goals and Objectives for the Board to have done.

Each committee/area is to submit proposed 2016-17 Goals and Objectives. Dave Sanderson will assist Mary in compiling. Get to Mary by 2/12/16. Mary will start work on a UCU Handbook/Manual, another of the 2015-16 Goals.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Board approve certification of 70 members for UU Fair Share assessment (dues), now \$85/member = \$5950 for UCU to pay.

Discussion to appoint coordinator regarding Mid America UU Assembly in St. Paul, MN - on agenda for next month.

Budget requests due in March. Form in today's packet.

Annual meeting reports due at meeting with congregation on 4/17/16.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2016. The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diane Johnson, secretary