

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 10 a.m.

**March 3- Stewardship
Committee – “Gifts in
Gratitude”**

**March 10 – Willard
Yellowbird, "Creator VS God:
Different Roads Same Path"**

**March 17 – “View from the
Throne:”...**

**March 24 - Sam Miltich,
“Improvised Life: Exploring
Intersection of Mental
Health and Creativity
Through Jazz”**

**March 31 - Edie Barrett,
“Getting Uncomfortable with
White Privilege”**



It just keeps coming!

***March 2019
Newsletter***

Note: Daylight Saving Time Starts March 10

March 2019						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 "Gifts in Gratitude" Fellowship Dinner Adult RE 8:45 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am Children's RE 10:00-11:15 am	4 AA 7 pm	5	6	7	8	9
10 Willard Yellowbird - "Creator VS God: Different Roads Same Path" Adult RE 8:45 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am Children's RE 10:00-11:15 am	11 AA 7 pm	12 Battle Lake/Underwood U Group 3 pm @ Sverdrup Suites #300	13 Alexandria U Group 7 pm @ Widseth... Office Bldg	14 Perham U Group 6:30 @ Stan Carignan's	15	16
17 "View from the Throne..." Mindfulness Class 8:45 am Children's RE 10:00-11:15 am Speakers Committee 11:45 a.m. Stewardship Committee 11:45 a.m.	18 AA 7 pm	19	20 Finance Committee 4 pm Board Meeting 5:30 pm #300	21 FF U Group 6:30 pm @ Diana Ziesemer's	22	23
24 Sam Miltich, "Improvised Life: Exploring Intersection of Mental Health and Creativity Through Jazz" Adult RE 8:45 Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am Children's RE 10:00-11:15 am	25 AA 7 pm	26	27	28	29/30	Sunday 31 Edie Barrett, "Getting Uncomfortable with White Privilege" Adult RE 8:45 am Mindfulness Sitting 9:15 am Children's RE 10:00-11:15 am



Coming in

March 3 – “Gifts in Gratitude.” The Stewardship Committee will present and host the Sunday service celebrating the gifts we give and the gifts we receive with a participatory service and Thanksgiving dinner following. The service will include the welcoming of new members.

March 10 – Willard Yellowbird, "Creator VS God: Different Roads Same Path." Willard is Native American Spiritual Care Director at Sanford Medical Center and A Cultural Planner in Fargo. We welcome him back to our Church.

March 17 – “The View from the Throne:” In celebrating Women’s History Month, a panel of four British queens whose reigns spanned from 60-1603 AD will discuss their significant relationships around a virtual circular kitchen table.

March 24 – Sam Miltich, “Improvised Life: Exploring Intersection of Mental Health and Creativity Through Jazz.” Sam Miltich is a Jazz Musician from Grand Rapids, Minnesota. He will share his journey with schizophrenia. Sam teaches mental health tolerance with his music. He brings jazz and performance to rural areas of the state to increase access for people suffering from Mental Illness. His new C.D., *Pheasants with Torches* has just been released. He has been featured on Common Ground. You can also find an interview segment at [kare11-mobile-article-life-minnesota](#).

March 31 – Edie Barrett, “Getting Uncomfortable with White Privilege,” encompassing some UU Principles: believing in the worthiness of every person, showing compassion and fairness, working for justice, and understanding that everything is interconnected.

Edie currently attends the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, where she is pursuing a master’s degree in Public Affairs. They just finished for class reading, *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo. Edie found the work psychologically illuminating and disruptive. She has begun to question some of the author’s assumptions, but is intrigued with the awkward, damaged, and flawed conversation that reflects what it means to be in the dialogue of race. She doesn’t profess to be a specialist in this topic, and consequently this means that she is likely to be very similar to everyone in the audience.

The hope for her talk is that this will be a thought-provoking presentation. Issues of race, “otherness,” political affiliation, and economic diversity are literally everywhere in our news. Together—let us contemplate what it means to cultivate our similarities and bridge differences with dignity and mutual respect.

Edie Barrett is a published author, poet, and fine artist. She has also written and performed her work on stage. Her Santa Barbara stage performance was titled: *The Bus Ride to Transformation: Poverty, Racism and My Black Muse*. In 2018. Edie began graduate work at The Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. She hopes to use art as a vehicle for social change and engagement.

For almost 14 years, Edie worked in academic management at Pacifica Graduate Institute in the Department of Mythological Studies, in Santa Barbara, California. Pacifica is a world-renowned graduate school of psychology. For over 25 years she has been studying and exploring Jungian psychology. This perspective has had a profound impact in both her life and creative expression.

Edie moved to Ortonville, Minnesota in 2010, after living in Santa Barbara for twenty-six years. She is a fifth generation, Minnesota Norwegian. Edie has a tremendous love of the prairie and contemplates the intersection of landscape, creativity, and leadership.

For further information please visit her website: www.ediebarrett.com.



Monthly Greeting from Board President, Kris Warhol

"Give the life you deserve the very best of intentions. The rewards will automatically follow." If you want to help in this world, you'll have to teach how to live in it. That just might sum up why our Church is 130 years strong. Weekly interacting with our Sunday School class we are thankful for the leaders guiding our children towards a greater understanding of our interdependent web of all existence.

Looking back on religious teachings from a Lutheran perspective was a cat from a different breed. Teaching from the ten commandments centered and grounded a wounded heart. A child from a fractured family, religion became a beacon of reasoning and hope.

In my Sunday school studies were pictures of Jesus performing miracles. We colored them while being quoted scripture. God looking down from heaven carrying out requests from his father; turning water into wine, the blind to seeing.

Young, naive and following my peers brought me to the altar, owning a personal relationship with Christ. These words scripted are snippets written during hip replacement surgery. When thoughts of dying on the table darkened my soul, prayer was my refuge. Prayer was the only way steering me into the operating room.

What was rooted in my youth the promise of answered prayer gave me strength. Praying produces results.

Religion from many beliefs brings us together. What we adopt and own from those beliefs

guides us in this journey. Unitarian Universalist encapsulates all. The children in Sunday School will be discovering diversity of all major religions. Expanding horizons that are acclimating many of us as we worship together.

Out from all past experiences and old assumptions we build a religion that is truly our own. As a helper, one of the my joys has been to witness the personal growth of our members over the years. *Kris Warhol*



Politics in the Pulpit

Response to John Minge Editorial by Ron Graham

"I want to be clear I am not advocating any limitation on speaking strongly about moral and justice issues.

My position is simply Trump and his supporters are all, *without exception*, 'persons.' Therefore, by our first Principle they have *without exception*, 'inherent worth and dignity.'

In addition, my long experience tells me persons do not change for the better through mocking and ridicule. Again, our tradition would indicate that listening and seeking to understand their position must be our practice.

Each day I put on my boots, wade in the mud of politics and try to find hope we won't lose our country and perhaps much of the earth's life forms, including humans. Each day I see my beloved science attacked, my world of nature attacked, other races attacked, our press attacked, our government agencies attacked - even reality becomes suspect.

So, it is comforting to come to church and be with fairly-sane people who stand up for things I love.

That said, when I sit in the congregation, I get uneasy when any individual is put down or made fun of. I sit in a pew with my deceased mom and many loved family members and friends with me in my mind. They are all Persons and many support Trump. If they would feel unwelcome (as opposed to challenged) then I feel it too.

Yes, strongly speak truth to power and speak for the migrant, the environment, world stability, peace, etc.

After the service go downstairs and share your thoughts and listen to other viewpoints. But, in all instances we must do exactly what the sign in our RE space asks of our children: 'Respect for others. Respect for our space' (which is a Unitarian Church - not the Democratic Headquarters!). Or as some say, 'Hate the sin but love the sinner.'" *Respectfully, Ron Graham*



Children's Religious Education

March Schedule

March 3	Jon Solinger	Ron Graham	UUA "Home," lesson #8
March 10	Ron Graham	Richard Kagan	Sources
March 17	Cedar Walters	Ron Graham	Composting
March 24	Ron Graham	Lillie Kaye	Sources
March 31	Cedar Walters	Ron Graham	Sources

We have 7-9 children attending regularly. They range in age from 1 ½ - 9 years-old. On the first Sunday of each month, we use curriculum from the UUA website, Tapestry of Faith, lessons on "Home." Jon Solinger leads the lesson assisted by Ron Graham.

On the other Sundays, Ron or other leads/assistants have been concentrating on our UU Traditions and Sources. Ron has conducted science experiments with water and air. He also demonstrated with the children how far the moon would be from the earth if earth was the size of the ball he held – Amari correctly guessed it would be outside. Ron explained the sun, 400 times further away, would be a couple of miles from the church. They looked at a new poster of the Andromeda Galaxy and learned that our sun would be one of many suns - not special.

Then the older children wondered “how did it all begin?” A satisfying discussion happened about origins – science provides answers, but it is easier to understand the Bible saying God created it. As UU’s we get to figure it out for ourselves.

Cedar has been conducting lessons on how we may participate in activities to save our environment. Kris and Lilly led impromptu artistic session; listened to music while using our creative instincts to draw, cut, glue, and color our hearts out. Snacks included: apples, oatmeal raisin cookies, goldfish and some fruit snacks with apple juice.

Lessons are focused for the older children with playful activities that involve the younger ones.

Needed: If you have a battery-operated wall clock, you could donate for the meeting room in Sverdrup Suites, it would be most appreciated!

Notes from February Programs

February 3, 2019 Celebrant Ellen Eastby message “The Hard, Messy Work of Compassion” referencing UU Principles 1-3. Ellen keeps several files containing thoughts and ideas for sermon ideas. It was seemingly her “broad imagination” and ability to pull together connections that others may not immediately see, that may have kept her out of grad school program she was seeking years ago. But it is these same attributes that seem to serve her well in pulling together ideas and linking connections for her UU talks - today one of “3750 words!”

Compassion – to suffer together; to feel the pain of another and be motivated to relieve their pain. It is easy to feel compassion to mass victims of tsunami’s, the Las Vegas shooting where 58 were murdered and 851 injured. We shed tears for them. Hope is found in our tears and so we remain human. There is full emersion in the condition of being human.

Compassion comes easy on the large scale. But not so easy in the every day. Henry Noen states that compassion calls for the “full emersion in the condition of being human.” The words of popular wealthy, evangelist Joel Osteen may surprise: “It is our job to forgive, to lift the fallen, to help the broken, to heal the hurting.” Craig Greenfield describes two kinds of poor – the deserving poor and the undeserving poor. We render a judgment on who “deserves” our compassion.

After 25 years of sobriety, she asks, “Who am I to judge?” Not to who or why but how. How best can we extend God’s love... How do we.... We can say we are willing to die to save human kind but are we willing to live with someone “who snores.”

We have a tough time with those with whom we disagree or think wrong. So be it - we don’t understand. We don’t get it. We feel justified in thinking of them as “deplorables.” Someone criticized UU as denying the divinity of Jesus. The response: “we don’t deny the divinity of anyone.” Try to ask: “how they feel that brings them to those ideas.”

There is good news/bad news. All of us are imperfect, there is no black and white – only grey, we must each find our own way. We each draw our own line in the sand so we should carry a big stick.

Comments: when we label others, we desensitize ourselves and them from being human; look for shared experience; reminder of Sandy's challenge to find and talk with someone we disagree with; example given of visits to Pentecostal congregation that is the most racially diverse she's ever experienced; listen, find common ground and enjoy it sometimes even as entertainment; recognize when you find yourself disappointed that you have no control on another and accept.

Podcast link @ <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/the-hard-messy-work-of-compassion-ellen-eastby-february-3-2019>

Attendance: 41

February 10, 2019 Victoria McWane-Creek returned to us once again with her talk on **"Depolarizing Everything,"** addressing UU Principle 2, "Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

Victoria thinks of herself as a "disrupter/developer." Over the past year or so, she has been working to depolarize herself. How "I" show up to make it better. She thinks of how she learned to ride a bicycle – just doing the thing, find balance and keep going further each time – find the power and the leverage to move along. In developmental change, she finds that folks are on a continuum –go to where they are, not demand that the other person be where you are. Depolarization dialogue uses SCARF: status, clarity, autonomy, relational, fairness. How do "I" relate better to people? What do they value and how do I align with that?

There is risk and tension in the freedom to say what I need to say publicly. Equity is the fair chance for the opportunity. Who doesn't want a fair and just society? There is a poem, "The Bridge Called Me Back" that talks about being the bridge to our true self, our own values.

In answer to how she has separated race class, gender challenges to herself, she talked about "intersectionality" – who I am, what I bring and what I value. Choose when and how to invest. There is intention (what did the other intend?) and impact (how does it affect me?). Was this what you intended? This is how it affected me. Be conscious of what matters to others.

When asked about her thoughts on what a person may have done 30 years ago and how it relates to white supremacy, she advises – "Yep, I did it. This is how I've changed." Take accountability for what you did when young and dumb." There is too much "We gotcha now."

Victoria ended by issuing an invitation to a community conversation on "Cultural Identity" at Legacy Hall, Tuesday, February 12 @ 6 p.m.

Podcast link @ <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278/depolarizing-everything-victoria-mcwane-creek-february-10-2019>

Attendance: 36

Website:
www.ucofu.org

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

Sunday Talks available via
PodCasts @ soundcloud.com/user-927528278

Cancellation/Postponement Due to Weather

Cancellation/Postponement Due to Weather: for weather rated announcements, tune to Lakes Radio Family of Stations – 103.3, 96.5 FM and 1020, 1250 AM. You can also check the UCU website at www.ucofu.org or the Facebook page. If you do not hear a cancellation announcement, please use your best judgment on making a safe trip to church.

Newsletter Submissions due prior to Issuance the 1st of each month

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

Editing: Stephanie Sanderson

Emailing/mailling: Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson.

Website: Ellen Eastby

Facebook: Melody Shores

Photos courtesy of Norm Kolstad & credited others.

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 via email. They are also posted at www.ucofu.org.

Contact JoAnn Larson @ redswilds@gmail.com for Sunday announcements and local media notifications.

Nurture Your Spirit ...

U Group Schedule (Meetings 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
- Battle Lake U Group, the 2nd Tuesday @ 3:00 p.m. @ **Sverdrup Suites #300**. Facilitators: Bob Worner/ Joanne Cress.
- Fergus Falls U-Group: 3rd Thursday @ 6:30 pm @ Diana Ziesemer's, 934 W. Linden St., Fergus Falls. Facilitator: Melody Shores.
- Perham U-Group: 2nd Thursday @ 6:30 p.m. @ Stan Carignan's. Facilitator: Stan Carignan.

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

To learn more or join a group, contact Lead Co-Facilitators: Kris Warhol @ mwarhol7up@gmail.com or 218/205-1644 or Shannon Smith @ shannonsmith20@gmail.com Or 320/630-6229

Adult Religious Education Classes & Mindfulness Sitting

1st Sunday of the month, 8:45 - 9:45 a.m. – John Minge leads discussion.

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

3rd Sunday of the month, 8:45 – 9:45 a.m. – Stan Carignan will lead new class using the book, "*Seeing, Knowing, Being*" by John Greer as a text to explore what mindfulness is, how it can be achieved, and what it does for a person. Book chapter discussions followed by 20 minutes of mindfulness practice.

4th Sunday of the month, 8:45-9:45 a.m. Bob Worner leads the discussion.

Each Sunday of the month, other than 3rd Sundays (see above): 9:15 – 9:45 a.m., Stan Carignan leads Mindfulness Sitting @ #300 Sverdrup Suites.

U Group March Theme: Sanctuary

Sanctuary observation

My sanctuary is comprised of small decisions I made when I turned my schoolhouse into a home. I have laundry next to my huge closet, upstairs with the bedrooms, where I also have a wall of shelves for my best books.

There's a special extra medicine cabinet for use as a vanity. My kitchen is extremely well laid out and it's a beautiful room. There's beauty at every window; all are large and mostly uncovered, with extraordinary light, night, day, sunlight or gloom light. I have a place where I'm always ready to paint or write. In that same room, if the sun is bright, there's a light show passing through, because of the mirrors at the windows, mostly at twilight, just before they're filled with cobalt blue, as the sun disappears. When the moon is full, bright light fills the two large galleries.

Outdoors, winter and summer, are big, mature trees, and smaller ones and new ones coming up—in a tangle—fighting it out for space, since they aren't really members of an untouched ecosystem, but instead, like an assembly of travelers on a train platform in the big city, all coming and going from other places, like Kansas, Norway, Saskatchewan, and Colorado. But it's green here, and Monarch butterflies come to feed on native milkweed—and I eat raspberries right off the stem, as soon as I see them.

I can see all the way down the shallow, sloping road, about a mile, wide open. *Written & Shared by Sandy Barnhouse, U Group Participant*

My, How They Have Changed!



Remember these boys? (September 2013)



They are now MEN! (February 2019)

For the first time, since they left Perham as foreign exchange students, in early February this year, Elshan (from Azerbaijan) visited Fikri (from Indonesia) in Istanbul, Turkey. Elshan brought Fikri and his wife good food his mom had made. They went shopping, toured and caught up on each other's lives and shared pictures with "Mom," Mary Anderson, their USA Host in 2013-14. They often came to church with Mary. Although as Muslims, they didn't participate in the rituals or hymns, they did enjoy the social hour and treats.

Empowerment Grant Applications In!!

Ron Roller, Chair of the grant application process informs us that we received 10 grants asking for a total of \$19,000 for this year. The Empowerment Grant Committee met late in February to review and select recipients. The selected grants will then be presented to the church board in March for approval.

Some Place Safe Tea



Members/friends of UCU helped with our now annual community service project serving lunch at the Some Place Safe Fundraising Tea. Kris Warhol and Melody Shores coordinated efforts for a UCU sponsored table decorated with an "Embrace Diversity" theme. Tags describing some of the UU principles and values were created by Melody Shores. Servers from church included:

Carole Mitchell, Heather Morris, Alyssa Bell, Kris Warhol, Melody Shores, Connie Stigen, Janell Miersch. Several remarked this was the best tea yet!

Save these dates in April -

Annual Fundraising Chili Dinner

Friday, April 5, 2018

5-7 p.m.

Underwood Community Center

See Kris Warhol for tickets and Mary Anderson to sign up for duties/desserts. Further details during church announcements.



Annual Meeting

April 14, 2019

Because Easter falls on the 3rd Sunday of April, the traditional date of the Annual Meeting, this year the meeting will be held on the 2nd Sunday, April 14. There will be an abbreviated service and the meeting will follow immediately thereafter with a light lunch served courtesy of Kris Warhol.

Living our UU Principles

We are Part of the Larger UU

LOVE
RESISTS

Love Resists is a joint campaign by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Dear Unitarian Church of Underwood,

We have no crisis at our border.

But we do have a crisis of our borders.

The crisis is believing there is a border between who is human and worthy of dignity and who is not.

Love Resists team member Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen [wrote](#) these words in November and they are still painfully true now. While the Trump administration has needlessly

declared a national emergency at the border, we know the real emergency is the dehumanization and demonization the refugees and asylum-seekers.

We at Love Resists are listening to our partners in how to respond to the current artificial national emergency at our border. We have heard repeatedly that continuing to support refugees and asylum-seekers is crucial.

Please see [Opportunities to Support Asylum-Seekers](#), our crowd-sourced resource which includes tasks such as volunteering possibilities at the border and in U.S. border states as well as ways to act from your own home, including sponsoring or hosting a refugee. And if those options aren't feasible, supplies are urgently needed.

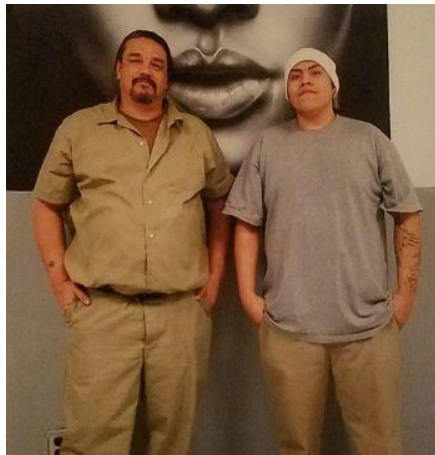
We will share additional actions as we learn of them.

In solidarity,

The Love Resists Team
www.loveresists.org

Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance MUUSJA

Support Indigenous Political Prisoners in Minnesota



Rattler (Michael Marcus) and Dion Ortiz, two Indigenous Water Protectors serving time as political prisoners for their involvement in the DAPL Resistance, pictured together at Sandstone Federal Correctional Facility in MN.

Dear Ones,

During the past three years, many of you have joined with us in developing a relationship with our Indigenous partners in supporting the courageous witness of the Water Protectors over the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). Many of you joined us when we sent vans to Cannonball and Bismarck, ND, to participate in this witness. And many of you have leaned in to other crucial parts of this witness to UU values, like contributing to the "yUUrt" (and pellet stoves) at the camp that served many purposes including as an Interfaith gathering center, and as health, media, and legal meeting places. We Minnesotans know that this was a most practical contribution to carrying on this work through a winter on the Northern Plains!

Many of you also helped to pass the profoundly important [Action of Immediate Witness](#) at the 2018 General Assembly, where UUs from everywhere pledged our ongoing solidarity with Indigenous Water Protectors, especially those who have become political prisoners of the United States government.

We now invite you to join in supporting the next stage of this partnership. While the State of North Dakota arrested people of many racial and cultural backgrounds, the Federal Government decided to make an example Indigenous people in particular -- and has charged *only* Indigenous people in the DAPL resistance. Five Indigenous Water Protectors have ended up serving time in Federal prisons. Two of these political prisoners, [Dion Ortiz](#), and [Rattler](#) (Michael Marcus), are serving time of 6 months to 18+ months at the Federal detention facility in Sandstone Minnesota (near 35W, halfway between the Twin Cities and Duluth).

We are looking for a committed group of people to make monthly contributions of \$10 (or more!) to one or both of these Indigenous partners for the duration of their incarceration. The funds will be used to help Dion and Rattler pay for basic life necessities at the prison commissary, maintain contact with loved ones through the exorbitantly expensive prison phone system, and supply relatives with money to travel to visit Rattler and Dion at Sandstone.

If you are willing to join us, **please reply to this email with a YES**, letting us know how much you are able to contribute each month, and whether your donation will be for a limited time or until Dion and Rattler are released. We will get back to you ASAP with details on how to apply that generous gift to Dion and Rattler's support.

What this partnership requires of us now is to show—even after the TV cameras have gone—that we have not forgotten, and that we hold our partners and relatives in love and care. Thank you for showing up again for real people, with your real values, for the long haul.

In faith and solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley", with a stylized, flowing script.

Rev. Ashley Horan, Executive Director
ashley.horan@muusja.org

Message from the MUUSJA Board of Directors

Dear MUUSJA Community,

We are entering a time of big transition at the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA), and we are ready for this moment.

MUUSJA's executive director, Rev. Ashley Horan, has informed the Board of Directors that she will be ending her tenure as Executive Director in July. We deeply appreciate Ashley's work with our organization over the past five years, and in the coming months, we will celebrate her leadership and her ministry, and offer you the opportunity to do so as well.

MUUSJA has consistently grown in strength and influence, in Minnesota and beyond. We are boldly living into our mission to build a more just and loving world. We have deepened our racial justice focus, expanded our network in Greater Minnesota, partnered with faith leaders from Unitarian Universalism and other spiritual traditions, built critical partnerships with movements for justice, and grown the size of our staff. We are proud of all we have accomplished together, and the Board is confident that we are extraordinarily well-positioned to enter the next chapter of our story, led by a talented new Executive Director who will carry on MUUSJA's joyful, spiritually-rooted justice work.

As MUUSJA enters its 19th year, the call for Unitarian Universalists to show up has never been greater. Communities of color, indigenous people, immigrants and refugees, the LGBTQIA+ community, disabled people, and women continue to experience mounting threats to justice that further impede our collective liberation. We continue to resist these threats, working to bring people together within, across and beyond congregations, and building capacity and spiritual grounding for effective justice-making.

The MUUSJA Board of Directors will lead a search process for a new Executive Director that is broad, inclusive, and rooted in our faith and values. In the coming weeks, we will be opening the position and publishing a job description, and we welcome your help in spreading the word and identifying qualified candidates. As we guide this transition over the next several months, we look forward with optimism to identifying and embracing MUUSJA's next Executive Director.

We are moving from strength to strength.

You are critical to our faith-based movement for justice. We appreciate your support and will keep you updated during this transition.

In faith,



Sherri Knuth and Taylor Putz
MUUSJA Board Co-Chairs

Note: Ellen Eastby, UCU Member is on the MUUSJA Board of Directors.

A Message from the MUUSJA Executive Director

Dear Ones,

As we approach this impending leadership transition, I am profoundly grateful for the nearly five years of powerful work in which I have been blessed to engage as MUUSJA's Executive Director. This ministry has been both deeply challenging and incredibly life-giving, and I will be forever shaped by what we have dreamed up, collaborated on, and accomplished together. It seems right that in July, just after my fifth anniversary with MUUSJA, we will part ways, each of us to move into the next chapter with thanks for what has been and excitement about what is to come.

I have been working closely with the Board over the past two months since I told them of my departure to offer support as they prepare to search for MUUSJA's next Executive Director, and to ensure the transition to new leadership goes as smoothly as possible. As Sherri and Taylor say above, I believe we are incredibly well-positioned to identify an exciting, talented, spiritually-rooted Executive Director to lead MUUSJA into its next iteration. I am also deeply confident in (and profoundly grateful for) the entire MUUSJA Board of Directors, both as they conduct the search process and as they continue to provide the centered, faithful leadership that is the backbone of our organization. I also have huge gratitude to my beloved colleague, Pastor Danny Givens, who will continue to serve as MUUSJA's dynamic Statewide Organizer and skillfully hold much of MUUSJA's programmatic work through the transition.

I look forward to a very full, very exiting last few months of work with MUUSJA. Onward, with gratitude!

In faith and solidarity,



Rev. Ashley Horan, Executive Director
ashley.horan@muusja.org





Next month's newsletter will have complete information about the 2019 MidAmerica Regional Assembly on April 5-7, 2019, including information on how to register.

UUA.org/midamerica.

“Intersectionalities” is the title of our April 2019 Regional Assembly in St. Louis, MO <https://www.uua.org/midamerica/ra>. **Why the concept of “intersectionality” has inspired us in the MidAmerica Region**

Twenty-eight years ago, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term “intersectionality” in [a paper](#) as a way to help explain the oppression of African-American women.

A leading thinker and scholar in the field of critical race theory, [Crenshaw](#), a professor at Columbia Law School, directs the [Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies](#) and is a co-founder of the [African American Policy Forum](#).

As she explains, “Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It’s not simply that there’s a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things.”

Excerpted from <https://www.law.columbia.edu/pt->

br/news/2017/06/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality

To listen to Crenshaw describe intersectionality in her own words, we include a link to Crenshaw's [speech](#) at the Women of the World Festival in 2016.

Note: If you wish to attend, **please contact President, Kris Warhol at 218/205-1644 or mwarhol7up@gmail.com.**

The Unitarian Church of Underwood Celebrates 130 Years (1889-2019)

With information gathered by Norm Kolstad, descendant of the founders of this church, we continue the narrative begun in the February newsletter of the struggle for the Unitarian Church of Underwood to maintain as a liberal church in a conservative area and follow the UU principles. We feature the correspondence during 1945-46 between John Gronner living then in Topeka, Kansas with his sister, Ethel, then a member and Secretary of the Underwood church's Board of Directors. Ah, the politics underway!

if you want the full story all at once, right click on: [Here is the link to the article.](#)

Part 2.

[Letter from John Gronner to Ethel Gronner; September 18, 1945] Dear Ethel: I was very keenly disappointed when I received your letter advising me that Friday, September 21 had been set as the meeting date for a church meeting to vote upon affiliation, merger, union or something of the sort with the Maine church.

I have, of course, been wrong in my judgment many times before, and I may again be wrong in my judgment in regard to this subject. Frankly, however, I do not think that our group is ready to vote on such a subject at this time.

Most of the members of the Maine church that I know are very fine people, but they are all inclined to be extremely conservative as far as their religious views are concerned. The only justification for the existence or continuance of our little church is that it continue to be a liberal church.

If the members of the church would take the time to study the history of the various churches, it would not be difficult for any one of them to understand that the only natural place for affiliation is with a Congregational church. For this very reason, I have always felt that our logical connection was with the Federated Church at Fergus.

I will never want to support any church where the minister cannot speak his own convictions. In my opinion, if a minister speaks in such a manner as to inspire the folks in the Maine congregation, then he certainly cannot inspire us in our church. If he tries to speak according to his congregation, then he most certainly becomes a genuine hypocrite, and is in my opinion unqualified for a position of leadership.

It certainly is my desire to fall in line with whatever is best for our church, but frankly, I cannot continue to support our church or any other church unless I feel that the church definitely stands for a worthwhile principle. If the purpose is such that we just become another church, then we might as well be absorbed into one of the stronger organizations in the county.

I frankly recognize that there are two sides to this question, and that is why I feel that it is most unfortunate that the matter should be brought to a vote before all the possibilities have been explored.... I sincerely believe that every member of our church is seriously interested in the church from the standpoint of our young people, but I do not believe that they are willing to sacrifice principle in order that we can have greater numbers from the standpoint of such membership. We, of course, are interested in the bigger and stronger membership, but not as a result of a compromise of the principles for which our church has always stood.

Were I there to vote on the basis of information that I now have, I would be obliged to request that the question be tabled until the possibilities in connection with the Pelican Rapids church and the Wadena church as well as any other commitments from the A.U.A. could be considered.

I am frankly of the opinion that two regular church services each month plus one Young Peoples' meeting each month is adequate from the stand point of regular services. Special meetings could always be called whenever qualified outside speakers would be available. A contribution of \$600 a year from our church should be ample to cover such an arrangement.

The regular church minister should by, all means not be responsible for preaching at the young peoples' meetings. One of the principle purposes of a liberal young peoples' group is to develop resourcefulness among the younger members of the church. Depending on the minister for regular contributions, completely defeats this purpose. The Young People should be responsible for finding their own speakers and get the most out of their group when they occasionally have discussion meetings developed by their own ingenuity. Then, of course, when field men from the A.U.A. [*American Unitarian Association*] and other available speakers through our own denomination were available they could be used for either special regular church services or for young people's meetings whenever the young people would so desire.

Whenever an affiliation is made with any other group, there must be a definite written agreement in connection with the use of the hymnals and the Sunday School material. If there isn't a definite agreement that the Hymns of the Spirit (present hymn book) and the Beacon Press or Pilgrim Press material are to be used in the Sunday School, then my vote would be a definite "NO".

Whatever is done at the Friday meeting, I sincerely hope will be for the best interest of the dear little church.

[Board minutes; September 21, 1945] Rev. Eastland *[Field Service Representative of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church]* explained.... that the suggestion here made was that Underwood join with Maine and Maplewood in hiring a minister in order to secure a well-trained man who was to serve each church on the basis of the Congregation to which he preached. Motion made by Mr. Shodin that the matter of hiring a minister be postponed until further investigation can be made and that we be given the privilege of hearing a minister before he is hired. The chair called for a standing vote. Result: 26 in favor - 16 opposed - 6 indifferent. *[see the proposed Memorandum of Agreement for Securing Pastoral Services, [page 1](#), [page 2](#), [page 3](#)]*

[letter from John Gronner to Ethel; September 27, 1945] Keep your chin up and don't worry about the things that have been thrown at you. If I understand the constitution right, it is still my opinion that it is all right to let these fellows vote themselves out of a home and even though we do not have more than two meetings a year, we can still hold Sunday School at the homes and in this way give the youngsters the training that we want them to have. I am not willing to sacrifice principle for the sake of a bunch of people that are members of the church mostly because they are anti-Lutheran, or in other words, have become interested because they could get by without contributing much money. They do not stand for much in my opinion, and if we look back over history, their contributions are very little in either cash or otherwise.

When Elof *[Hagen]* told me at a church meeting last August that they were giving some thought to the thing that has been going on, he said, "John, what do you think about it?" I answered, "of course, I do not know the facts, but I would certainly go slow in considering anything like that." The evidence of railroading does not indicate that they have gone very slow. He, of course, has been under a lot of pressure, but I thought that his shoulders were broader than has been evidenced in this case.

It might be that the thing they are trying to do is all right, but I still repeat that I will vote "No" and will fight to the last inch against their going through with it unless they incorporate the thoughts in regard to our form of service, use of the hymnals, and the fact that the minister not refer or make any reference to the Trinity, and that he will in other words give a broad, liberal interpretation of religion in his sermons.

Please do not worry, but I rather wish that you would remain on the board until after the final meeting that they have decided upon. We surely can make some changes in the members of the board in the future.

[letter from John Gronner to Dr. Frederick Elliot, President American Unitarian Association; September 29, 1945]Right now, there is a group within the church who are pushing a union with the Presbyterian church. I think that these folks are sincere in their efforts because it is

their belief that the church can't continue unless they receive some support from the A.U.A. or that they can tie up with some nearby church of some kind or other.

Frankly, however, I cannot see how you can mix a strictly orthodox group and a liberal group and make anything out of it at all. I am therefore wondering if you have any suggestion as to what we might attempt to do. I, of course, fully realize just how you must feel in connection with the group as a result of some of the things they have done in the past. Reverend Flint gained a small following when he was there, but none of them were Unitarians, and it is odd that none of them were liberals as far as religion is concerned. They were strictly political followers of Reverend Flint's and when he left, they lost all interest in the welfare of the church.

Now that the war is over, is there some way that the A.U.A. could again enter into the picture, but for only a short period of time? For instance, if you could work out a program whereby you could pay two-thirds of the salary of a resident minister the first year, one half the second year, and one third the third year. Or, as a matter of fact, any kind of a plan would be of help to them at this time. If a young fellow could be placed in the community who really had personality and leadership qualities, he could accomplish much. Of course, any man placed there would have to be chosen in such a manner that he would be an individual that would keep out of politics in his church work. He would also have to be from the so-called conservative school of Unitarians.

Personally, it would not make a bit of difference to me whether he were a so-called HUMANIST or a THEIST. Reverend Flint had, however, poisoned the group in regard to Humanists, and anyone in the group would have to go slow in this regard.

I cannot help but feel that all Unitarians are at least to a great degree both Humanists and Theists.

[letter from John Gronner to Rev. Dana Mclean Greeley, President of the American Unitarian Association, Boston; September 29, 1945] There are only two strictly Congregational churches in the county. One at Pelican Rapids, Minnesota, and the other at Bertha. There is also one at Wadena which is right outside of the county line. I am trying through correspondence to get them to survey the possibilities of some kind of a connection with one of these churches before they tie up with the Presbyterian Church.

If you have occasion it might be of some help to us if you would speak to Dr. Elliot about our problem.

[letter from John Gronner to Rev. George Field, Bertha, Minnesota; September 29, 1945] Dear Reverend Field: I am writing you this letter to inquire as to whether or not there would be any possibility of your serving the little Unitarian Church at Underwood, Minnesota. I, of course, do not know whether you have any additional churches that you are serving at the present time or not. The group at Underwood is, however, very much in need of some one that could visit that church at least two times and preferably three times each month.

[letter from Georg Walen to Ethel; October 1, 1945]I have received your letter. We are with you and wish that we could help you. Bear in mind that you are only an acute case of an ailment from which the entire Unitarian Church suffers. It has perplexed me for years and continues so to do. The principle of tolerance lies at the root of it--- it is a dilemma---therefore, you must under no circumstances take this matter too personally. Do your duty before God and men, and then you can rest with the feeling that you have done all within your power, no matter what happens. You cannot let personal matters --such as family relation - come in between you and the principle of truth which you expound. Having a firm foundation, you will stand firm on this foundation -- misunderstanding and suffering is part of it---but so also is that rest of loyalty to principles.

We have faced a similar situation in this Church. As you know some years ago, largely on my imitative, we marked out about 70 persons "who were with us and with somebody else", "Be broad, give in"-I have heard it before. It is the poison of men of little or no conviction. Do not misunderstand me. In personal matters, if one of the brethren err, let charity prevail, so long as it is possible. In matters sacred to the faith of the fathers throughout the centuries, LET FIRMNESS PREVAIL. It means suffering and agony---but bear in mind that acceptable men and women are thus tried. Der er ingen vei utenom!!!! *[There is no way out!!!!]* So, hold firm to your faith!

I have read the suggested memorandum. It is skillfully written. As you know I am not opposed to close cooperation of the reformed Churches over and as against the Absolutistic ones, i. e. Catholic and Lutheran---they are both foreign to the American soil. But of all reformed Churches the Presbyterian comes closest to the Absolutistic ones. If your minister is an orthodox Presbyterian, he is a Calvinist. If he is Calvinist, his doctrine of man is at the extreme opposite of ours. "The points of difference is to be kept in the background"- are so many words. It is either a simpleton or an extreme opportunist (cynic) who thus can write. Either case is very bad. But you probably better not discuss this matter with him, for unless you have had some training in theology, he will easily corner you --that is, assuming that he is an opportunist.

Now note number 9 of the memorandum beginning with "The pastor shall be CALLED and so on. READ AGAIN AND AGAIN. There you are tied! You no longer have a congregational form of government. NEVER NEVER NEVER NEVER FORGET THAT. The minister is not responsible to you, the congregation, but to the presbytery (elders) This form of government has its merits. I am not discussing these here. I am merely pointing out that you are departing from the congregational form of government, AND THAT YOU MUST KNOW WHAT THAT DEPARTURE MEANS.

I can only say: BE FIRM, but do not take matters too personally. I wish I could talk to you. Give me the specific number on which you absolutely can rely on. Also, that of the opposition.

[letter from Frederick May Eliot, President of the American Unitarian Association; October 2, 1945] The problem at Underwood, it seems to me, cannot possibly be solved from Boston. Our

whole philosophy is based upon the theory that responsibility must be decentralized as far as is possible, and we try to base our policies upon the recommendations of the Regional Directors.

In the case of Underwood, this would mean, first of all, that a plan should be developed in consultation with the officers of the Minnesota Unitarian Conference. As it happens, the Conference is to meet in Saint Paul later this month, and I expect to be there for that occasion. I shall make it a special point to talk with the various ministers and with any representatives of Underwood who may be present, to urge the development of a plan that will conserve the essential liberalism of a little church which has a very warm place in my heart.

To be continued in the April Newsletter.....

**UNITARIAN CHURCH OF UNDERWOOD
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES—JANUARY 16, 2019, BOARD MEETING**

Board members present: Tim Lanz, Connie Stigen, Bob Worner, Darryl Booker, Shannon Smith, Kris Warhol, Ron Roller, Dave Sanderson, and John Minge. Board members absent: John Miersch.

The Meeting was called to order at 5:30 5:37 P.M. by Board President Kris Warhol.

1. Kris opened the Meeting with a reading. The reading was from/by Lao Tzu and pertained to what constitutes a good leader.
2. Agenda: The proposed agenda for this meeting was approved. (Worner/Sanderson)
3. Minutes of the November 2018 meeting were approved. (Sanderson/Lanz)
4. Governance—the Five-Year Plan. John Minge said that he'd do a table of contents to the Five Year Plan to make it easier to find things in the Plan. An unrelated point: There is a one-page addendum that outlined the revisions to the UCU Policy and Procedures Plan that was adopted by the Board in June of 2018. That addendum is filed. The Plan was reviewed and discussed.
5. Treasurer's Report: Ron Roller presented and commented on the Balance Sheet (as of December 31, 2018). He also presented and commented on the Profit/Loss Statement and a Budget Performance report as of the same date. As a general matter, our finances are in good shape. There was some discussion. Ron reminded the Board of the important role that Tere Mann is playing as the Church's bookkeeper.
6. Stewardship Committee: Dave Sanderson reported that this committee met during the previous week. It has decided that there is to be a "gifts and gratitude" event at the Church on March 3. The event will consist of a turkey dinner after the church service. The underlying idea is to encourage a discussion of the gifts that are received from the church. Fundraising will not be the subject of discussion. A brochure on stewardship has been prepared and is to be used in lieu of a stewardship letter to church members.
7. Program Committee. Kris reported on the efforts of the Committee to find speakers. It is difficult to find "name" speakers for a Sunday morning church service in Underwood. Kris also mentioned that Religious Education is going well—particularly children's RE.
8. Membership Committee: Kris reported that 89 members are to be certified.
9. Celebrants. Shannon reported on the activities of the celebrants. They try to meet monthly. They are presently reading about Unitarianism and Universalism. Shannon recently spoke at the Willmar Unitarian Church.
10. Communications and Technology Committee: There was no report from this Committee.
11. Worship Committee: There was no report from this Committee.

12. Outreach Committee: To date, three empowerment grant applications have been received. The chili dinner has been scheduled for March 29, 2019. [NOTE: IT HAS SINCE BEEN RESCHEDULED TO APRIL 5.]

13. Social and environmental justice: The St. Cloud UU has been very active in these areas. It was suggested that this be referred to the committee(s) that deal with these issues to see what we might do to be more active.

14. U Groups: There was some discussion regarding the activities of some of our U Groups, including volunteering at Welcome Place in Pelican Rapids.

15. Facilities Committee: Darryl reported on what was learned from the recent mold study. There is no mold issue. There is still an indoor air quality issue—better air flow is needed. Addressing this issue will require the expenditure of funds. A window project is being considered. New windows will cost about \$25,000—not including the cost of labor. Darryl said that, given liability issues, the architects (from within the Church) should probably be paid something for such a project. An alternative to new windows would be to work with the existing windows and add storm windows. Finally, a secondary exit out of the church building is being discussed. A big issue is the aesthetics of such a project. Darryl suggested that such an exit might have to be incorporated into the windows.

16. Space Planning: this committee is to meet on January 23.

17. Willmar Workshop: This is scheduled for February 16, 2019. The cost of participating has already been budgeted.

18. Mid-America meeting: This is to take place in April and costs about \$400 per participant. Air fare is extra. Richard Kagan has indicated an interest in going.

19. Records: A meeting is scheduled January 30 on the Church's efforts to pull together all documents, photos, etc. that reflect on the Church and its history. The idea is that all such items should be preserved and stored in a way that makes them accessible. Kris, John (Minge), and Norm Kolstad have been working on this.

20. Trump-bashing. There has been some concern that comments—especially those coming from the pulpit—that pertain to Trump are or may be upsetting to some who attend our church. The question that has been raised is whether and/or to what extent we should try to regulate that. A few of the points that were made: any such comments should be made civilly and with respect to the opinions of those who might disagree; any such comments should not be partisan in nature but rather should be made in the context of the principles that the Church adheres to; and that an important function of churches over the centuries has been to speak truth to power. No action was proposed or taken.

The next meeting is to be held on February 20, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. at Sverdrup Suites.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted this 20th day of February 2019.

John Minge, Secretary