



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 2017 Newsletter

Unitarian Church of Underwood

206 North Main Street
Underwood

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www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org

March 2017						
◀ February						April ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 Bob Worner “Why Are We Here?” New Member Welcoming Social Justice Discussion, “What More?” Adult RE – The New Jim Crow CC	6 AA 7 pm	7	8 Finance Committee 5:30 pm Alexandria U-Group 7:00 pm Widseth Bldg	9 Perham U Group 3:30 p.m. @ Louise Lovdahl's	10	11
12 Andy Hayner-Music & Reflections on Standing Rock Play Practice 12 N Adult RE – Ancient Religions KIDS RE	13 AA 7 pm	14 Speakers Committee 4:30 pm Battle Lake U Group 3 pm @ Groff/Wass's	15 Board Meeting 5:30 pm	16	17 	18
19 Underwood Women's Group Mindfulness/Quaker Quiet Sitting 9-10 am CC	20 AA 7 pm	21 Fergus Falls U Group 6:00 pm @ Tere Mann's	22	23	24	25
26 “Why I Am a UU” – Panel Play Practice – 9 am Adult RE – Spong's Study of Matthew CC	27 AA 7 pm	28	29 Membership Committee 5:30 pm	30	31 Chili Dinner Underwood Community Center 5-7 pm 	Notes: Green Committee late March meeting TBA

Speakers for March

March 5 – Celebrant, Bob Worner, "Why Are We Here" - UU Principles # 6 & 7.

March 12 – Andy Hayner – Reflections on Standing Rock and Music by Doodle Bivens, Clancy Ward, and Andy Hayner: The stand against the Oil-a-garchy at the Standing Rock Reservation. One spark in dry grass brings a wildfire of resistance, resilience and sustainability.

"We are human beings in a world rapidly losing its understanding of being human." -John Trudell

March 19 – Underwood Women's Study Group addressing UU Principle 4.

The Underwood Women's Study Club will present a play about their activities in Underwood through the years. This is a play that they prepared and presented when they celebrated their 80th anniversary. Several people connected with our UU community are part of their history.

March 26 – "Why I'm a UU" Series panel – Stan Carignan will be facilitating with panelists: **Sandra Barnhouse, Ellen Eastby, Ron Graham, and Janell Miersch.** We will be focused on our 3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. As such, they will be discussing elements of their core spirituality, religious practices, and how being a UU helps them to be the person they desire being.

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 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. Please note the new feature to nominate

"Like" UCU on Facebook: see www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org

Note: The monthly Newsletters are included and many other items of interest are updated regularly and can be viewed at: www.ucofu.org.

February Speaker Notes

February 5 – Celebrant, Ellen Eastby's talk was entitled: **"A Call to Social Justice: 30 Days of Love and Share the Love Sunday."** Ellen spoke about "Standing on the Side of Love," a campaign that was established in 2009, in response to the shooting at the UU Church in Knoxville, TN. They sponsor two events each year:

1. "Share the Love Sunday," celebrated by congregations on a Sunday close to Valentine's Day.
2. "Thirty Days of Love" in which tools of love/social justice action are shared (for individuals and communities).
 - Love, here refers to action, not to feeling.
 - Keith Ellison, when addressing the UU General Assembly in 2010 said that 'Love is way more practical than war' and there IS enough love to go around.

- Black Lives UU stated the while 'our fighting injustice may begin in anger, it is sustained by love.'
- In the current climate, we need to not just react to policies of injustice exhibited by the new administration. We need to put our love into action.
- Katelyn Breedlove, in an interview with Meg Riley, points out that social justice and spirituality are inseparable. How can one claim to be religious and ignore social justice?
- Lina Gardner, of Black Lives Minneapolis asks, "What does my faith tell me?"

The UUA and UUSC have issued a Declaration of Conscience, which can be adopted/signed by individuals as well as congregations. The first line reads: "At this extraordinary time in our nation's history, we are called to affirm our profound commitment to the fundamental principles of justice, equity and compassion, to truth and core values of American society."

For the entire "Declaration of Conscience," see: <http://connect.uusc.org/l/103112/2017-01-17/gpgn2> and see below.

February 12 – Kris Warhol introduced our speaker, **Victoria Creek**. They have known each other for a long time. Victoria described both she and Kris as "sooo much" – "all of that and some more too." In introduction, Kris read from "*Radical Hospitality*," hospitality being the theme of Victoria's talk, "**Creating a Soul Welcoming Environment.**"

When we host, we prepare for guests, mostly preparing in how we want things. But to really host, we set aside our personal needs to welcome the other person and their ideas. We expand the heart. There is the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you've have them do to you." Then there is the Platinum Rule: "Do unto others as they would have done to them."

While hosting another, we can't assume what they need. Rather we need to ask, "What do YOU need." "I see you and want to know what you need to be ok." This may mean being "hostile" to oneself. "Host," "hospitality", and "hostile" come from the same Latin root word, "hostia." To host, just for the time, set aside your own agenda, reject what you feel you already know- become "hostile" to your own thoughts. Be prepared to be uncomfortable. There is vulnerability, triggers, uncertainty. We like certainty, pattern and predictably. To be a host, you need to be hostile to what you know or think you know. Have an empty space that the other person can fill on their own. Justice, compassion, love - are not about thoughts, but about actions that "expand the heart."

Attendance: 53

February 19 – David Grant, "The Wise Person Builds Bridges": David and his wife, Celeste have been friends with **Tere Mann and her husband, Bert** since 1973. David said that he has always been interested in faith. His Catholic godmother took him to Jewish synagogues, Buddhist temples, mosques, etc.



David Grant, Writer 2/19/17 – photo courtesy of Susan Groff

David's title, ***"The Wise Person Builds Bridges,"*** came from a quote of an African story he'd heard: "During a time of crisis, a foolish person builds walls; a wise person builds bridges." In times of crisis, we seek out our tribe. A 'tribe' can react in different ways to crises. It can be fearful and insular, or it can be expansive and inclusive. (ex. – With climate change, we can seek out ways to adapt; or we can accumulate weapons to defend ourselves. Interestingly no scriptures advocate the latter response to crises).

In terms of race issues, many believe that humans differ from each other depending on where they are from. Some believe that some groups are superior to others. However, diversity is very important biologically and culturally. It is a strength of ecosystems and of humans. The greatest diversity in the human gene pool is in Africa where homo sapiens originated. Through DNA analysis, David has been able to meet some of his father's pre-slave trade ancestors, in Ghana. He has also so far found 1459 people with whom he shares a 'bloodline'. These are people of many races, including black and white, because slave owners often mated with slaves.

Minnesota is not the easiest place for immigrants to come to. In some ways, Minnesotans are 'nice'. However, there are often expectations and impatience with immigrants who don't understand the nuances of the culture. And new immigrants are often the ones who are trying the hardest to understand the local culture.

We need to listen to the stories of others.

Recently, *A Good Time for Truth* was published by the MN Historical Society. "In this provocative book, sixteen of Minnesota's best writers, (including David Grant), provide a range of perspectives on what it is like to live as a person of color in Minnesota." (mnhs press)

February 26 - Blayze Buseth, "A Timeless Concept." Blayze is a young artist working in pottery and relief sculpture. His work with clay has evolved through practice and his own learnings.

He was influenced by reading Joseph Campbell's *The Hero's Journey* – that describes life's cycle as the quest, the maze, the dragon, the return.

Blayze specializes in making custom urns, pendants and vessels that are meant to represent the person they are made for. He has so far designed 20 symbols to depict attributes that can represent a person's character. He experimented with how to incorporate these medallions into his pieces to personalize the piece to honor or inspire an individual. The lids for the cremation urns are topped with a symbol of the person's character. Then, the medallions are vertically placed down the front of the vessel to depict other attributes. For example, the heart represents love and compassion, the handshake may symbolize communication or loyalty.

Blayze brought and displayed a number of beautiful pieces to give us a larger sampling of his work. He has his own studio at 1683 Ottertail Drive in Fergus Falls.

For more information see: [bbuseth.com](http://www.blayzebuseth.com/) or <http://www.blayzebuseth.com/>

Attendance: 35

Invitation to Join UCU As a Voting Member Welcoming March 5 - During Sunday Service

To become a voting member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Underwood, you indicate your wish by signing the "silver" membership book. We invite you to participate in the welcoming new member ceremony that is held twice a year, **the next planned for March 5, 2017**. Please see JoAnn Larson for further details.

Monthly U Groups

This season, we have four U groups that are meeting monthly. The Alexandria U Group is at capacity and they still have some wanting to join. Each year U Groups select one service project to do for church and one for the community. For their church projects: the Perham U Group is helping with the Chili Dinner; the Battle Lake/Underwood is doing the brunch for the Annual Meeting in April; the Fergus Falls is doing a brunch May 21 as a fundraiser for the Feeding Backpack program.

The groups reacted positively and thought relevant to our times, the February topic, "Finding Courage." The topic for March is: Encountering Diversity. *"I think we have to own the fears that we have of each other, and then, in some practical way, some daily way, figure out how to see people differently than the way we were brought up to."* ~Alice Walker

U Group Schedule

- Alexandria U-Group: 2nd Wed @ 7:00 pm @ the office building of Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg.: Facilitators: Lee Becker/Susan Sanford

- The Battle Lake U Group, the 2nd Tuesday @ 3:00 p.m. @ Susan Groff and Dave Wass's. Facilitators: Bob Worner and Joanne Cress. When Joanne and Luke are gone for the winter, Kris Warhol will co-facilitate with Bob and the group will meet with a host to be announced.
- Fergus Falls U-Group: 3rd Tues @ 6:00 pm @ Tere Mann's, 1319 N Park, Fergus Falls; Facilitators: Dianna Ziesemer/Connie Stigen/Mary Worner
- Perham U-Group: 2nd Thursday @ 3:30 p.m. @ Louise Lovdahl's, - 42720 490th Ave., Perham; Facilitators: Stan Carignan/Louise Lovdahl

Each U-Group holds an empty chair for anyone who wants to join with a group.

**Someplace Safe Tea
Annual Fundraiser
Held February 18, 2017**



Duane & Connie Stigen, Julie Schultz, Alicia, Heather Czeck, Betsy Wells, Mary & Bob Worner, & Shelley Hedtke

Once again for the fourth year, UCU members and friends helped serve the lunch for the annual Someplace Safe Tea Fundraiser. Someplace Safe is a nonprofit organization working to eliminate violence in West Central Minnesota and beyond. They provide emergency services and support for victims of violence, and their families. They offer information and resources to individuals utilizing their service. They create opportunities for volunteers, sponsors and supporters to get involved. They empower survivors to live a violence free life and inspire social change through advocacy, education and awareness. Helping out at the Someplace Safe Annual Tea Fundraiser is just one way members of the UCU act in support of social justice issues within our community.

"Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit." — e. e. cummings

Churches United for the Homeless General Update



Shelter Update: To date 2017

Sheltered:

138 Adults

46 Children - Avg age 4 yrs

Senior Citizens (62 & over) Sheltered:

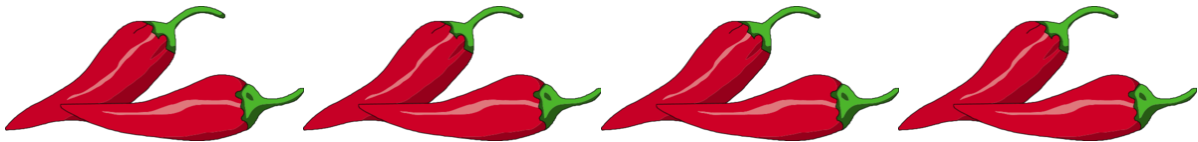
2016: 28

2017 to date: 4

Households Turned Away: 28

The Board of Directors approved that the Unitarian Church of Underwood support Churches United for the Homeless with the recommended annual donation of \$7/member beginning in fiscal year 2017. For more information on the need and services provided see their newsletters at lipari@churches-united.org.

SAVE THE DATES!!



Annual Chili Dinner

Friday, March 31, 2017

5-7 p.m.

Underwood Community Center

It's that time of year again. Time for us to host and serve a delicious dinner to the Underwood and surrounding communities to raise funds for the Underwood Senior Nutrition Program. These funds pay primarily for delivery of Meals on Wheels to seniors in the Underwood area. John Minge will assume the role of chief chili maker and has recipes for several kinds to be served. JoAnn Larson, Administrative Consultant, and Perham U Group, of which John Minge is a member, will provide organizational help. In addition, we especially need the committed help of a couple of individuals with the chili preparation and cooking that starts Thursday evening

and earlier on Friday. Then, volunteers are needed to help with early ticket sales, hanging promotional posters, other food preparation, setting up, serving; bringing store-made desserts, Don't forget we especially need help with clean-up!! Sign-up sheets will be passed at church or contact JoAnn Larson at redwilds@gmail.com, John Minge at bijost@gmail.com or Mary Anderson at maryanderson8380@msn.com.

Special invitations will be extended to Sverdrup and Tingvold and other area churches to join us at the dinner.

Take Tickets, Sell Tickets, Buy Tickets!!

In Advance	\$ 9
At the Door	\$10
Ages 4-12	\$ 4
Under 4	FREE

Proceeds to Benefit the Underwood Senior Nutrition Program



Come join us!



Saturday- April 1st, 1-3 PM
Annual Charity Fundraiser 2017

School for Shan Refugees

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

3400 Dupont Ave. S. Mpls, MN 55408

ShanRefugeeSchools.org

***What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other? -
George Elliot***

"The annual Schools for Shan Refugees (SSR) fundraiser is being held in Minneapolis on April 1. It is intended for the SSR supporters living in Minneapolis - but if you are going to be in the Cities on April 1 and would like to attend, Bernice Johnson would appreciate the show of support.

Mary Worner, a SSR board member, will be attending the fundraiser. She is contributing two Minnesota-themed baskets to the silent auction. If anyone has an item they would like included in a basket, let Mary know. They will be assembled the last week of March.

Thank you to everyone at UCU that has supported Schools for Shan Refugees. Bernice and the rest of the board and the Shan refugees, appreciate all your contributions. " – *Mary Worner*

In the Beginning Play

Sunday Service, April 9



Production of "In the Beginning" play directed by Bonnie Bell Albers featuring the story of creation, characters and critters. Play practice schedule is:

- **February 26** - 9 a.m. at church
- **March 12** - noon following services
- **March 26** - 9 a.m. at church
- **April 2nd** - noon following services (kids also)

- **Saturday, April 8** – 10:30 a.m. **DRESS REHEARSAL DATE!!!** (Kids included)
- **April 9 Performance:** Performers please arrive at 9 a.m. (kids also)

Annual Meeting Date Change To Sunday, April 23, 2017

This year, because the 3rd Sunday of April is Easter Sunday, the Board voted to approve that the annual meeting be held on the 4th Sunday in April – April 23rd. Please mark your calendars accordingly.



You're Invited UCU Volunteer Appreciation, Sunday, April 30th A celebration of YOU at UCU!!

The Membership Committee is sponsoring lunch and celebration following Sunday service, fun and prizes! Watch announcements and newsletters for further information!

UUA Mid-America Regional News Regional Assembly 2017 - Finding Our Partners: Faith in Action



In spite of our small numbers in the national religious scene, Unitarian Universalists have been at the forefront of every significant social change in our nation's history. Now, more than ever, we need to work with partners to have an impact in our cities, states, and country.

Join us at the Oak Brook Marriott in Oak Brook, Illinois, on April 28-30, 2017.

Our Keynote Speaker will be Rev. Dr. Lee Barker, President of Meadville-Lombard Theological School! Rev. Dr. Barker's address will be "To Multi-faith: A Verb." According to President Barker, "Unitarian Universalism is perfectly situated to promote constructive multi-faith engagement for increased understanding and enhanced harmony. Success will depend on a new understanding of what it means to 'be engaged.'"

For more information: <https://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly>.

Note: If you are interested in attending the MidAmerica Regional Assembly, please alert Mary Anderson or other Board member so that consideration may be given to the number of interested attendees for the 2017-18 budget.

Social Justice Action & Opportunities

In reaction to our political landscape, there seems to be now more than ever, UCU members and friends expressing for themselves a feeling of anxiety, a need for urgency to do “something” – with the “something undefined.” We ask ourselves and each other: “What do we do now?” “Where do we go from here?”

To give us further opportunity to dialogue just what social justice action and what opportunities are open to us the church as a whole and not just individually, **Ellen Eastby will lead a discussion on March 5 following the Sunday Service.** If you have a need, interest or ideas, please join the discussion.

As your Board President and Newsletter Editor, I have these thoughts:

Because we often act independently and individually on matters of conscience and how we actively involve ourselves within the community, we sometimes think that the Unitarian Church of Underwood is not sufficiently involved in social justice actions. I ask myself, “Do we, UCU, need to come up with a more cohesive, collective social justice action plan that can be embraced by our members/friends?” Or, can we “suffice it to say that we are doing plenty in the way of social justice through our Empowerment Grants, our community and fund raising events, our personal contributions to causes of our individual choices?”

When I think of what UCU does do in the way of Social and Environmental Justice, there is much. We support social justice movements, we support environmental justice, we support women’s rights, we support immigrants and refugees, we support black lives and all people of color. We support the LGBTQ community, we support those who have been marginalized. That support is done in many different ways. It may mean marching. It may mean lobbying or sending postcards or making calls to our congressional and legislative representatives. It may mean having conversations with others.

Most of us reside within Otter Tail County, one of the larger counties in Minnesota, with a county population that is predominantly white, predominantly conservative, predominantly Christian. Albeit, we are of small numbers. Yet, we hold ourselves out as Unitarian Universalists of liberal thinking. Within our county, we do not have a defined indigenous population; we do have small numbers of non-white residents, small communities of immigrants, even refugees, but unless we reach out or reside in one of those communities, we have little exposure to people with different skin tone, different language, different culture.

We have beloved gay and lesbian members/friends and are appalled when they are insulted or harassed because of whom they love. We consider ourselves a welcoming community accepting anyone, everyone.

We do have lakes and water and natural wild-life areas that need environmental protection. We do have poverty – lots of poverty. We do have guns – lots of guns.

Last year, we were shaken over the number of police involved shootings in many communities. We looked to educate ourselves on racial injustice issues and the meaning of white privilege by inviting black speakers to inform us on the issues from their perspectives; holding an adult religious education class to read and study *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander and may be moving on to *The Third Reconstruction* by Rev. Wm Barber. We had U Group topics around “Racism,” “Seeking Diversity.” We continue to wrap our thoughts around what it means to be white, middle-class, American.

We’ve had speakers of other faiths. We’ve contributed to the Pelican Rapids Multi-Cultural Center. We’ve had speakers doing work in other countries and contributed to those efforts. We’ve had speakers on climate change and other environmental issues. We are making plans to host another area fall workshop featuring MUUSJA and to exchange ideas and actions with other UU churches.

We probably have the biggest diversity in our politics – most of that belongs outside the church with individual participation with a chosen political party. While at church, we must remind ourselves of the discomfort if/when disparaging/even caustic partisan comments are made when sharing our thoughts. We have political differences between us and visitors of unknown backgrounds. We may disagree but what we do know, is that we each hold dear the UU Principles.

Many of our speakers these past months have encouraged us to find, talk and mostly listen to someone with whom we disagree. Ellen Eastby spoke of Standing on the Side of Love. Because until we start engaging, “reclaiming neighborliness,” reconnecting, we will not – cannot, begin to recognize our commonalities and the “interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

Is that enough? Is there more? Just how much are we expected to do and how long can we keep doing it? We’re just a few. Are we enough? Do we dare? Of course, we dare. What are the social justice and environmental justice issues that we might further recognize? Who is already doing something and how can we join those efforts?

To do something, to do more, we want to become aware of what is happening in our community and what others are doing and link where we can or individually join these efforts. When I think, what more that we/could should do as a church body, I can’t think of a specific target beyond what we are already doing other than to “put our love into action.”

To continue to recognize what we do DO at UCU in the areas of social and environmental justice, we will continue to offer feature articles in the newsletters such as those below. *Mary Anderson with the help of Ellen Eastby*

Social Justice Service Spotlight

Many UCU Members and Friends involve themselves in the community in various social justice and/or environmental justice service activities. They do this work with little thought of recognition, living daily the UU Principles. Ron Graham suggested that we recognize some of these individuals in an ongoing way in the monthly newsletter and he began it with his own nomination. **To help make this an ongoing feature, you are invited to nominate a fellow UCU member/friend in recognition of their social or environmental justice work.** Please first contact that person for their permission, write up a feature or submit the name and highlights of what that person is doing and send to Newsletter Editor, Mary Anderson @ maryanderson830@msn.com.



UU SOCIAL JUSTICE SERVICE In Recognition of KEN HAMRUM Nominated by Ron Graham

Many of us know Ken Hamrum for his music. In addition to playing various trombones, he has performed for us with his didgeridoo, hurdy-gurdy, floor lever harp, tuba, euphonium, drums and other instruments. Ken has helped many would-be musicians acquire free (his donation) or inexpensive instruments and has mentored many. He is also serving the community by playing in four different community bands, plus two at M-State.

Ken is also known for his jokes, many of which involve lawyers and musicians but also branch into other fields, such as changing light bulbs.

I nominated Ken for our new newsletter feature for the UU Social Justice Service Award because of his service as a Public Defender. He serves the most vulnerable - some are very poor - no furniture, sporting equipment or even \$10 in cash. Their lack of resources complicates their relationship with the court because it is often difficult or impossible to pay fines and appear for hearings. In addition, many find the court system bewildering and need someone who truly cares about them.

As a Public Defender, Ken is a state employee. He currently has cases in Otter Tail, Wilkin & Grant Counties but occasionally, has cases in other counties. He is only paid for part-time but, in fact, works more than full-time to give the best defense possible to the most vulnerable. Ken says this is common among Public Defenders because the work requirements

are higher than can be met with present resources. Stress (especially if a public defender is convinced the person isn't guilty) and burnout are common in his field.

Ken has been employed by the State Public Defender system since 1990. Before that he worked in a county attorney's office as a prosecutor, did some private practice and was also a county public defender.

Ken wants us to realize that his clients are people in our community who buy groceries, have children in school, attend churches, etc. Many of those clients he deals with daily, and WE, may have little idea of what they are up against- whether it be the criminal justice system itself or the impending consequences of their actions that could include fines, penalties, alienation, separation. Just in dealing with these very difficult situations, we need to realize that these folks may have little left to give, whether it is to their families, their communities, their church. Thus, it is up to us to be kind in our thinking and to be supportive for what they are enduring.

And so, Ken, in his capacity as Public Defender and fellow human, recognizes and respects the "inherent worth and dignity of every person," struggles through and to use "the democratic process within our society at large," fights for "justice, equity and compassion in human relations."

Ken - I and we commend and thank you for all you are doing for our church and community."

Ron Graham

Women's March

January 21, 2017

According to news sources, it was estimated that on January 21, 2017, at least 3.3 million people participated in over 500-650 marches across the U.S. on the ground swell Women's March. People across the world on all seven continents, including Antarctica, marched in solidarity with women and America. One of this editor's friends told her that she knew of three women who marched in Longville, Minnesota!!

And there were UCU women and relatives who marched among them. Candles were lit by several on January 22, the day following the March:

Katy Olson- for the spirit of unity felt at the Women's March that she, her daughter Cedar Walters and Tere Mann participated in at Fargo.

Betsy Wells – for her family members she'd talked to who had participated in marches in Chicago, Portland, Oregon and Hawaii.

Melody Shores – for her daughter who marched in the Twin Cities, dressed as a bison.

Tere Mann – for Connie Stigen who participated in the Women's March in St. Paul.

Connie Stigen describes further her experience when she joined the March in St. Paul:

"I am so glad my friends Henry (Mott) and Marty (Prentice) reached out to me to attend the March. I wasn't sure what to expect but the day turned out to be far beyond my wildest

expectations! The city buses were so full that they were no longer picking up people to transport to the state capital so we actually walked 3 miles to the capital and 3 miles back to our car – tiring, but totally fun!

Everyone we encountered was so engaging in thoughtful conversation- some surprised at their need to speak out (not unlike myself). What we thought would be a crowd of a few thousand people (some predicted 8k) was reported that night to be at least 100,000 strong - amazing!

People marched for women's reproductive health, gender equality, pay equity, social justice, environmental safety, etc. – in a violent-free protest. Young parents brought their babies and young children, grandmas (like me!) were there in force along with families with disabled family members. People of so many ethnic backgrounds showing support for each other- what a great lesson in civics!" *Connie Stigen*

Editor's note: Henry and Marty say they have a place for you to stay if/when you want to participate in future actions in the Twin Cities.

Katy Olson who marched in Fargo, expressed that: "It felt good to do something publicly to express my opposition to what is happening. In times of distress, it is good to be among your peers. At least we know there are others with whom we can join arms and take up the struggle."

Tere Mann marched along with Katy and Cedar and had these thoughts: "To me the issue was/ is standing with those who need the support. Those who are losing with this new administration and those who lost before under past administrations and congresses. How do we stand together, and give voice to those oppressed? I marched to protect our rights to question our government's actions. It is the government "of the people" and we need to exercise it so it functions that way."

Thanks to all who stand and march for our UU Principles to affirm and promote:

- *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
- *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;*
- *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;*
- *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.*

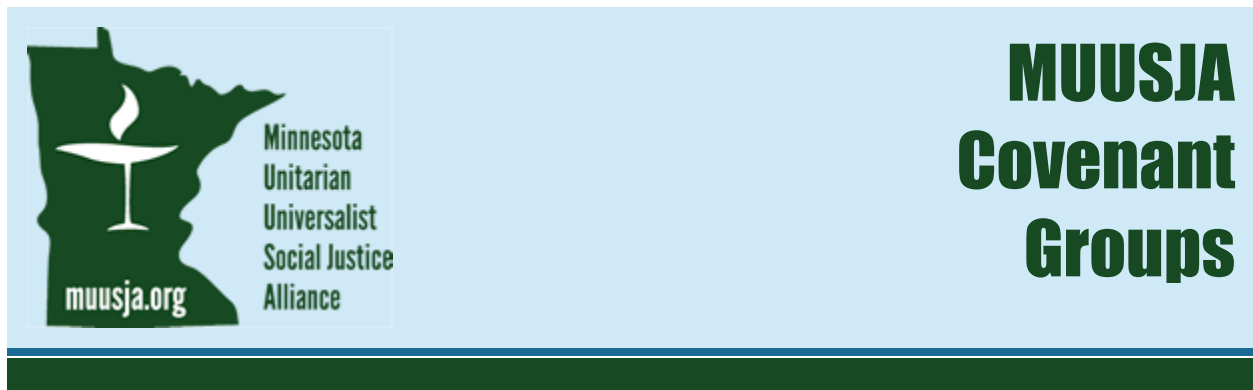


Letter to the Editor of Fargo Forum

Mark Jacobson shared an opinion piece he wrote to the Fargo Forum. For full article, see: <http://www.inforum.com/opinion/4223443-column-immigration-bans-are-contrary-evolution>

"Humans evolved without borders of any kind and all of us are residents on the Mother Earth. Laws that claim exclusive private property rights or sovereignty over any lands by one people or another are inherently biased against biology. Biology knows no borders and is much more powerful than humans. Do the lowly birds, descendants of dinosaurs, have more rights than humans? Apparently so, as they fly wherever and whenever they choose, without capricious laws — changing this way and that at the whims of politics — interfering on their way." ... *Mark Jacobson*

Opportunity for YCU to Participate



Spring Covenant Groups

Dear UCU,

In ten days, we will be kicking off our Spring Covenant Groups. These groups are rich places of conversation and connection for social justice leaders and activists. Sometimes, our struggles can feel overwhelming, and we want to create a space where we can build up our resilience so that we can sustain our resistance.

Again: community + connection —> resilience —> better resistance.

These Covenant Groups meet on Zoom (a video-teleconferencing software) once per month for 90 minutes, and we will be utilizing the Soul Matters curriculum—a theme-based exploration of spiritual topics and practices—through a social justice lens. If you are interested, please follow [this link](#) to register and take a survey so that I can assess everyone's availability and preferred meeting times. The survey will close next Friday (March 3rd), and I will be announcing the final time slots on that day. You will also receive the brief reading material and a few questions to ponder before our first sessions, which will start the week of March 6th.

With love and warmth,

Jack Gaede
Intern for Justice and Religious Leadership
651-703-3700
muusjaintern@gmail.com

Contact your Representatives

"One of the most effective efforts to bring change is to contact our representatives at both the state and national level. We are encouraged to do this by phone, speaking about one or two issues at a time. It's important to give our name and zip code and then either thank or indicate disapproval with the senator/representative's actions. I'm learning that either speaking out at local forums where our representatives are or making those phone calls are the most effective. Signing petitions or sending emails have less, if any, impact.

The phone calls are not just to voice our opinion, but the legislator or Congress person then can indicate how many phone calls they have had on specific issues.

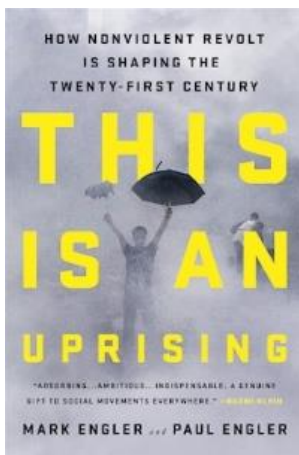
My understanding is that the conservatives make many more calls than the progressives. We all need to voice our opinions in a way that counts." *Submitted by Louise Lovdahl*

Read and Learn

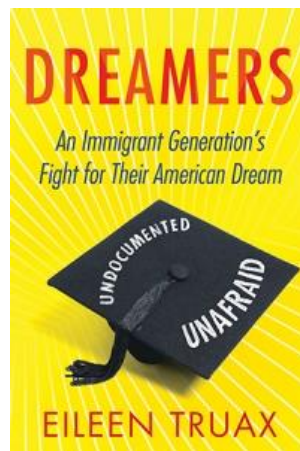
In Spirit

Your search for truth and meaning begins here

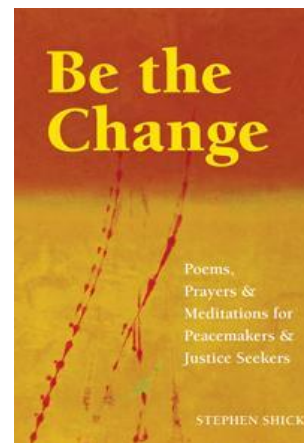
Thirty Days of Love may have ended on February 14th but taking bold, courageous action for intersectional racial justice never ends. We lift up the following books and additional [resources](#) as you deepen your commitment to justice.



This Is An Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-First Century by Mark and Paul Engler



Dreamers: An Immigrant Generation's Fight for Their American Dream by Eileen Truax



Be the Change: Poems, Prayers and Meditations for Peacemakers and Justice Seekers by Stephen Shick

When mass movements erupt onto our television screens, the media portrays them as being spontaneous and unpredictable. Mark and Paul Engler look at the hidden art behind such protests, examining core principles that have been used to spark and guide moments of transformative unrest.

[Purchase today.](#)

In *Dreamers*, Eileen Truax illuminates the stories of Dreamers, undocumented immigrants brought to the US as children and now fighting to live in the US legally. These young men and women are living proof of a complex and sometimes hidden political reality that calls into question what it truly means to be American.

[Purchase today.](#)

This collection is designed to inspire and sustain activists and others who are working for a better world. Shick draws on his four decades of activist experience to offer motivation and encouragement to those just starting out as well as reflections and insights to veteran justice-seekers.

[Purchase today.](#)

Alone

Maya Angelou
from

Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well

Lying, thinking
Last night
How to find my soul a home
Where water is not thirsty
And bread loaf is not stone
I came up with one thing
And I don't believe I'm wrong
That nobody,
But nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone
Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone.

There are some millionaires
With money they can't use
Their wives run 'round like banshees
Their children sing the blues
They've got expensive doctors
To cure their hearts of stone.
But nobody

No, nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone
Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Now if you listen closely
I'll tell you what I know
Storm clouds are gathering
The wind is gonna blow
The race of man is suffering
And I can hear the moan,
'Cause nobody,
But nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone
Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone.

UUA News Alert

The Rev. Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), issued this statement following the Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) announcement on gender identity:

"I applaud the Boy Scouts of America on their decision to accept and register youth in the Cub and Boy Scout programs based on the gender identity indicated on their application. This is a significant step in the direction of greater inclusion for the BSA.

As a faith community, Unitarian Universalists for many years have supported the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people in all areas of our society. Unitarian Universalists know that greater inclusion on all levels leads to richer relationships and experiences in our lives and communities.

We look forward to the opportunity to work with the BSA on implementing this new policy. Together, we will create a welcoming and inclusive community for all youth who want to participate in scouting."

This page is also available on UUA.org.



UU Bulletin

A monthly newsletter from the Unitarian Universalist Association to keep you and your congregation informed.

Sign the Declaration of Conscience

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)
President Rev. Peter Morales and
Unitarian Universalist Service
Committee (UUSC) President and CEO
Hon. Thomas Andrews [invite you to sign](#)
the [Declaration of Conscience](#),

committing to put Unitarian Universalist
values into action to resist hate, fear
and bigotry. "We will oppose any and all
unjust government actions to deport,
register, discriminate, or despoil. As
people of conscience, we declare our
commitment to translate our values into
action as we stand on the side of love

with the most vulnerable among us. We welcome and invite all to join in this
commitment for justice." Join us in transforming faith into action! [Read](#) the full
Declaration of Conscience and sign on today!



UUA Statements on Executive Actions

Since taking office, President Trump has signed a number of executive orders and memoranda that run counter to the values of Unitarian Universalism. The UUA is a religious voice against policies of oppression and bigotry. [Read what the UUA has said on recent policy shifts](#) on our website.

Commit to Sanctuary and Solidarity

In the wake of proposals to deport two to three million undocumented immigrants in the United States, UUs are gearing up to fight back and protect this vulnerable population by providing sanctuary wherever necessary. The UUA and UUSC have sponsored actions in support of sanctuary and solidarity with immigrants and refugees. [Learn more](#) about our work and the work of congregations to support this movement on our website.





Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance

A Message from the Executive Director

Extracted from letter from Ashley Horan, MUUSJA Executive Director February 23, 2017

... Let's be clear: this is not about bathrooms. This is not about safety. **This is not about anything other than bigotry and fear.** These transphobic stances--on both the national and the state level--will put trans and GNC students' lives even more at risk than [they already are](#), and they are a clear declaration of war on the human and civil rights of the most vulnerable segment of one of the most at-risk groups of people in our nation.

... Our Unitarian Universalist faith has long made a deep commitment to affirming the inherent worth and dignity of trans and GNC people, and rising in solidarity with all those who are targeted by transphobia and gender violence. **We believe all of us--including and especially our trans/GNC siblings--are created in the image of Divine, and any human attempt to deny trans/GNC people their full humanity and potential for freedom and flourishing is morally reprehensible.**

... MUUSJA remains committed to bringing Minnesota Unitarian Universalists together to do just this, and we invite you to join us. We will be watching the national- and state-level legislative struggles, and letting you know about opportunities to show up for advocacy. We will continue to develop partnerships with local organizations, such as [OutFront Minnesota](#) and the [Minnesota Trans Health Coalition](#), to build relationships and accountability with those who are most directly impacted--and we will let you know about future opportunities for learning, public witness, and involvement. And we will continue to support our UU congregations across the state as we continue to deepen our own learning and commitments to solidarity with trans/GNC people, both within and beyond our walls. Stay tuned in the coming weeks and months for ways to show up.

For full article, see: MUUSJA.org

Environmental Justice Minnesota Interfaith Power and Life (MNIPL)

From the MNIPL Website

Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is about the belief that the active care of creation is integral to spiritual life and social justice. We respond to climate change by bringing Minnesota's faith communities together and by providing opportunities for congregations to join the growing climate justice movement.

Since our founding as *Congregations Caring for Creation* in 2004, we have mobilized religious support for landmark legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota, educated hundreds of thousands of congregants, and worked with every major religious denomination in the state.

At MNIPL a fundamental concept of organizing is that resolving the climate crisis requires an intersectional and transformational response. At its core, we believe that we have arrived at this crisis because of an old story of power over, domination, and separation and that to change we need to tell a new story, which is an ancient story -one that our faith traditions teach at their core- a story of partnership, power with, interconnection and belonging. We want our organizing structure to mirror this new story- which is why we have created the Movement Builder Program. A network of Community Connectors in faith communities around the state (that's you!)- people who know their community's story, resources, and gifts and will be able to be a liaison of communication and opportunity between MNIPL and the growing interfaith climate movement and their community. In that way, we expand our network, increasing support for the work of individual communities and the strength of our movement.

We are committed to supporting you and/or others in your faith community in more actively or meaningfully engaging people in climate action. Our staff are available to provide organizing support through: one-to-one consultation, strategic planning meetings with a core team, facilitating Community Climate Conversations and Action Planning, bringing our Youth Leadership Team to work with your youth or adults to inspire climate action, and providing other subject matter programming ie. Just Solar, Energy Efficiency, Climate Refugees and Food Justice. We can also provide Be the Spark tailored organizing training and leadership development workshops. Feel free to be in contact to discuss what would fit best now in your place.

MNIPL has asked for congregations to name a "community connector" and Janell Miersch, a member of the Green Committee, has volunteered to act as our UCU connector. Thank you, Janell!!! For more information, see: <http://mnipl.org/about/about-mnipl.html>.

Go Toward the Roar

[Michael Meade, D.H.L.](#)

Founder, Mosaic Multicultural Foundation

For decades, I have worked with severely “at-risk” youth; some who willingly put their lives at risk, and others who find themselves at risk for reasons beyond their control. Of course, all youth are at risk to some degree, as each young person must risk themselves in the world to learn who they are at the core of their life. Now, amidst growing fears and uncertainty about the future, young people sense that everything around them is at greater risk. Young people, who are supposed to be the “future of the world,” can find themselves fearing that the world has very little future to offer them.

Whether it be educated youth considering the increasing dangers of climate change or less privileged ones who feel the bite of poverty and the growing disparity between rich and poor, modern youth grow up amidst threats of natural disaster, nightmares of terrorism and bewilderment at the ineffectiveness and lack of courage of those who seem to have the most power. Increasingly, I hear young people asking how to act in a world that seems to be coming apart at the seams.

Having found my own way through the world by studying myths and stories, I tend to answer with old tales that show how people have survived great troubles and the spread of fear many times before. Too much fear can lead to unnecessary panic as well as a paralysis of imagination. An old story can help contain the fear and reduce the tendency to panic and run away from life’s inevitable risks.

This old teaching story comes from the great African savannahs where life pours forth in the form of teeming, feeding herds. As the herds eat their way across the plains, lions wait in the tall grass nearby, anticipating the chance to prey upon the grazing animals. In preparation, they send the oldest and weakest members of the pride away from the rest of the hunting pack. Having lost much of their strength and most of their teeth, the roar of the old ones is far greater than their ability to bite.

The old lions go off and settle in the grass directly across from where the strong and hungry lions wait and watch. As the herd enters the area between the hunting pack and the old lions, the old ones roar mightily. At the sound of the roaring, most of the herd panics. Blinded by fear, they turn and flee from the seeming source of danger. As they rush wildly in the opposite direction, they run right to where the strongest lions wait in the tall grass for dinner to arrive.

“Run towards the roar,” the old people used to tell the young ones. When faced with great danger in this world, run towards the roaring, go where you fear to go, for only there will you find some safety and a way through danger. Trouble that is faced when it first appears can be the roar that awakens a person’s deepest resources. In times of trouble or tragedy, a person either steps into life more fully or else slips into a diminished life characterized by fear and anxiety.

The modern world has begun to roar in a big way and fear has become the dominant emotion amongst people of all ages. Old folks fear that they will lose health care and retirement benefits;

those in their prime earning years fear that they can't earn enough or could lose their jobs at any moment; and young people fear that there is no place for them in this fearful world where the whole thing could seemingly end at any moment.

Clearly, there are real fears and wild uncertainties in this rapidly changing world. There are many people waiting and willing to exploit the fears of others. And, the tendency to panic as part of the herd can suddenly strike anyone. Everyone feels some fear when panic is in the air. Yet, fear can also be a guide that clarifies what needs to be risked for a greater life to be found. That's what I tell young people when they ask what to do as the world around us becomes increasingly riddled with great uncertainty and blind reactions.

Don't get caught in the blind fears that grip the herd. When the world roars at you, it is time to go where you fear to go. The real risk in this life has always been that of becoming oneself amidst the uncertainties of existence. On this Earth, everything we are given can also become lost. The notion that life should be safe or even that retirement should be secure misses the point of fully living the story seeded in one's soul from the beginning.

The old soul in the human psyche knows that the whole thing has hung by a thread all along. Not that there aren't real fears, but that those who are older are supposed to draw wisdom from surviving the trouble in their own lives. Those "old enough to know better" are not supposed to panic and foolishly add to the roaring of the world.

Those looking for security in the midst of radical change become easy pickings for those trying to benefit from the roaring troubles of this world. Those who believe that life should be predictable or that their security should be guaranteed wind up caught in the teeth of blind anger or debilitating fear. As an Irish poet once said, "A false sense of security is the only kind there is."

In the end, what we fear will not go away, for it indicates what we must go through to live more fully. As an old African proverb advises: When death or danger finds you, let it find you alive! Whether it be an individual, a community or a country, when faced with tragedy or fearful uncertainty we either enter life more fully or else begin to accept a smaller way of being. In the end, or when the end seems near, genuine security can only be found by taking the risks that lead to a greater sense of life and a more inclusive and encompassing way of being in the world.

Shared by Louise Lovdahl

Unitarian Church of Underwood Board Minutes for January 15, 2017

Board members present: Mary Anderson, David Sanderson, Connie Stigen, Norman Kolstad, Alisha Piekarski, David Wass, Bob Worner, Kris Warhol, and John Miersch. Absent: Stan Carignan. Also present: Administrative Consultant JoAnn Larson.

The meeting was called to order at the church by Board President Mary Anderson at 12:08 pm.

Mary Anderson shared a reading/meditation.

The agenda was approved (Miersch/Sanderson).

The minutes of the December 21, 2016 meeting were approved as printed (Warhol/Stigen).

Reports:

Treasurer: David Wass

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson

Speakers Committee: JoAnn Larson – speakers booked through April.

Foundation/Stewardship Committee: David Sanderson – bequests encouraged.

Facilities Committee: Kris Warhol – appreciation of the board goes to Katie Roller-Olson, Ron Roller, Duane and Connie Stigen, Tere Mann, Diana Ziesemer, and Mary Worner for their work in the preparation and installation of the sound abatement panels. No progress on lift repair; replacement to be studied. Change to LED lighting to be considered. No major problems at Sverdrup Suites.

Safety Committee: Norman Kolstad – presented plan for emergency exits prepared by Reed Becker; Facilities Committee to make detailed proposal at annual meeting.

Community Outreach: Mary Anderson – help needed for chili dinner March 31. Lutheran Social Services sponsoring conversations/classes on race.

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson – church photo directory to be ready February 1. A Volunteer Appreciation event is being planned.

Communications Team: Mary Anderson – working on web site, electronic storage, teleconferencing, social media, newsletter, access to UCU videos.

Unfinished Business:

Last month's question on Sverdrup Suites sub-letting is covered in the lease contract. The chili dinner proceeds from 2016 will be donated to the Underwood Senior Dining fund (Wass/Worner).

New Business:

Board members will be personally contacting membership for input. The 2017 UCU annual meeting will be April 23 (Kolstad/Sanderson). UCU will host a 2017 fall workshop for all area UU churches – date to be determined (Wass/Miersch). A covenant between UCU and Habitat for Humanity was endorsed (Worner/Sanderson). Board terms and elections were discussed.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 5:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:21 pm (Stigen/Miersch).

Respectfully submitted,
Norman Kolstad, secretary.