

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

Unitarian Church of Underwood

PO Box 58, 206 North Main Street

Underwood

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: www.ucofu.org

www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org

Sunday Services
March 4 - Spencer McGrew, "Water - A Geographer's Perspective"
March 11 - Kara Beckman
March 18 - Women's Study
March 25 - Winona LaDuke- "The Seventh Fire"



***March 2018
Newsletter***



Note: Daylight Savings Time Begins March 11, 2018 – Spring Ahead One Hour

<div> <div>◀ February</div> <div>March 2018</div> <div>April ▶</div> </div>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Spencer McGrew “Water...” New Member Welcoming RE Class - Race in MN 8:45 am Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 a.m. #300	5	6	7 Space Planning Task Force 5:30 pm	8 Perham U Group 6:30 @ Stan Carignan's Warehoused: Refugee Camp to MN – Legacy Hall, MN State 6:30 – 8:30 pm	9	10
11 Kara Beckman RE- Ancient Religions 8:45 am Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am Children's RE New Member Orientation 11:30 am	12	13 NO MARCH MEETING for Battle Lake/Underwood U Group	14 Alexandria U Group 7 pm @ Widseth... Office Bldg/ Speakers Committee 3:30 pm Finance Committee 5:30 pm	15	16	17
18 Victoria Creek Class – “How did I get Here?” Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am #300	19	20 Fergus Falls U Group 6 pm @ Diana Ziesemer's	21 Board Meeting 5:30 pm	22	23 Chili Dinner 5-7 pm 	24 March for Our Lives – Washington DC & St. Paul, MN
25 Winona LaDuke "The Seventh Fire" RE-“ Fluid in Faith” 8:45 am Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am #300	26 Winona LaDuke – MN State, Legacy Hall 5 pm	27	28	29	30	31

Sunday Speakers Coming in March

March 4 – Spencer McGrew – “Water—A Geographer’s Perspective.” Spencer McGrew grew up on a small lake near Rollag, Minnesota. Growing up near water inspired his curiosity and love of the natural world. Spencer graduated from Minnesota State University with a bachelor’s in history and a minor in geosciences. He earned his master’s in Geography at the University of North Dakota in 2013. His talk will provide an overview of the ponds, streams, lakes, and rivers that link together the world. Spencer lives in Fergus Falls with his wife Michele Anderson and their two cats Otto and Ozzy. His talk will address UU Principles: *The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all & Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

Note: The service will include the New Member Welcoming ceremony.

March 11 Kara Beckman – using restorative justice in schools

March 18 – Rescheduled – Victoria Creek, “An Update from The Field: How did I get here?”: an account of the travails, triumphs, and tragedies of life in OTC.

Victoria is a doctoral student at Concordia University interested in understanding how college administrations perceive the role that campus housing (may or may not) play in community college student success. She is committed to community service that has included three terms as an AmeriCorps VISTA, ten years on the Youth Advisory Council of the Workforce Area Board, and more than seven years of service to the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota. Victoria has been part of a statewide movement to bring civility to public discourse around difficult topics as a lead facilitator for the Minnesota Council of Churches Respectful Conversations Project and a practitioner of the “Art of Hosting Conversations that Matter.”

March 25 – Winona LaDuke, “The Seventh Fire.” Winona LaDuke is an American environmentalist, economist, and writer, known for her work on tribal land claims and preservation, as well as sustainable development. She is the executive director of Honor the Earth, a Native environmental advocacy organization that plays an active role in the Dakota Access Pipeline protests.

Note: Winona will also be the featured keynote speaker at a special event at MN State, Legacy Hall, Monday, March 26 beginning at 5 p.m. This event is being sponsored by Sponsored by the Minnesota State Community and Technical College Sociology Department and the Unitarian Church of Underwood. See details below.

Sunday Talks available via POD Casts!!

Missed a talk or want to repeat a talk, Click on the following

link: <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278>

Many now available to listen to!! (Thank you, Ellen Eastby!)

**“Like” UCU on Facebook: see
www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org**

**Thank you, Melody Shores for your
prompt posts to the Facebook Page!!**

**Website:
www.ucofu.org**

**Wi-fi Now Available at UCU
See Bulletin Board or Bulletins for
Password**

U Group Schedule (Small Covenant Groups) Meet Monthly)

- Alexandria U-Group: 2nd Wed @ 7:00 pm @ the office building of Widseth, Smith & Nolting Office Bldg., 610 Fillmore, Alexandria: Facilitators: Lee Becker/Susan Sanford
- The Battle Lake U Group, the 2nd Tuesday @ 3:00 p.m. **resuming in April 2018** @ home of Joanne Cress and Luke Anderson. Facilitators: Bob Worner and Joanne Cress.
- Fergus Falls U-Group: 3rd Tues @ 6:00 pm @ Diana Ziesemer's, 934 W. Linden St., Fergus Falls. Facilitator: Jacob McKnite with Mary Worner.
- Perham U-Group: 2nd Thursday @ 6:00 p.m. at Stan Carignan's. Facilitator: Stan Carignan.

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

March topic: “Simplicity”

Each year, each U Group does a church project and/or a community project. For this year: Battle Lake U Group will serve a pancake breakfast at church and serve a meal at Churches United for the Homeless. Perham U Group helped with the annual December curry dinner at church and will help with Underwood Community Annual Chili Dinner March 23.

To learn more or join a group, contact Luke at luka@arvig.net or 218/209-7809 or Stan at Stanley.a.carignan@gmail.com or 218/841-2657.

Newsletter Submissions

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

Editing: Stephanie Sanderson

Emailing/mailling: Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson.

Website: Ellen Eastby

Facebook: Melody Shores & Bonnie Showers

Note: Announcements sent to JoAnn Larson, Administrative Consultant for church bulletin and/or Mary Anderson for the monthly newsletter are forwarded for inclusion in the www.ucofu.org and Facebook Page.

Newsletter comes out on the 1st of each month

Children's Religious Education



Girl Scout, Violet Solinger with helper, Sequoia, selling cookies!

**Schedule 2017-18
Sundays, 10-11 a.m.**

March 11, 10-11 a.m. – Tina & Cathy Stone

April 15, 10 – 11 a.m. – Jon Solinger & Alisha Piekarski

May 20 or 27 – “Old Fashioned Sunday School Picnic” @ Phelps Mill or God's Acres

**Child Care or Activity Bags Other
Sundays**

Adult Religious Education Classes

Each Sunday of the month, 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. Stan Carignan leads Mindfulness/Quaker Quiet Time Sitting.

1st Sunday of the month, 8:45 - 9:45 a.m. – John Minge leads discussion from: "*A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota*."

2nd Sunday of the month, 8:45- 9:45 a.m. – Sandy Barnhouse leads the Ancient Religions Class.

4th Sunday of the month, 8:45-9:45 a.m. Bob Worner leads, using the book studied by the Celebrants, *Fluent in Faith* by Jeanne Harrison Nieuwejaar.

From the **First Sunday, Adult Religious Education**, John Minge shares that: "NPR's, Kerri Miller moderated her 1/31/18 morning program on 'how to talk about racism.' One caller was particularly interesting as he didn't think that he was experiencing 'white privilege.' He was very decent in his comments and was a good example of why it's so difficult to make headway on the issue of racism. He stayed on the program and seemed to have an open mind, but at least one of the guests seemed to be disturbed by what the caller was saying--justifiably I thought." To listen:

<https://www.npr.org/podcasts/414687786/m-p-r-news-with-kerri-miller>

"The **Ancient Religions class that meets the second Sunday**, heard from Bob and Mary Worner on ecofeminism. Bob 'has read and taken good notes' according to Mary, and he just happened to pick out my favorite book on the subject, *Gaia and God* by Rosemary Redford Reuther. Mary reviewed with us parts from *States of Grace*, by Charlene Spretnak, an author who was first published by the UU Beacon Press. Beacon Press was a very experimental publisher during the 1970-1990s women's spirituality movement.

We are also in process of organizing the upcoming March 18 women's history program potentially to portray some of the goddesses—or authors—we've encountered since the beginning of Second Sunday. If you are interested in participating in the program, please contact me at: artdome43@gmail.com or 218/826-7412. You pick your character, gather some interesting details for a 5-minute presentation, come up with a costume, practice your reading and share it on March 18. I'm available to help with any/all of that." *Sandy Barnhouse*

The **4th Sunday Adult Education Class** did not meet in February due to service cancellation. Bob Worner requests that class attendees please read pages 51-77 and 81-112 of the book, *Fluent in Faith* in preparation for the March class.

MARCH

Mark the Dates!!

Everyday Otter

Tail County

New York Mills Cultural
Center

Feb 1 - Mar 3, 2018

Photography by Jon Solinger
& Ceramics by Blayze Buseth

Images of Otter Tail County

Free to See & Open to All



“Warehoused: From Refugee Camp to Rural Minnesota”

THURSDAY, MARCH 8; 6:30-8:30PM

Documentary & Community Conversation

**LEGACY HALL, MINNESOTA STATE COMMUNITY
& TECHNICAL COLLEGE, 1414 COLLEGE WAY**

Join us to watch the documentary followed by moderated discussion.

This event is FREE and open to all.

Over 12 million people live in refugee camps. *Warehoused* sheds light on the daily life of refugees in Dadaab, Kenya, following a man whose family has resettled in Willmar, MN. Warehoused refers to asylum seekers trapped in border camps for five years or more without the right to work or move freely. The moderator will be led by a refugee who lived in Dadaab for 20 years before moving to Minnesota. Contact is: *Katelyn Boyer* Reference and Adult Services Librarian, Fergus Falls Public Library, (218) 739-9387 or kboyer@ferqusfalls.lib.mn.us.

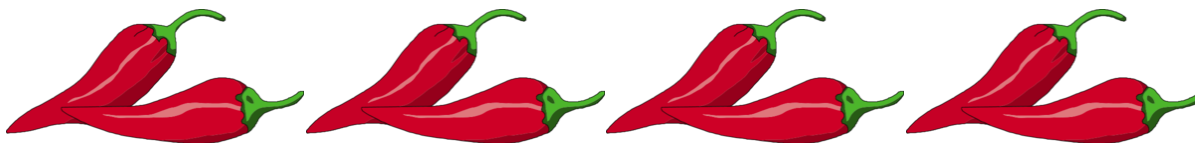
Sponsored by the Fergus Falls Public Library, Fergus Falls Human Rights Commission and Fergus Area College Foundation

For information on Dadaab, see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dadaab>



INVITE

**What it Means to be a Unitarian
Universalist
And a Member of the Unitarian Church
of Underwood
New Member Orientation
March 11 following Sunday Service
New Member Welcoming
March 4 during Sunday Services
(Details Below)**



19th Annual Chili Dinner

Proceeds to Benefit the Underwood Senior Nutrition Program

Friday, March 23, 2018, 5-7 p.m.

Underwood Community Center

Take Tickets, Sell Tickets, Buy Tickets!!

The Unitarian Church of Underwood will hold our annual chili dinner, March 23, to raise money for the Underwood Senior Nutrition Program. The funds pay primarily for delivery of Meals on Wheels to seniors in the Underwood Area.

Note that Katy Olson and Ron Roller were instrumental in starting the first chili dinner in 1999. Other chefs and organizers have since taken over from them.

This year, we've invited volunteers from Sverdrup and Tingvold Lutheran Churches to assist us, making this a joint project. John Minge, assisted by the Perham U Group, along with other prepares the food and with the help from many, promotes the event, sells tickets, sets up, serves and cleans up. Along with the chili, other fixings and numerous desserts are served. John is again experimenting to provide a variety of chilies, including vegan/gluten free, one for every taste.

Volunteer 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.

See JoAnn Larson to get your tickets and your posters!

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

**Students' March on Washington DC
And in St. Paul, Minnesota
March 24, 2018**



Fergus Falls High School student, Sadie Marty brings to our attention that to gain awareness about gun violence, a students' march is scheduled in Washington DC on March 24. In conjunction, there will be a student march in St. Paul that same date. Sadie is planning on getting a bus through the school to bring students down to St. Paul. The bus will cost \$1,250 and students will be charged \$10 to commit to the trip when signing up. If you are interested in helping our students make their voices heard, please contact Sadie at (218) 731-5500 or Sadie_marty@hotmail.com.

See: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2315718898654480/>
<http://act.everytown.org/sign/march-for-our-lives/>
<http://www.marchforourlives.com/mission-statement/>

The following words were shared by Celebrant and Service Leader, Ellen Eastby on February 18, 2018 following the February 14, Florida school shooting claiming 17 children and teachers.

**When News Has Been Sad
Opening**

By Sharon Wylie

You whose hearts are broken, come in.
You whom pain has touched, and sorrow, and shock.

You who have cried this week, and read the news with sadness.
You whom loss has shadowed. You who grieve.
Come in, come in.
You with hearts open to joy and hope, come in.
You whom love has touched, and friendship, and wonder.
You who have laughed this week, and felt gratitude for life's many blessings.
You to whom gifts are given in abundance. You who rejoice.
Come in, come in.
All our hearts are broken and open.
All of us here grieve and rejoice.
This is our place, and this is our hour
To gather and sing and cry and laugh.
Come in. Let us worship together.

The Offering on a Difficult Morning Offering

By Elena Westbrook

Note: these words were written for a Sunday following a significant national tragedy. The tragedy of Florida School Shooting occurred on February 14, 2018.

Far too often, we are forced to confront the terrible things that people can do to each other. When these things happen, all we can do is come together in places like this church to remind ourselves that there is still hope; there is still love; there are still good-hearted people who can look unblinkingly into the storm and continue to believe a calm, bright morning will come.

This community is a refuge where we can keep the ember of hope alive when all the world seems intent on dousing it. And then we can use our little ember to light a beacon for the rest of the world.

Our offerings each week sustain this community, so we can share our small embers to light a dark world. Please give generously so that we can all, together, help spread that light.

Winona LaDuke will be UCU's Featured Speaker

Sunday, March 25, 10:00 a.m.

March 26 - Special Event at Legacy Hall – Fergus Falls Campus

"First Daughter and the Black Snake" Film - 5 p.m.

Honor the Earth Information Booth 6:30 p.m.

Winona's Keynote address: "The Seventh Fire" - 7 p.m.

*(Sponsored by the Minnesota State Community and Technical College Sociology Department
the Unitarian Church of Underwood)*

An evening with internationally acclaimed indigenous environmental activist

WINONA LA DUKE

5 PM MONDAY, MARCH 26
Legacy Hall - Fergus Falls campus

5 | Viewing of the film "First Daughter and the Black Snake"
Winona LaDuke believes Big Oil is the black snake predicted in indigenous prophecy to bring the earth's destruction.

6:30 | Visit the booth of Honor the Earth,
a Native-led environmental organization

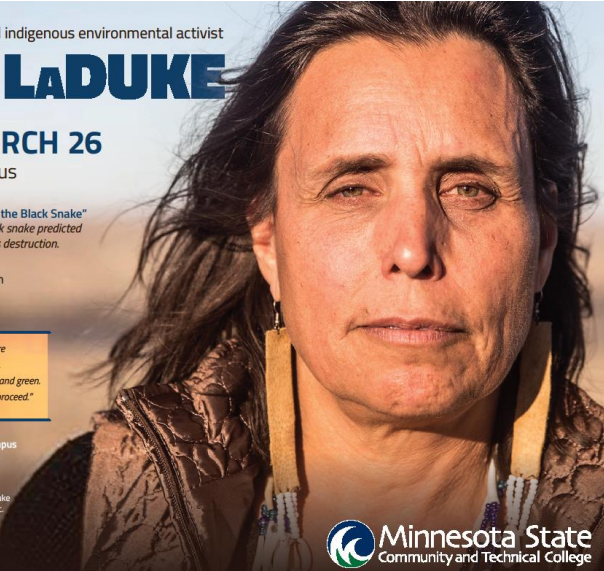
7 | "The Seventh Fire," Keynote address
by Winona LaDuke

"Ojibwe prophecy speaks of a time during the seventh fire when our people will have a choice between two paths. The first path is well-worn and scorched. The second path is new and green. It is our choice as communities and as individuals how we will proceed."

M State cafeteria will be open for those wanting to eat on campus
Sponsored by the Minnesota State Community and Technical College
Sociology Department and the Underwood Unitarian Church
Freewill donation to support the work of Honor the Earth
RELATED APPEARANCE: The Underwood Unitarian Church will host LaDuke at 10 a.m. Sunday, March 25, in Underwood. The event is open to the public.
Learn more. EARN more. minnesota.edu

MINNESOTA STATE
Minnesota State Community and Technical College
A member of the Minnesota State system. It is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educator and employer.

Minnesota State
Community and Technical College



Notes from February Speakers

February 4, 2018 - Shannon Smith's talk was titled "The Heart is the Last Frontier."

Here are some excerpts:



"People can perceive the world differently by using their mind or using their hearts; through their thoughts or through their emotions. As a western culture, we have gotten very good at knowing the world through rational, linear thinking. But knowing the world through our hearts and holistic feeling does not come naturally for many of us. The changes introduced to us by ideas such as 'follow your heart', non-dual thinking, and spiritual healing are revolutionary for many."

- "Learning to know the world from your heart is not an easy shift...it is a change of vista and viewpoint."
- "One interesting area of research is led by a group of noetic scientists, who study how beliefs, thoughts, and intentions affect the physical world. This group believes that the heart plays the important role of synchronizing many systems and states of our body, integrating the heart and mind. "The heart is the center of our body intelligence, not the mind."
- "Opening your heart" has meanings on many different levels:
 1. Listening to your heart and emotions.
 2. Listening to information that comes to you through emotional intuition.
 3. Heart chakra and the flow of energy through our body
 4. Establishing a heart link to our divine higher power; sharing love, gratitude, peace, wisdom.

How can we do this? Through contemplative prayer and meditation. "Contemplation is a positive choosing of the deep, shining, and enduring divine mysteries that are hidden beneath the too-easy formulas. It is not fast food religion, but slow and healthy nutrition."

Through shifting to a heart centered focus, we can develop compassion, and maybe save ourselves from self-destruction.

Podcast at: <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/the-heart-is-the-last-frontier-shannon-smith-february-4-2018>

Attendance: 47

February 11 - **Stan Carignan** facilitated a panel discussion “**Why I am UU: We are a Pilgrim People, a Pilgrim Church**” with long-time UUs: **Tere Mann, John Miersch and Florance Thompson.**



Stan Carignan



Tere Mann



John Miersch



Florance Thompson

Florance's religious background is “Norwegian.” Both **Tere** and **John** grew up Lutheran. **John** became skeptical at a very young age. It was when he and Janell had children that they looked for a religious foundation for their growing children and found UU in Milwaukee. It was when **Tere** went to college and took World Religions that she learned there were other religions and many/most had the same core truths.

It was not so much one epiphany but a series of discoveries that led each to Unitarian Universalism. **Florance** grew up with few restraints but it was her love of math and physics that provided truths and honesty. She established a Sunday school in her home to provide other children and her children a religious foundation. Through parent participation, that evolved into the Fargo/Moorhead UU.

John felt that raising kids in a large metropolitan area gave him and his children opportunities to explore various religions and cultures. **Tere** became increasingly involved with earth traditions and original pagan practices, noting how some of those rituals were incorporated into world religious practices.

Belonging to the Unitarian Church of Underwood provides **Florance**, who liked fairy tales, music and dance; a sense of love, care, kindness, fun. **Tere** appreciates the welcoming found at UCU – that the doors are open to all; that there is an affirmation of ritual; that there is an acknowledgement that there is more than one way. **John** also appreciates UCU's welcoming of everybody, acceptance whether you are a professed believer or a non-believer; the humor and the emphasis on social justice.



February 18 – Adam Martin, Founder of F5 Project and F5 Venture Partners. Adam Martin's talk was titled **"The F5 Project,"** a 501(c)3 founded by Adam to help released felons transition into living in the community. When released, felons are usually given little support and guidance. He equated this to playing a video game for the first time and beginning on level 45.

Adam shared the story of his life. Growing up, he was frequently in trouble and school was difficult. (He attended Battle Lake High School). Beginning at age 18, he was convicted for and served sentences for crimes such as stealing cars and burglary, a five-time felon. Each time he got out, he would get a job (low paying), but he couldn't get housing. He slept on friends' couches, in homeless shelters, etc.

One day, he "woke up." (He has no explanation for why that day). He decided to begin to redirect his efforts from a life of craziness to getting his life together. A friend let him stay at his house, and helped him get a steady sales job with a company that took a chance on him and gave him the support he needed. As his life progressed, he started to help other released felons get their lives together. Eventually, he quit his sales job and developed the F5 project.

The project currently runs 7 houses, with 31 residents. Most are in the FM area; one is in Bismarck. People live at the houses, and 97% are employed (guided by the other residents and by the project). While the national recidivism rate is 70%, out of the last 100 residents of F5, only 7 have been recommitted to prison.

Adam later explained the double significance of F5. The "f5" key on a keyboard is the "refresh" key. It is also related to the fact that Adam has served time for 5 felons.

Several take-aways:

- Anyone who is breathing is valuable.
- The goal of the project is to help everyone achieve independence.
- Treat people like people without expectations.
- Help yourself by helping others.
- Mentorship is key.
- "Grace" happens.
- Safe housing is a #1 need. After having safe housing, employment can follow and lead to the person's success.
- Meet the person where they are at.
- Success is a journey – it takes time.
- When grace is extended to someone, it is more powerful than heroin.
- Participants in the program are beginning to go into prisons to speak about the program.
- Prisoners can accept the empathy that former prisoners can offer.
- There is growing interest in ND and around the nation to offer services like the F5 Project.

For more information, see: <https://www.f5project.org/>. Podcast @ <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/f5-project-adam-martin-february-18-2018>

Attendance: 42

February 25 – Services cancelled due to inclement weather. Guest speaker, Victoria Creek will be rescheduled.

Attendance: 6 hardy, disappointed souls.

Mr. Minnesota, Classic Guitar Built

By Steve Berg



The Unitarian Church of Underwood is privileged to have many fine musicians among our members and friends. We always look forward to the special music provided at Sunday Services. This guitar pictured was built by Steve Berg in 2017. The wood used is all from Minnesota, much of which came from the Berg's hobby farm in Winona, MN. The back and the sides are black walnut. The top and the neck are butternut. The fretboard and the bridge are ironwood. The braces on the inside are basswood. The rosette around the sound hole is spalted birch. Check out more details on the guitar and the music of Steve Berg and Linda Quigstad-Berg:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11XQPzO7mal&t=3s>

Steve and Linda are available to do "House Concerts for a Good Cause." Arrange a date, extend invitations with flyer assistance from Linda, pick your cause and pass the hat. Steve and Linda tell stories and share originally composed and other music. The money collected is donated to the "cause" chosen by the host of the concert. For specifics: contact them at bergfarm@gmail.com.

(Photo courtesy of Norm Kolstad)

Generous giving for Sunday Collections from April 1- February 28, has met the 2017-18 projected operational budget. The Fiscal Year ends March 31.

Your gifts support and sustain the mission and programs of UCU. Direct debit banking is available. Ask JoAnn Larson for the form. Thank you!!

UCU Strategic Planning, 2018-2023

Please complete and return the
Questionnaire **ASAP** to:
Designated basket @ church or
Mail to: UCU, PO Box 58
Underwood, MN

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

The Unitarian Church of Underwood, founded in 1889, has now been in existence for 129 years. Our history ranges from a small group of individuals with common cause to a more leader centered organization governed by a Board of Directors with lay volunteers primarily responsible for all the operational duties. The Board of Directors uses the authority of the UCU By-laws and the direction of the Strategic Plan to address and meet the mission of UCU. We are currently in process of developing the 3rd of our 5-year Strategic Plans, the first having been developed in 2008.

In February we conducted a series of focus groups to gather input on what we want/expect UCU to look like during and at the end of the next five years (2018-2023). We are also seeking input through a questionnaire to members. Information gathered will be incorporated into a Strategic Plan document to be approved by the Board and the membership.

Under Administration and Governance, we have three main functions: Program, Community Outreach and Facility. The final 2018-23 Strategic Plan will address what we want/expect UCU to be/become over this next five-year period in each of these areas:

Organizational structures and leadership built/maintained to: manage the fiscal and human resources of the church in a manner that is inclusive, transparent, efficient and effective.

Program offerings support the spiritual journeys of members by providing a broad range of opportunities for personal reflection, discussion, intellectual stimulation, artistic expression, and social interaction.

Community Outreach efforts encourage and support members, affiliates, and collaborators to engage in community services, social justice efforts and environmental causes from local to world levels.

The church Facilities and grounds are maintained and improved for maximum serviceability, efficiency, and longevity.

Even if you did not participate in a focus group or complete a questionnaire, we are still open to hearing your thoughts. Thank you!!

Board of Directors: Mary Anderson, President; Dave Sanderson, Acting Vice Presiden; Norm Kolstad, Secretary; David Wass, Treasurer; Darryl Booker, Stan Carignan, John Miersch, Connie

Stigen, Kris Warhol, Bob Worner; Strategic Planning Task Force: Luke Anderson, Mary Anderson, Susan Groff, Ron Roller, Stephanie Sanderson, Connie Stigen, Betsy Wells, Bob Worner.



**Participate in New Member Orientation (February 27 and March 11) and
New Member Welcoming
March 4, 2018**

Those who have recently signed the Membership Book or are interested in signing the book to become a UCU member will be officially welcomed March 4, 2018 at Sunday services. Two new members met at John & Janell Miersch's February 27 for a light supper and the one-hour New Member Orientation session. For those who missed or are interested, there will be another orientation session at church **March 11** following Sunday service.

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

We, like other UU Fellowships, have voting members; others who though not voting members, attend regularly or come for our featured speakers or other offerings; some who consider themselves members but are unable to participate; and some who come sometimes as visitors. We welcome everyone: "no single belief includes us here, no disbelief excludes us."



UCU Board Certifies

62 members for UUA Fair Share Assessment

Each UU church is expected to pay annually their Fair Share Assessment (annual dues) to the Unitarian Universalist Association (\$60/year/certified member) and the UU MidAmerica Region (\$25/year/certified member).

Under UUA, each congregation defines for themselves, "certified member." In consideration that a large part of our budget goes to the fair share assessment for each congregation, a few years ago the Membership Committee with Board approval established the criteria that we certify one member per household. Voting members must meet

the UUA by-laws requirements: (signed the membership book, over 16 years of age, participates annually in one or more events, makes financial contribution and wishes to be considered a member). Each certified member receives a copy of the UU World Magazine. One of the reasons we settled on this definition is we didn't see the need to have two or more magazines come to each household. We also wished to keep our dues within a manageable level of our operating budget.

For record keeping purposes, the Membership Committee maintains two lists: Voting Members list (individual meets voting member criteria) and Contact List (voting members + members we may or may not have seen in a while, plus other friends/visitors). Ellen Eastby also maintains an email mailing list that probably includes all these, plus others. We also keep on file, previous year's voting member and contact lists.

With the certification of 62 members, our Fair Share Assessment to UUA for FY 2018 will equal \$5270.00, a significant percentage of our annual operating budget. When we count individual voting members, we have 86. Members who meet the voting member criteria are eligible to vote on congregational decisions at the annual meeting in April.

In addition to those 86, we have 13 members of whom we are unsure of their status - moved, long term absence, etc. We have sent each of these individuals, a letter asking them to clarify their desired UCU membership status. We are not including them in this year's count pending their response. If they respond that they want to continue to be considered an active, voting member, we will continue them on the voting member roster and count them next year. If they no longer consider themselves an active, voting member, we will still include their name and contact information on the contact roster (active and inactive members/friends).

Last year we certified 64 members and counted 88 individual members. That included the 13 to whom we are sending the status letters in lieu of just counting them and paying those additional dues. Since last year, we've added 17 new members (all now actively participating)

and lost 3 beloved members. These new members account now for over 20% of our total individual members! "Households" becomes kind of a moving target as families move together or separate and that may account for any discrepancies you otherwise note.

Because we have faithfully paid our annual Fair Share Assessment over many years, we are considered by UUA, an Honor Congregation.

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson (Chair), JoAnn Larson, Janell & John Miersch, Alisha Piekarski, Bonnie Showers, Mary Worner, Diana Ziesemer.

HONOR CONGREGATIONS

As of January 2018

Cong ID	Congregation	Members Certified for FY18	Honor Congregation MA FY17	Honor Congregation UUA FY17		
5533	MN-Underwood-U Church of Underwood			65	Yes	Yes

Gratitude is an important spiritual practice that we on the MidAmerica staff want to share more. And one of the things we are most grateful for is the generosity of our congregations--especially those 99 Honor Congregations that have contributed the full Annual Program Fund amount requested of them by the UUA as well as the full amount requested by the MidAmerica Region. These contributions help us share the promise of our faith by moving our communities and the world toward more love, justice, and peace. The Unitarian Church of Underwood is an Honor Congregation in the MidAmerica Region. *Phil Lund, Congregational Life Consultant*
See: <https://www.midamericauua.org/donate/honor-congregations>.

Friend's Passing



Dave Simpkins of Sauk Centre passed away the week of February 20, 2018. Norm Kolstad remembers that Dave presented a talk about Sinclair Lewis a few years ago at UCU. He was friends with several people in the congregation, to name a few: Norm Kolstad, Valerie and Florance Thompson, Susan Groff. He was the newspaper publisher in Sauk Centre and a big fan of the free press. For more information, see:

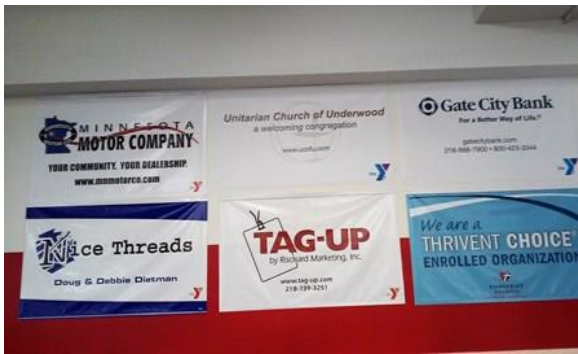
<https://www.facebook.com/dave.simpkins.12>

Someplace Safe Annual Fundraising Tea



For the 5th consecutive year, members of UCU helped serve lunch for this year's 15th annual Someplace Safe Fundraising Tea. Pictured above: Mary Worner, Amy Beckman, Kris Warhol, Heather Czeck, Connie Stigen, Carole Mitchell, Melody Shores, Diane Johnson, Sandy Barnhouse. Thank you all!!

UCU Poster at the YMCA, Fergus Falls



"If you go to the Fergus Falls YMCA and walk the track, you are likely to see there another member or friend from the Unitarian Church of Underwood. You will also see a big poster, 3' x 5', on the wall featuring our church, along with posters for other organizations and individuals who have given \$1,000 or more to the Y. This is one small way to make UCU visible in our community." *Betsy Wells*

Betsy Wells applied for and was granted one of our empowerment grants for the YMCA last year. Our grant provided scholarships for help with the Y membership fees for families who couldn't otherwise afford them.

Thank you, Betsy, for making the application for the Empowerment Grant and to Betsy and Mary Worner for arranging for the poster that gives visibility to the Unitarian Church of Underwood.

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF UNDERWOOD

Award of 2018 EMPOWERMENT GRANTS

Watch this Space!!

News from 2017 Empowerment Grant Recipients

Habitat for Humanity



“Dear Build Partners,

Things have settled down for me after a very exciting and hectic four-months of my first build. I wanted to say thank you to everyone who came out to help and to those of you who are resolved to help on the 2018 Build this summer/fall.

The Dedication Ceremony was well attended and touching as we presented Heather and Kwende with quilts from both the Federated Church and Vining Lutheran Church. We also presented them with a Bible that will help guide their family as they live out their faith and raise their family in their new home. Lastly, we gave them a well-used hammer. The hammer is a symbol of putting our faith in action and helping to build both homes and communities. Dave McRoberts, our Board Vice President, emceed the ceremony. Dave Schneeberger, the Board Treasurer, gave the house blessing and prayer. We wish the Keimle's all the best and will be returning in the spring to help paint the home and finish the landscaping.”

Thank you for supporting our ministry and helping to make decent, affordable housing a matter of conscience in our community.”

*Stan Carignan, Executive Director
Fergus Falls Area Habitat for Humanity Affiliate, Inc.*

Note: The lot has been purchased for the next build site. Applications are now open February 20-March 2, 2018 for a new Partner Family. Criteria selection and application process can be found at: <http://www.fergushabitat.org/content/income-eligibility>.



*Shelter and Support
in a Spiritual Setting*
1901 First Ave. No.
Moorhead, MN 56560
218/236-0372

Bright Sky Apartments are opening and it is time to stock the furnishings. To help, go to Amazon Registry. It is set up as Churches United "marrying" Bright Sky Apartments" and can be found through search. Thank you!

IMMEDIATE NEEDS

TWIN SIZE BLANKETS AND SHEETS, WARM WINTER COATS,
DIAPERS, WET WIPES,



Schools for Shan Refugees, Inc.
Blankets for Chilly Shan Children in the Hills near Chiang Mai, Thailand
Winter 2018



Head teacher, Ying, with a bundle of blankets to distribute

“Friends (you know who you are!) often give me cash and say, ‘Use it where you need it most,’ meaning use it for the needy Shan children our charity supports. I save that cash throughout the year and in the fall or early winter we use it to help keep the children warm. This year we had \$250.00. I sent the money to our teachers to buy blankets for children who live in a hilly agricultural area in northern Thailand. This year they found twin size blankets (the children are small!) and paid about \$2.50 U.S. each for them. Board member, Yvonne Garcia, was in Thailand to help facilitate the event.”

Many thanks for your kind donations to help keep these Shan children warm!”

*Bernice Johnson, President
Schools for Shan Refugees, Inc
www.shanrefugeeschools.org*



Shan children waiting for their blankets.



Got mine!!

Registration Now Open for MUUSJA's Spring Online Covenant Groups

MUUSJA's Online Covenant Groups are back for 2018! Please join Pastor Danny Givens, MUUSJA Statewide Organizer, for this monthly online small group ministry space, created to deepen relationships, embody renewal, and nurture resilience for justice leaders. Groups will meet for 90 minutes a month, March-June, via Zoom videoconferencing.

Monthly themes, drawn from the Soul Matters theme-based ministry program, invite attendees to a place of communal journey as we discuss, reflect, and learn together. Themes for the spring/summer cycle will include *Ancestors*, *Vulnerability*, *Transformation*, and *Rootedness*. To register, please [fill out this form](#).

MUUSJA/MidAmerica Social Justice Webinars

MUUSJA is excited to partner with MidAmerica Region UUA to offer a series of webinars for social justice leaders! Our March Webinar, "And Each Day We Mean One More: Organizing 101 for Congregational Justice Leaders," will take place on Tuesday, March 14, 6:45-8:00pm CST. Details of the webinars (along with other MidAmerica webinars) are available at <https://midamericauua.org/events/webinars>. Each starts at 6:45 pm Central.

If you are unable to attend the live webinars, please note that they will be recorded and available for viewing later.

Brilliant Bits from Boston

And the new name is...



Drumroll everyone, the new name of "Standing on the Side of Love" is, "SIDE WITH LOVE" <https://sidewithlove.org/>. HUZZAH! For nine years Side with Love has been our interfaith public advocacy campaign promoting respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Side with Love confronts issues of exclusion, oppression, and violence based on identity. Many of us have worn their yellow shirts and carried their banners. And, for years folks have noted that the phrase "Standing on the Side of Love" excluded people with diverse means of mobility. At GA 2017 a Responsive Resolution was approved to "create a new imagining that better includes and reflects the needs and contributions of disabled people." Many stakeholders worked together to come up with "Side with Love." And what about all those old T-shirts and banners? Phase them out when you can. To learn more creating a robust accessibility and inclusion ministry in your congregation check out <https://www.uua.org/accessibility/aim>

For a brief look at how your contributions help sustain the work of our Unitarian Universalist Association, check out [Faithful](#), the 2016-2017 Annual Report of the UUA. In addition to a list of all Honor Congregations in the UUA, the report also indicates congregations that have contributed the full requested amount for 10 to 24 consecutive years and congregations that have contributed the full requested amount for 25 or more consecutive years.

Check out books @



www.uua.org/bookstore | [sign up for updates](#)

Unitarian Church of Underwood

Approved Board minutes for January 21, 2018

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

The Board of the Unitarian Church of Underwood was called to order at the church by Board Vice President David Sanderson at 11:51 a.m. John Miersch shared a reading/meditation. The agenda was approved (Warhol/Miersch). Minutes of December 20, 2017 meeting were approved as printed (Warhol/Worner).

Reports:

Treasurer: David Wass

Administrative Consultant - JoAnn Larson

Foundation/Stewardship Committee: David Sanderson - UCU Foundation mailing

Program/Worship Committee: Kris Warhol

Speakers Committee: Kris Warhol

Community Outreach: Kris Warhol - Empowerment applications; Winona LaDuke, March 25;
Someplace Safe Tea, February 15; Chili Dinner, March 23

Facilities Committee: Kris Warhol - FY2019 budgeting

Sverdrup Suites: David Wass

Safety Committee: Norman Kolstad - record-keeping.project

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson - membership list, new member welcome

Communications Committee: Mary Anderson - Podcasts of Sunday talks

Space Planning Task Force - Mary Anderson - postponed meeting

Strategic Planning - Mary Anderson

Nominating Committee: Mary Anderson - identifying prospects

Unfinished Business:

Discussion on the gun ban sign. A "Celebration of Giving" Task Force will be formed to supplant the Battle Lake U-Group's planned stewardship dinner.

New Business:

none.

The next board meeting is set for Wednesday, February 21, 2018 with a Finance Committee meeting February 14, 2018.

The meeting was adjourned by Board Vice President Sanderson at 12:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Norman Kolstad, secretary.