

## Unitarian Church of Underwood November, 2013 Newsletter

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

### Coming Up in November

#### Sunday Morning Service Begins at 10:30

November 3 – Craig Molstad – Habitat for Humanity, Repair Ministry

November 10 – Rev. Ian Evison – Growing in Community

November 17 – Connie Payson – The Roma in Pelican Rapids, MN

November 24 – Bob Worner – Your God is Too Large (or Small)

#### Sunday Morning Meetings Begin at 9:15

November 3 – Adult RE

November 17 – Writing As Spiritual Practice

### Last Newsletter

This is the last newsletter Stephanie Sanderson and I will be doing. Although it has been great fun and we both enjoyed bringing it to you the last couple of years, it is time for us to move onto other things. At this point, no one has come forward to take over editing and publishing the newsletter. Until that happens, UCU will be without a newsletter. If you would consider stepping into the role please know that you have room to be creative. You need not follow the exact same format that we have used. Help will be available for the first issue or two, if you'd like. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

We want to thank you all for your support and the wonderful articles that were submitted. A special thanks goes to Ron Graham for writing the member profiles.

Please note that news and information about upcoming speakers will still be available on our website [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org).

Ellen Eastby

*"Problems have solutions, but mysteries don't, because the more we understand a mystery the more we realize how much more there is to it than we have realized at the start. The larger the island of knowledge, the longer the shoreline of wonder." Huston Smith, Forward in The Cloud of Unknowing, edited by William Johnston, Image books 1973*

## Sunday Speakers

### **November 3** – Craig Molstad – Habitat for Humanity, Repair Ministry

Craig will give updates on Habitat for Humanity's work and progression toward being a repair ministry. For example, in 2005 five homes were provided. In 2012, 25 homes were repaired, thus benefitting more people. He will also update us on Habitat for Humanity's international work, including disaster recovery and repairs.

Craig has worked with the Fergus Falls Area Afflitate for 10 years, serving as Executive Director. He was a volunteer for 15 years before that. He and his wife own the Battle Lake Motel and RV Park. Their son Gunner is Tevia in the Battle Lake performance of Fiddler on the Roof. Their daughter Georgia is working in her first job at the age of 12.

### **November 10** – Rev. Ian Evison – Growing in Community

Rev. Ian Evison is with the newly formed MidAmerica Region that has replaced Prairie Star District. He will be joining us for the Area Workshop - Building stronger UU Fellowships - on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup> and is kind enough to stay another day to speak to us Sunday morning. Rev. Evison is a UU minister who has served in a variety of ministries, including parish ministry, theological education, a research project at the University of Chicago in Family and Religion, and service at the Alban Institute as Director of Research. Current passions include future trends in American religious life, new frontiers of organizational development. He also has a geeky interest in change strategies and denominational structures. To keep sane he cooks, gardens, frequents farmers' markets, and makes large quantities of compost. Ian and his wife, Leah, split their time between Chicago and St. Paul.

### **November 17** – Connie Payson – The Roma in Pelican Rapids, Minnesota

Connie Payson was the refugee resettlement coordinator in Pelican Rapids from 1997 to 2001. Her talk is about overcoming stereotypes and learning to understand a culture that transcends beyond refugee resettlement.

### **November 24** – Rev. Bob Worner – Your God is Too Large (or Small)

## UU Quote

He drew a circle that shut me out –  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.  
But Love and I had the wit to win:  
We drew a circle that took him in!

Edwin Markham, "Outwitted" The Shoes of Happiness (1915)

## Adult RE

This year in Adult RE we are trying to gain a sense of the spiritual traditions of Native Americans. Those traditions (which are still being practiced and which appear to be experiencing a resurgence) have a respect for our natural resources that is lacking in Western spiritual, economic, and political traditions. Additionally, we Westerners would be wise to learn to be less inclined to impose our will on those whose traditions are different.

As we explore these subjects, we need to be mindful of a few things. First, our time in Adult RE is limited. As a result, it is unrealistic to think that we are doing anything more than scratching the surface of complicated and profound traditions. But it's a start! Second, we need to be careful to not romanticize the spiritual traditions that we're exploring and to not unfairly vilify our own traditions. There is at least a baby or two or three in that bath water.

We are including in our resources materials that were written or spoken by Native Americans over the past several hundred years. I'm hoping to get into some of the teachings of Black Elk this coming Sunday. He was an important Oglala holy man who lived from 1863 to 1950. Additionally, he participated at the age of 12 in the Battle of Little Big Horn and was injured in the 1890 battle at Wounded Knee.

Please feel free to email me at [bijost@gmail.com](mailto:bijost@gmail.com) if you would like to receive any of the materials that have been used to date.

John Minge

## Children's Religious Education

Children's Religious Education will be starting up soon. Betsy Wells (+ interested others) will be offering monthly classes for kids, which will be held during the Sunday service hour. Kids of all ages will be welcome; those younger than 3 are asked to bring an adult with them. An informational/organizational meeting for parents/other interested people will be held on Sunday, Nov. 16, following the service, to discuss details (such as direction, schedule, and topics). For more information, contact Betsy Wells at [betsyanddougwells@gmail.com](mailto:betsyanddougwells@gmail.com) or 218-736-4469.

**“Never underestimate the power of a few committed people to change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” - Margaret Meade**

This quote comes up often in my thoughts, seemingly over used at times, but this quote it so true! I witnessed it with the painting and redecorating of our lovely church! A BIG than you goes out to Susan Groff, Katy Olson, Ron Roller, Tere Mann, JoAnn Cress, John Miersch, David Wass, Ron Graham, Sandy Barnhouse, Anders Persson, Donn Siems, and Mary Anderson. There are others I am not aware of that also helped make this happen that need to be thanked, so please thank them! The church has never looked more beautiful and will shine in many ways when we have our area conference and many years beyond. The small changes add up and make us all benefit in so many different ways. THANK YOU!!!!

Dave McRoberts

### **Area Workshop – Building Stronger UU Fellowships**

Over 50 attendees, both from area UU churches and our own UCU fellowship, are expected to be at the "Building Stronger UU Fellowships" Fall Workshop November 9, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Many of our UCU members have offered to help make the day a success by facilitating, taking notes, greeting, serving lunch and treats, etc. Our church looks fantastic with its new paint job and clean corners -- thanks so much to everyone for getting our beautiful space ready for "company." The Fall Workshop planning committee is: Ellen Eastby, Bob Worner, Diana Ziesemer, John Minge, Bonnie Bell and Mary Anderson.

As soon as the Fall Workshop is finished, we'll be moving on to plan for our 125 year anniversary celebrations. If interested in joining that committee, contact one of the people listed above.

### **Puppets on Their Way!!!**

Fifty Five (55) Hand Puppets are now in the suitcase of Bernice Johnson. Bernice is taking them to her Shan refugee kids. The puppets had been previously introduced at Sunday Service with a rousing round of "Tootie Ta" by our RE kids and service attendees. Who had fun creating, making and showing off these puppets? Mary Anderson, Ellen Eastby, Maggie Meehan, Janelle Miersch, Mary Worner and Diana Ziesemer - that's who!!

We also filled a suitcase (sat on to get closed) with baseball hats that were donated through the Perham Boys & Girls Thrift Store and obtained courtesy of Heather Czeck. Postage to mail the hats would have cost \$177.60 + \$20.00 for insurance so Bernice convinced a friend to bring the suitcase and we gave her the baggage fee of \$100.00 so that the remainder of the money we collected can go to the Shan kids.

We are looking forward to getting pictures back of the puppet displays!

## Three Pieces by UCU Writers

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and the darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.”

Whatever else our primitive Biblical ancestors were there were those who, like us, were trying to understand the miracle and mystery of existence. These opening words, before creation’s myth took hold as absolute truth, are not so much different than Native American words, not so different from our own musings. Oh, we have science to hold before us the big bang, the limitless experience of time/space we couldn’t even imagine, but our spirit beings still seek connections, answers, tentative elusive truths. Who are we, or better, who am I? For me whatever else I am I am spirit. My body has permanent cracks growing wider by the day. Knowledge I once possessed eludes my thinking. Relationships are lost to death and distance and the mind’s decay. Ah, but spirit is alive, seeking, thrilling, marveling, at not only the beauty of the world around me, not only of the incredible happening of this tiny planet, but at something deeper still and altogether holy in you and in me that now and then peeps through, and now and then stands before life itself strong, and visible and endless.

Bob Worner

### **In Search of Wholeness**

Philosophy and theology let me into whirlwinds of intellectual polemics. Political ideologies have made bright promises then left me to fight in fractious contests. Scientific inquiry took me down trails of cause and effect into endless minutia. Studies of human behavior left me cynical, wallowing in a morass of historical apologetics and self-serving predictions.

I found wholeness while lying on my back peering beyond the stars into the universe, while lying on my belly watching ants work to survive as community, and when I touch the one I love and feel empathy flowing two ways.

Luke Anderson

## Wisdom of a Child

I thought making cookies from scratch would be a good experience for our four-year-old daughter, Susan. Standing on a chair beside me she watched intently as I rolled out the dough and began to show her how to use the cookie cutter. She noticed that I was having trouble with dough sticking to the cutter. She suggested I put the cookie cutter in a little flour first and then press it into the dough and wiggle it. "It would work better for you, she said."

I looked down at this adorable little blonde blue-eyed child and asked, "Sweetheart, I wonder if I have learned more from you or you from me?"

"Oh no, Mommy, I have learned more from you. I've learned love."

Joanne Cress

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## Community Thanksgiving Celebration Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> 7pm Underwood School Cafeteria

Who - All churches in the Underwood school district have been invited. Sverdrup/Tingvold, and UCU..... All are welcome!

Location – Underwood School, Underwood MN

Food – Coffee/Lemonade, Bars (After the gathering)

Service Format – Starts at 7PM lasts for 30-40 minutes. Welcome, Music, Thanksgiving Proclamation as written by President Obama, more music, Gratitude readings, Music, Lite Lunch and Fellowship.

Music - groups from each church. bells? Choirs, soloists, accompanists and songs.

Publicity - More to come in newspapers and posters will be put up around town.

Offering will go to the Fergus Falls Area Emergency Food Shelf.

If you have not had the opportunity to come to this in the past couple of years, please put this on your calendar! It is a great way to build community with our friends and neighbors, and give thanks for all!!

## U-Groups

U-Groups are up and running this year, and have met in September and October. We would really like to thank our spectacular hosts: Jerry and Mary Larson (Battle Lake), John and Janelle Miersch (Fergus Falls), Diana Ziesemer (Fergus Falls), and Mary Anderson (Perham). You always provide a warm and welcoming place for us to be together. Thank you, too, to the facilitators who stepped up to take on the extra responsibility, learning, and meeting time. We have about 40 participants in this program, which represents half our membership! Our U-Groups give us the opportunity to deepen our relationships and to explore together our spiritual natures. Members have given much time and talent in service to our church and community. Thank you all.

“At night, I open the window and ask the moon to come  
And press its face into mine. Breathe into me....  
Close the language-door and open the love-window.  
The moon won’t use the door, only the window.” Rumi  
(From the October lesson: Being Open and Alive)

### 2013-1014 U Group Meets

#### **Fergus Falls Evening Group**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month - 7 p.m.

Home of John & Janelle Miersch

Co-Facilitators – Diane Johnson & Connie Stigen

#### **Fergus Falls Afternoon Group**

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month – 4:30 p.m.

Home of Diana Ziesemer

Co-Facilitators – Bonnie Bell & Tere Mann

#### **Battle Lake Afternoon Group**

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the Month – 3:30 p.m.

Home of Ross & Mary Larson

Co-Facilitators – Bob Worner & Stephanie Sanderson

#### **Perham Afternoon Group**

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the Month – 3:30 p.m.

Home of Mary Anderson

Co-Facilitators – Mary Anderson & Mary Worner

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**Underwood Unitarian Church**  
**Board Minutes for September 18, 2013**

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

Also present: Administrative Consultant JoAnn Larson.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ellen Eastby at 6:33 p.m.

Ellen Eastby offered a meditation/reading.

The agenda was approved (Miersch/Sanderson).

The minutes of the July 21, 2013 meeting were approved as printed (McRoberts/Anderson).

Reports:

Treasurer: written report submitted by Ron Roller

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson

Program Committee: Mary Worner

Outreach Committee: Mary Anderson

Facilities Committee: Dave McRoberts

Planned Giving: David Sanderson

Old Business: Anderson reported on the Area Workshop and Membership Directory. It was decided to order 15 extra copies (McRoberts/Sanderson). Other topics discussed: child window protection, old printer disposal.

New Business: Katy Olson was added to the list of approved celebrants (McRoberts/Sanderson). A request for a special offering to support the *Stand For Food* blog was referred to the Community Outreach Committee for consideration as a social justice issue (Sanderson/McRoberts). By consensus, a board member will be present at Sunday services when JoAnn is absent. Other topics discussed: missing minutes, committee naming and roles.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

The next meeting will be after church, Sunday, October 20, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Kolstad