



## Unitarian Church of Underwood November 2014 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

**November 2** – Greg Wagner, West Central Initiative, the Demographics of Otter Tail County -  
“A Snapshot Perspective on the Current and Emerging West Central Minnesota Economy.”

**End of Daylight Savings Time – Don’t forget to “fall back” one hour on your clock!!**

**November 9** – Joseph Demasi and brother, John – “Living in a World of Kindness.”

**Note: Free House Concert with the Demasi Brothers at Ron & Barbara Graham’s November 8, Saturday night 7:30 p.m. Coffee/soft drinks provided. The address is 21667 Hillside Beach Rd, Fergus Falls, phone: 218/739-5669.**

**November 16** – Bob Worner, “An Attitude of Gratitude.”

**November 23** – Emma & Eliabeth Mahan, DMin, BCC Chaplain, Lake Region Healthcare, “The Furry and Interdependent Web.”

**November 30** – Tim & Desta Hunt, TBA

**Note: Prior to beginning of service at 10:20 a.m., there will be issued a “Call to Gather” to alert folks to assemble in the sanctuary so that the service can start promptly.**

### Upcoming Religious Education

**November 2** - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Discussion of Emerson’s Essays 9:15 a.m.

**November 16** - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Writing as a Spiritual Practice 9:15 a.m.

**November 23** - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Adult Religious Education group (9:15 a.m.) will be discussing the Gospel of John and John Shelby Spong’s book: [The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic](#). It is a growing group. The several extra copies of Spong’s book have been taken, but it can be purchased at Lundeens or ordered on line. For November read the first 5-6 Chapters of the gospel and perhaps 100 of Spong.

**Sun., Nov. 2 & 23:** Children’s Religious Education 10:30 AM. (Due to October scheduling conflicts, Children’s RE did not meet in October so that is why there are two scheduled for Nov).

### Other Meetings:

**November 12** - 12 Noon Facilities Committee

5:30 p.m. 125 Year Celebration Wrap-up/Membership Committee

**November 19** - 5:30 p.m. Speakers Committee

6:30 p.m. Board Meeting

**November 23** – Following Sunday Service: U Group Facilitators

**Note:** AA Meets every Monday evening @ 7 p.m. at UCU

### **More on November Speakers**

**Nov. 2: Greg Wagner, “A Snapshot Perspective on the Current and Emerging West Central Minnesota Economy.”** Greg will highlight the region’s current and projected demographics as well as other socio-economic factors that shape this region now and into the future. He will also discuss emerging economic development trends, and what the workforce of the region will look like in the future.

Greg Wagner, Economic Development Planner for West Central Initiative whose duties include completing the regional Comprehensive Development Strategy (CEDS), helping communities identify federal and state resources for economic development projects, and assisting with grant applications to the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA). Greg is also responsible for implementing various regional economic development activities, the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program for WCI and assists with credit review on loan applications. Greg lives in rural Fergus Falls with his wife Tara and 3 children.

**Nov. 9: Joseph and John DeMasi, "Living in a World of Kindness,"** an intergenerational service so please invite the kids as well! Their presentation will address UU Principals 1, 2, 3 and 6 directly.

Joseph and John DeMasi, present a service on ability awareness and how we need to see the value and worth of ALL human beings. They will highlight what an inclusive world looks like when everyone is included and we are all valued and judged by our abilities, not our race, creed, gender or disabilities.

Twin brothers and award winning UU musicians, Joseph and John DeMasi hail from New York City where they got their start in the folk clubs of Greenwich Village. They have gone on to record numerous CD's, had a record deal with BMG Kidz, performed in a group for 20 years with Chris Burke, the actor with Down Syndrome from the ABC-TV show *Life Goes On*, appear on NPR radio and currently travel the country performing at UU churches, schools and concerts.

**Nov. 16: Bob Worner- “An Attitude of Gratitude.”** 7th UU principal.

**Nov. 23: Elizabeth Mahan, DMin, BCC, Chaplain - Lake Region HEALTHCARE, “The Furry and Interdependent Web.”** UU Principle 7, “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” Emma, the golden retriever, and her handler, Liz Mahan, will present how they tap into the healing energy of the interdependent web of all existence. In their roles

as Animal Therapist and Chaplain, Emma and Liz regularly visit the lake Region Healthcare community in Fergus Falls. They look forward to sharing their learnings with UCU members.

**Nov. 30: Desta & Tim Hunt – Specifics not yet available at time of Newsletter release.**

### **Newsletter Submissions**

Please submit your ideas and articles for the Newsletter to: [maryanderson8380@msn.com](mailto:maryanderson8380@msn.com). Editing provided by Stephanie Sanderson and emailing/ mailing provided by Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson. Feedback is appreciated.

### **The Month that Was**

October 5 - **Lisa Lipari, Churches United for the Homeless, UU Principles #1 and 2**

The Fargo Moorhead Community Center Director, Lisa Lipari, said she feels that "There but for the grace of God, go I." Many are just a car accident or job loss away from being homeless.

Although the community center has 273 beds, some needing a bed may not get in. From 800 - to 1000 are homeless in the FM area. A fourth of these homeless are children. The children's program has 17 beds, but has as high as 30 children at any given time. The Free Thrift Store gives clothing and furniture. Volunteers offer a friendly face and a listening ear. One man comes back to tell the progress he has made, maybe got an interview, etc. It is important in maintaining personal dignity to use their names.

There is the only shelter between Fargo and the Twin Cities that will take a single man and his kids. Part of what they do is emergency shelter. The capacity is 65 but sometimes Moorhead allows up to 96.

They would like to build an apartment building. There is lack of affordable housing. Even with a voucher, they must have a landlord who will let them in. There is bonding in MN for \$6 million for a building for 24 families and 17 singles- which would be people over 65. On October 23, they will learn if the funding will be granted. The biggest grant they have received is the \$75,000 from Walmart.

**October 12 - Betsy Wells** introduced **Brad and Nancy Friesen** who spoke on **Living in the Middle East**. Betsy met the Friesen's as the Good Samaritan who helped them when they lost their way canoeing on the Otter Tail River. Their story was so interesting to her that Betsy asked them to speak to us.

Nancy spoke: She was born in North Dakota. "I see God's hand in my life." She met Brad and nine years later they brought their three children along with them to Pakistan. Brad's dad had been a doctor in Indonesia during a far more peaceful time. Brad was a micro-engineer, developing hydropower to bring electricity to those who had been using open fires inside that brings soot and disease. With electricity they had lights and then even washing machines.

For 4 ½ years in Pakistan, Nancy followed the rules for women. Women do not go out! If they do, they must cover up completely, with only their eyes visible, and then be accompanied by a man. There were no other English speakers. After 9/11, they evacuated in a hurry, leaving everything; but, unlike those in Syria now, they had a soft landing because of family and friends here. They lived in Fargo for a few years, and then January 2005, went back to Afghanistan. Two families with five children between them lived in a four-room house, and they had to evacuate from there as well. Remember the Koran flushed down the toilet in Guantanamo Bay? Muslims protested that sacrilege with riots. Brad and Nancy were briefly back in the US, then lived in Kabul 2005 – 2007, when Nancy taught in an American School and tutored the Vice-President in English.

Brad spoke: As an engineer he can travel the world but got lost on the Otter Tail River. (Laughter) When electricity comes, a single bulb will flood the room, AND their little fires, a giant leap for that little group. Many thousands now have electricity.

Nancy spoke: She was a teacher but also wanted to know the women in her community. She made weekly trips to their homes, which consisted of three rooms: one for men, one women and a kitchen. They kindly boiled water and froze it for ice cubes just for her so she would not get sick.

Brad: Wind turbines now are the power but without a grid, lights go out when wind stops. Through the long war, the US has not won their hearts and minds. When asked what Afghan's want: "Like all others, they want independence and food for their families."

**October 19 - Bob Worner, "A Sense of Belonging" UU Principle #3.** Bob tied together so eloquently our 125 year celebrations, today's Progressive Dinner and what UCU currently may mean to us:

1. Sense of belonging involves the matter of our own choice. Our yearning for a sense of belonging inspires us to join clubs, bars, coffee shops and church, less as an avenue but principally to belong, to share our own lives and others, theirs. Our church has served as the Light on the Prairie for 125 years, a progressive church, an extension of a sense of belonging. We do not own another human being. When we as a nation had slaves, we called them less than human, pretending they were not human beings, selling children away from parents and husbands away from wives. And today, women around the world are considered less, and to deviate sometimes is to even risk death – at the hands of a brother or father. They are taught to obey. There are colonies of people living among us who have their own laws and only leave that society at tremendous cost. There was/is no choice and no sense of belonging for those individual who do not follow the norm.

Churches offer a sense of belonging, but what they are teaching, you must believe. People, who may be dear and even live near who you'd like to come here do not for their own various reasons and by their choice.

2. At UCU we have abandoned hierarchy that may exist elsewhere – no pope, no bishop, not even clergy. The celebrants today reacted negatively to the idea of “installation.” They just wanted to be “introduced.” They do not see themselves as uniquely better than anyone else or held above others in the church. They see this role as service and a way to enhance their own spirituality.

3. What do you do/feel that gives you a sense of belonging – what brings you here today? Belonging is the reason we came. We are not alone. Today members are opening their home and tables for the progressive dinner, others bring things here, we have the gift of silence through U groups- listen and affirm and opportunity to be quiet. John Minge has made us dinner here, as has Brian Larson and his family, Budd and Marguerite have brought turkey eggs, and Budd’s spinach.

Belonging is essential. Here we know we are not alone with our fears and joys. That is why we are here. "Of the five different congregations and the eight communities where I have served as minister, I have not felt as at home as I do here."

**October 26 – Rod Broding "Where Does a Misfit Fit?"** Rod Brodine (Swedish pronunciation) or Broding (as usually pronounced) grew up in SW Minnesota. He saw himself as a “misfit.” His dad was an alcoholic, his mom taught him to dance and because he knew how to dance, he found his way in a new high school in Pipestone because the other boys wanted to learn to dance like he could. An old man at Lake Benson challenged him when Rod said he might go to college – the man struck him in the chest, “You, a Brodine go to college.” Like ha! He not only went to college, he taught school, he went to the seminary, and he served in the ministry. He thinks many of us at UCU may be misfits also – spiritual sojourners who have questioned along the way. He saw and heard Martin Luther King Jr. and was amazed at his followers and likened it to the followers of Jesus - at the same time wondering how/why they were compelled to follow even as he was ready to follow King. His main point was that “Each of us finds our own creed.”

Rod left us with two questions: What is my identity (Who am I)? And what is my community (Where do I belong)? It was evident that Rod has reflected on his past and how he has formed and was able to skillfully articulate who he is and where he belongs.

### **Equal Exchange Coffee**

Thank you to everyone who purchased Equal Exchange coffee. Your purchase supports small farmers in developing countries. A limited amount of Equal Exchange chocolate and tea will be available. Also, decaf drinkers, a shipment of decaf coffee will arrive soon. Equal Exchange products are on sale upstairs at church. (Kathy Kensinger – Coffee Coordinator)

**Success!!**  
**The First Progressive Dinner!**  
**October 19, 2014**

Having a progressive dinner was an idea originated by **Diana Ziese**mer early on in the planning for the 125 year anniversary celebrations for UCU. The hardest part was to figure out the logistics of how this might work with members/friends coming from such different distances and directions. But with the gracious hospitality of members, first serving appetizers at church (**Diane and Bob Johnson, Katy Olson and Tere Mann**), nearby opening of homes for the main course (**Bob and Mary Worner, Dave and Stephanie Sanderson, and Mary, Ross & Brian Larson**) and then dessert hosts for those on their way home (**John & Janelle Miersch, Dave McRoberts, Lisa Carignan and Diana Ziese**mer), it worked out surprising well and with great turn-out. Many got to participate in the appetizers following services before we disbursed to the host homes for entrée and desserts. Amazingly, the guest lists turned out near even at each home with a total of 35 attending. Some of the comments gathered:

*"We had a fabulous meal at Sanderson's and the pie at Diana's was great. It was such a good conversation that I didn't want to leave." Ellen Eastby*

*"We had such a good time at both Larson's and the Carignan's and had such good food at each place. We brought up many topics, laughed a lot and got pretty silly over suggestions for UCU to thrive (more meatballs - for one). It was so comfortable and we teased back and forth a lot." Mary Anderson*

*"What I heard from several is how we need to keep doing progressive dinners! It was really fun to have people at our house. We had twelve guests!!!! We really enjoyed having people come to our home. Most had not been here before. So, I'm volunteering for the next one!" Stephanie & Dave Sanderson*

*"The meal at Steph and David's was divine. But mainly, I think this is a wonderful tradition for us to do on a regular basis. Maybe each season?" Diane Johnson*

*"It was fun on my end. So glad you all came to our house!" Lisa Carignan*

*"The meal at Worners was yummy as usual! We had a short but productive discussion about the future of our church. I think once a year is a good target for celebrating our church." Katy Olson*

*"We had a wonderful time at Sanderson's (thanks again for adding our son and daughter-in-law to the mix at the last minute!). We were only expecting 3 people for dessert at our home, but 7 came - luckily I made plenty, but we didn't have one large conversation, just smaller ones because there were 11 people total. We all agreed it will be worth repeating!" Janell & John Miersch*

*"The Progressive Dinner was a great success. It was particularly fun to get to know some people that I hadn't visited with much in the past." John Minge*

*"Such a beautiful day. So nice to set on the deck with great company and take in the wonderful autumn day. Thanks for coming out!" Dave McRoberts*

Thank you again to the food providers, home hosts and for all who came out to enjoy this time together!!

### **Celebrants**

During the Sunday Service on October 19<sup>th</sup> Bob Worner made an introduction of the Celebrants of the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Celebrants Ellen Eastby, Debra Ferguson, John Minge, Katy Olson, and Shannon Smith each took a few moments to tell the congregation a little bit about themselves and explain why they chose to become celebrants.

The Celebrants are members of UCU who came together to experience and provide spiritual growth opportunities for themselves and the congregation, in part because there is no permanent minister. Each Celebrant is approved by the Board of Directors and is registered to perform marriages in the state of Minnesota. Celebrants are available to officiate weddings, funerals, and child dedications for both UCU members and nonmembers. They will also be speaking during Sunday Services on occasion. For more information, you can contact any one of the celebrants personally or contact the church at 218-826-6553 or [ucofu@ucofu.org](mailto:ucofu@ucofu.org).

### **Eagle Scout Project Coordinated by Luke Andersen**

Luke Andersen belongs to Boy Scout Troop #304 in Fergus Falls. Luke's Eagle project was a Carnival for Kids with Special Needs. It took place September 30th at Cleveland Elementary. About 40 kids participated. It was for kids in grades 3-6 and their siblings in grade school. Tere Mann, Diana Ziesemer and Bonnie (Bell) Albers and of course, mom, Anne Andersen helped along with troop members and others. Luke heard from the teachers the next day that all the kids had a blast and when asked what they liked best they said "everything!" They had 8 games, crafts, face painting, snack and lots of prizes. All games were non-competitive and everyone got a prize just for trying a game ( bowling, fishing, rock dig, spin the wheel, duck pond, lollypop tree, beanbag toss, plinko). Luke thanks UCU for the encouragement given him and the help of the ladies above.

Luke also helps UCU out by working with Ellen Eastby to make sure the sound system works properly during Sunday services. He's getting his merits!!

## 70+ Puppets Made For Shan Kids



**Creative Critter Puppets 2014**

For the second year, a number of volunteers hand-made puppets to send with Bernice Johnson to distribute to the Shan children she visits on her annual trip to Thailand. Thank you **to Janell Miersch, Mary Worner, Maggie Meehan, Linda Winkler, Betsy Wells, and Mary Anderson** and to the RE Kids for helping design some for Betsy's making.

**Steve Nigel** will transport the puppets from here to Bernice on the first leg of their long journey and Bernice and her son, Brian, will carry them in their suitcases all the way to Thailand for winter distribution to kids who will be given these special critters sent with love.

Bernice's response to the above picture sent her earlier: *"I LOVE the puppets and so will the children. I was just thinking about a Tree Toad poem that would be fun for the kids to learn and hoping there might be tree-toad-like puppets among the bunch. In this photo I see two that could be tree toads and that I could use to demonstrate.*

*Many thanks to all who worked on them! I'll send photos.  
Love and a hug, Bernice"*

**Fergus Falls Area Habitat for Humanity and  
Your Hometown Pizza Ranch Are  
Partnering Up for a Fundraiser**

**Monday, November 10th from 5:00 p.m. - to 7:00 p.m.**

Pizza Ranch will serve, you have fun and eat, and Habitat  
will clean up.

Proceeds go towards building a new home in Fergus Falls  
in 2015

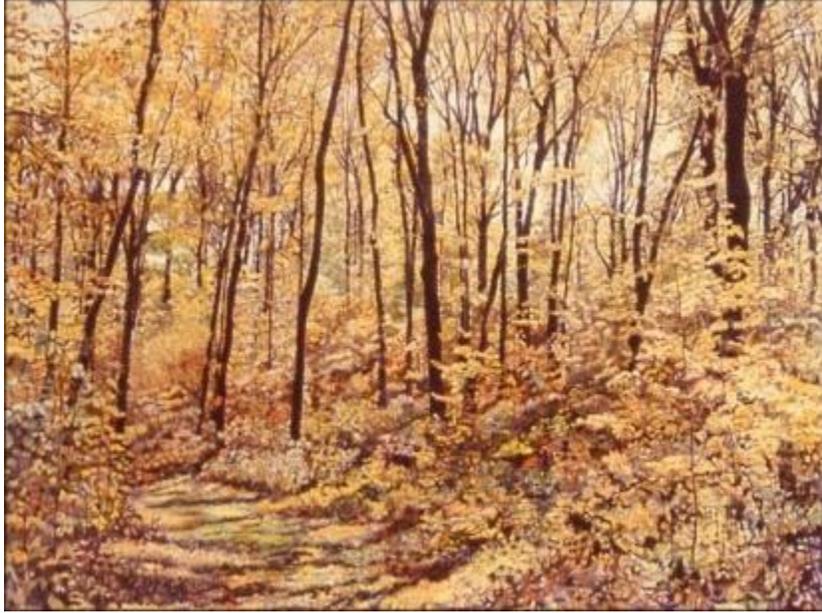
Eat, drink and and be helping a family build a home!

Pizza Ranch is located at:

604 Frontier Drive,

Fergus Falls

The Fall Habitat for Humanity Harvest Dinner has been postponed until April due to many  
unplanned circumstances. November is still church Habitat month and the need this year is  
critical. Please consider giving a check through the church in Habitat's name, and/or attending  
the Pizza Ranch dinner, which will not have a program, just eat.



**Itasca View**  
**By Mickie Edmonds**

### **We Lift Up Our Hearts in Thanks**

For the sun and the dawn  
Which we did not create;  
For the moon and the evening  
Which we did not make;  
For food which we plant  
But cannot grow;  
For friends and loved ones  
We have not earned and cannot buy;  
For this gathered company  
Which welcomes us as we are  
From wherever we have come;  
For all our free churches  
That keep us human and  
Encourage us in our quest for  
Beauty, truth, and love;  
For all things which come to us  
As gifts of being from sources  
Beyond ourselves;  
Gifts of life and love and  
Friendship

We lift our hearts in thanks this day.

*Richard M Fewkes # 515 from Singing the Living Tradition*

## **Gifts They Bring U Group Facilitators**

UCU's small group ministry or covenant groups are called U Groups. They are now in their 4<sup>th</sup> year and were originally led by **Ron Graham** and **Stephanie Sanderson** who also developed three years' worth of curriculum. Four groups are now meeting and attendees comprise over half of the UCU members. Each month eight co-facilitators first meet together to review the next month's lesson and then lead their assigned small group in Fergus Falls, Underwood, Battle Lake and Perham. **Connie Stigen** and **Tere Mann** are the lead facilitators of the full group of facilitators.

We are grateful to those who volunteer to lead the groups and to those who attend as we share the silence, our reflections on the topic and good discussion afterwards. Each U group is expected to take on an annual project both in the community and for the church. They also attend to members in need and those in their nearby vicinity – all of which constitutes a small group ministry.

Here's a little about each of the facilitators:

**Mary Anderson** "first came to UCU in 2007 to hear Bernice Johnson speak and the place just felt good to me, reminding me of the small country church I grew up in.

The first U groups were taking place in Fergus Falls and that seemed unreasonably far for me to travel to attend and so I suggested that an East Otter Tail U Group be formed. I then volunteered along with Mary Worner to co-facilitate and we've been meeting now, this the 3<sup>rd</sup> year at my home in Perham.

Once a month I make every effort to bail out my house from the mess of the grandkids, prepare new recipes for a light supper and greet those attending, who I now count as close friends.

In our lesson, 'Establishing Community,' our group talked about how we regard UCU and this small group ministry as 'our community.' It has become a time of quiet reflection and intimate sharings and provides opportunities for us to give back to our church and local community."

**Bonnie (Bell) Albers** co-facilitates with Tere Mann at the Fergus Falls Afternoon Group at Diana Ziesemers. Bonnie was unavailable to respond but she'd likely tell you her experience with U Group if you just ask her.

**Joanne Cress** "was honored to have been invited to be a facilitator. This type of activity comes naturally to me. U Groups personalize one's church group experience. We need to individually invite others from the church who are not yet in a group." Joanne quotes from the church hymnal: "If it is language that makes us human, one half of language is to listen." She further says that "U Groups are an opportunity to express one's own personal thoughts with caring good listeners. These thoughts are respected and remain with the group."

**Diane Johnson** states so beautifully: "The Chalice Lighting is inevitably my favorite time in the Sunday Service. Not because I am 'nosy,' but because it provides magical moments when we become a Collective Consciousness, holding a focus by honoring each other's joys and concerns. That is powerful. Our UU covenant groups serve that function to an even greater degree because they stimulate inner reflections that our busy lives so often block. And they provide a safe place to share ourselves while we honor others.

One of my favorite writings about the structure of the groups ('How to Increase Deep Sharing and Listening in Covenant Groups' - Susan Hollister and Alicia Hawkins) mentions that "Listening from the heart differs from listening from the mind." The Chinese symbol for listening is made up of the characters for eyes, ear, undivided attention and heart. The mind is not included. In that way our UU gatherings really become a group meditation. And that is magic."

As a retired high school (history & English) teacher and long-time Quaker, **Carole Mitchell** thinks "this concept of 'community building' makes so much sense.....and continues to do so as we witness deeper growth for all of us involved in U-Groups. Facilitating a U-Group, for me, is a useful way to go deeper without hours & hours of the usual energy spent on most committees.

From my participation, I've witnessed and shared in "community growth" on a smaller scale that can morph into larger experiences, hopefully, for individual U-Group members. I think U-Groups are dynamically important to our congregation as well as the world that touches each of us where we are."

**Tere Mann** "first came to UCU after being invited by Rick and Diane Long back in the late 70's, early 80's. I left after we moved to town and got involved with the Episcopal Church. I came back when the US invaded Iraq and was hassled about a peace prayer and song I included in the service. I left again when I moved to CO and I was happy to return in 2013.

Stephanie Sanderson asked me to become a U-group facilitator last year and it has been an interesting opportunity to share with others at the UCU. It is quite different from any group I have ever been a part of. There is depth, a richness and vulnerability that isn't often what I have experienced in groups before. The openness which is shared is very special both in the U-Group and in the U-Group facilitators group.

Having the u-groups as a part of UCU I think brings a closeness and I would hope a deeper sense of community to the congregation. We connect in ways that I think allows us to be real with each other and I would hope allows us to be there for each other outside of the groups.

I'm very thankful for the opportunity to get to know more members of the congregation in ways that I wouldn't without the U-groups."

**Connie Stigen** "was asked to be a part of the initial U Group facilitators so I have been in the group since its formation. Initially I thought that the group was kind of fractured and I wasn't going to remain a part of it - until we had our experience with Laurie Bush who channeled us in the right

direction. Laurie was integral in giving us the basic foundation of our U Groups and I was sold on it after the first day with her. I totally enjoy the intimate and enlightening relationship we develop within the groups. I have not left a session yet when I feel like I didn't learn something new about a topic or a person in the group - it's a very fulfilling experience."

Connie graciously opens her home on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month to host the U Group Facilitators who attend to the business/coordination of the U Groups and then review the lesson for the upcoming month. Connie stepped forward after Ron Graham and Stephanie Sanderson retired to be Co-U Group Coordinator along with Tere

**Kris Warhol** will be filling in as co-facilitator with Bob Worner at the Battle Lake U Group when Joanne Cress is away. From Kris: "This will be the first group attending for me. For the past thirty years I have facilitated several groups beginning with N.O.W. during the early eighties in Minneapolis. I look forward to the topics we shall embark upon. Different perspectives offer a deeper insight and enrich us all."

**Bob Worner** "got involved as a facilitator because the idea for U Groups arose with the first Celebrants of whom I was one. In fact, they were my brainchild (the Celebrants not the U Groups). Credit goes largely to Ron Graham and to Stephanie Sanderson. We brought Laurie Bushbaum, from Sioux Falls and she met with us on a Saturday for a workshop, and then spoke in church on Sunday. Goes back 4-5 years. I've been a co-facilitator to two different U Groups, the first in Fergus Falls at Florence Thompson's house, and for the past three years in Battle Lake at the Larsons."

**Mary Worner** says that she gains personally from being a U-Group leader by "experiencing the commitment of other co-facilitators as we share in planning." She learns from "hearing the thoughts of others in the U-Group meetings on topics important to all or our lives," and she "enjoys the company of the participants during the social time." She believes that what the church gains from the U Groups is that: "projects are done for the church by each U-Group annually that makes for lots of work getting done without organizing another committee; that people who are learning to be better listeners in the U-Groups have become better listeners in other settings like committees; and that U groups are an opportunity for people new to the church to get acquainted easily and quickly in a structured setting."

And thank you to our hosts: **Ross and Mary Larson** (Battle Lake), **Sandy Barnhouse** (Fergus Falls/Underwood), **Diane Ziesemer** (Fergus Falls) and **Mary Anderson** (Perham). They open their homes each month to provide a welcoming, quiet atmosphere and provide treats themselves and/or with the help of other U group members.

## U Groups

Along with regular monthly meeting around a topic, each year, the U group facilitators group and each U group commit to doing a community project and a church project. So this year's U Groups have been actively seeking out community and church activities to figure out how we may contribute or be of service. Watch for further information as plans commence.

The Battle Lake U Group had 10 people at its October meeting and they have changed the date and time for meeting for the future to the 2nd Tuesday monthly at 2:45 at the Larson's. The first meeting at this new time will be Tuesday, Nov. 11.

The Fergus Falls Underwood U Group meeting at Sandy Barnhouse's is at full capacity of 12 people. Anymore and we'll have to form another group!!

The Fergus Falls Afternoon group meeting at Diana Ziesemer's has room for several more so if you are interested contact Co-facilitators: Tere Mann or Bonnie Bell.

The Perham U Group has several new members this year that add to the vitality of the group.

- **Battle Lake Afternoon Group** – 2nd Tuesday of each month beginning at 2:45 p.m. co-facilitated by Bob Worner and Joanne Cress or Kris Warhol at the home of Ross and Mary Larson
- **Fergus Falls/Underwood Evening Group** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. co-facilitated by Diane Johnson and Carole Mitchell at the home of Sandy Barnhouse (corner of Highways 1 and 35)
- **Fergus Falls Afternoon Group** – the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month from 4:30-6:30 p.m. co-facilitated by Tere Mann and Bonnie (Bell) Albers at the home of Diana Ziesemer
- **Perham Afternoon Group** – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month co-facilitated by Mary Anderson and Mary Worner at the home of Mary Anderson

#### **October Topic: "Experiencing Community"**

"(Real Communities) are communities where you feel at home, in which you can be yourself, warts and all. What is there about that group that makes it possible for you to be you, and to be there for others? In all probability, in that group you feel safe. You can risk being angry or disagreeing. You are able to get to know members, who at first you felt were different from you. You felt listened to. You really care about other members of the group. You listen openly to them because you are interested. You don't feel pressured to be in the group, you feel free to be there, and free when you are there. In that community you experience grace." Author unknown

**In November, our meeting topic is "Attending to Soul."**

## Great Spirit Prayer

*A Native American Prayer by Lakota Sioux Chief Yellow Lark*

Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the wind,  
Whose breath gives life to all the world.

Hear me; I need your strength and wisdom

Let me walk in beauty,

And make my eyes ever behold the red and purple  
Sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made

And my ears sharp to hear your voice

Make me wise so that I may understand

The things you have taught my people.

Help me to remain calm and strong

In the face of all that comes towards me.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every  
Leaf and rock.

Help me seek pure thoughts and act with the intention  
Of helping others.

Help me find compassion without empathy

Overwhelming me.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother,

But to fight my greatest enemy-

Myself (my fears and my doubts).

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.

So when life fades, as the fading sunset

My spirit may come to you without shame.



Free Thanksgiving  
Mickie Edmonds

**Unitarian Church of Underwood**  
**Approved Board Minutes for September 17, 2014**

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, Norman Kolstad, Kris Warhol, Mary Worner, Alisha Piekarski, Mary Anderson and John Miersch. Absent: David Wass, David Sanderson, and Don Siems. Also present: JoAnn Larson.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ellen Eastby at 6:31 p.m.

John Miersch shared a reading/meditation.

The agenda was approved (Miersch/Anderson).

The minutes of the August 20, 2014 meeting were approved as printed (Warhol/Miersch).

Reports:

Treasurer: no report

Administrative Consultant: JoAnn Larson

Program Committee: Mary Worner

Outreach Committee: no report

Facilities Committee: John Miersch

Membership Committee: no report

Foundation Advisory Committee: no report

Old Business: discussed the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, nomenclature, roles and responsibilities, and policies.

New Business: discussed appreciation for participants/contributors for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 26, 2014 at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Kolstad, secy.