



Unitarian Church of Underwood October 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 October

October 5 – Lisa Lipari, Community Center Director for the Churches United for the Homeless in Moorhead. Churches United for the Homeless is the largest shelter in northwestern Minnesota and is the only shelter within 225 miles that is able to accommodate single men, single women, and both one and two parent families.

Their Mission is to provide shelter and support in a spiritual setting. They accomplish this goal by offering spiritual ministry and emotional affirmation to people who are homeless, furnishing a temporary shelter, and referring residents to appropriate services such as job service, social services, mental health services, and programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

October 12 -Nancy and Brad Friesen, Living in the Middle East. The Friesens are currently residents of Fargo but spent many years living and working for SERVE in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Nancy taught in various capacities including pre-school and grades 1-3 and started a school in the village of Chitral, Pakistan. Brad has always worked in renewable energy. Initially he worked in micro-hydro power, providing light and power to homes. His worked has morphed into solar and wind power. He has recently returned from working in Afghanistan. They will share some of their personal experiences, and perspectives on the lives and times in the Middle East.

October 19 – Celebration and New Member Welcome with Celebrants, Katy Olson and Shannon Smith, followed by **Progressive Dinner** (see details below).

October 26 - 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.

October 5 - 9:15 a.m. (1st Sunday of each month) Adult Religious Education

October 12 – 9:15 a.m. New Member Orientation

October 19 – 9:15 a.m. (3rd Sunday of each month) Spiritual Writing

October 26 – 9:15 a.m. (4th Sunday of each month) Overview of the Bible

Kids Religious Education will not meet in October but will meet November 2 and November 23 at 10:30 a.m.

Other Meetings:

October 15 - 5:30 p.m. Speakers Committee

October 16 – Fall Roadside Clean-up and Potluck (see below)

October 26 - Board Meeting 11:45 a.m. following Sunday Service

October 28 – U Group Facilitators (4th Tuesday of each month)

U Groups' Schedule Below

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

The Month That Was

September 7 – Bernice Johnson and Eitan Simanor, “Update on Shan Children and Burma”

Bernice gave us an update on her work with the Shan, this being her 13th trip to Thailand since she first went to teach English and they won her heart. How did she spend the money from us, one of her largest donors? There are 14-30 students at the View School. The building is dismal and roads to it are rough. Water to bathe is from a stock tank. But the children love school, an open platform. The teachers are a joy and 3 were ones that received scholarships. They train among themselves. Then there are scholarships at the agricultural camp - \$33/year pays for a younger student and \$300/year for older ones because of transportation. One 14 year old girl there had never gone to school and then between 14-18 years old, she completed 12 grades. She is now a teacher.

Bernice was given the jacket she wore from one of the students who had been traumatized by the 2002 fighting. She completed college and is now working with displaced children. Some wanted to start a library and so with \$100 and more books than 3 people could carry, they now have books in Thai and English. Children at the Shan monastery orphanage received the baseball caps we gave – all the children got a cap and the children at the orphanage got the puppets we sent and learned the song “Tutti Ta.”

Then Eitan, a professional photographer, talked of his 15 visits to Burma. In his video, “Land’s End of Burma,” that he narrates, he says Burma is a paradise and a hell. Travel in Burma is either by old boats or motor bikes over the rough roads. The community is all important and people have high skills in fishing or agriculture. Schools are a sorry state. Now there are foreign investors but much corruption. 55 million are Burmese. 30% of the people are not Burmese. 35 languages are spoken. The Burmese persecute the minority groups and so they lose their land. They have to work as a community to protect themselves and their land. Part of the land is plain and the rivers and delta are surrounded by mountains. There are 120,000 refugees in Thailand from different ethnic groups, 52% having no recognition in status by the UNHCR. 450,000 are internally displaced persons (IDP).

Burma is one of the richest countries in natural resources and the Chinese are advantaging themselves with obtaining jade and building dams for electricity to China.

Burma is one of the most fascinating countries Eitan has visited, with fantastic photo opportunities, but magazines are not interested in photos of poverty or hardship. Help through NGO's only works if the community is part of the project from its inception. There has to be deep involvement by the locals – they see things in a different ways. Small scale projects work best that can be reproduced and are manageable. Bernice's projects are good examples.

September 14 – Bob Worner, “Building Community” UU Principle #6, “the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.” How do we build world community when we can't even build such within the National Football League, which focuses on money and the owners and not, the players. Trying to build an America everywhere is not the answer. We know we can build community in small groups like churches, but most times we don't even know our own neighbors. This is unlike Connie Stigen's growing up where she tells of 63 people visiting her parents in one day, beginning as her dad was doing the early milking.

The larger we are, the harder it is to build. We have built new neighborhoods, gated communities, invisible gates and ghettos that insulate and isolate. We have built ghettos of the mind – narrow-mindedness where thinking is discouraged. There are 138.8 million emails every 30 seconds but none of this has built peace, liberty, justice.

How do we establish a world community?

1. Make sure our homes are open – to new ideas, other ethnicities, families outside our own . Think of ways for our church to attract diversity. Learn to listen – speak to our principles and listen to other opinions.
2. Build on a good foundation - live gently and openly with earth and each other.
3. Know your history – who you are and where you came from. We've learned about UCU's founders, sustainers but think about who touches us now.
4. Live with purpose – seek the goal of world community.

Comments: Young people reaching out to teach English as a 2nd language, setting up NGO's. Seems to be a distrust of the known institutions so maybe this is a major shift – unknown yet as to what that shift may mean.

September 21 – Ellen Eastby “With the Joy of a Child” UU Principle # 1

After attendance last January at the Meadville Lomborg Theological School in Chicago, Ellen spoke to us in February on giving. Today her talk was on receiving. Ellen illustrated the “proper” typical rituals and reactions of a Scandinavian giver and receiver of a gift (“oh, you shouldn't have” “I insist” x 3 each side. Then carefully open without tearing the paper!! – most of us could identify). We need to learn how to allow another the gift of giving. We can be selfishly self-less when we deny others to give to us and need recognize that it is a meaningful experience for the giver to give. Acts of giving are a win/win – creates connectedness and

creates good chemical changes in the body. There is as much value in receiving as in giving. Recognizing that we are “deserving” gives us a glimpse of how others see us. What do we do when we receive a gift? Say “thank you,” show graciousness, enthusiasm, joy. Hugs are a gift to both the giver and the receiver.

September 28 - Sandy Barnhouse introduced the panel, an **Alternative Health Forum with Tere Mann, Peggy Maxwell, David Sanderson and Shannon Smith.**

Question: How do you define healing?

David said ‘To make whole.’ That involves the healer and the healed. The healer is assisting, not fixing. Most healing comes from within a person.

Question: What is your orientation to alternative healing?

Peggy said her interest in Traditional Chinese Medicine: is most holistic. The yin yang symbol is always in motion. Balance of light and dark, high and low, fire and water. When these come out of balance, illness follows. Different things bring peace of mind to different people.

Tere – “Back in ’86, I was a ‘touch-er,’ but was told that was too sexy ‘so I put my hands in my pockets.” Later she began studying and practicing massage therapies.

David visited his sister at the Himalayan Institute and studied yoga and meditation. He started his own practice of meditation, and became certified in medical acupuncture, which he began to incorporate into his medical practice. What he would like to see happen in medicine is that all aspects, East and West be considered.

Audience question asked of David Sanderson, M.D. “*Did you get pushback from your colleague’s?*” (Followed by laughter) Lake Region Hospital and other places: “bottom line - this is not a moneymaker”. Until Insurance companies pay, folks can’t afford. Doctors came along with the ideas but the administration stopped it.

Comment: Laying on of hands – alternative healing is not new. Take care of your soul- love yourself. Balance, peace of mind.

Shannon practices energy healing and said “integrate western medicine and alternative medicine.” This practice would reduce health care costs. One has to have happiness to share happiness with others. Thomas Moore “Care of the Soul” “Dis-ease gives you the opportunity to heal the soul.”

Question: Is there any role for drugs? They are all included as alternatives for healing as well as yoga, meditation, diet and exercise.

Question: Does YOUR personal energy level drop during the healing process? We have a physical body and an energy body –often unseen and unaware of our energy body. Think of self as a conduit of the energy of the universe.

Newsletter Submissions

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

Adult Religious Education

John Minge leads the Adult RE class that meets on the first Sunday of the month at 9:15 a.m. They will be discussing Emerson, a Spiritual Guide. The discussion will also incorporate current affairs.

Kids Religious Education

Kids RE met for the first time on Sept. 21, with 9 kids and 3 adults in attendance. The focus this year will be on building our own community, and on exploring symbols: in particular, symbols from various religions and what they represent, and beliefs, celebrations, etc. of those religions.

We begin each session by gathering together as a whole group to share joys and concerns; and to have a discussion about the symbol/symbols of the month. Then we split into 2 groups. JoAnn Larson leads the younger kids (preschool - 5th grade) in activities. Betsy Wells will be working on Coming of Age topics with the older group (6th grade and up).

A salute to the Season

Trick or Treat

Watercolor by Mickie Edmonds



Spiritual Writing

At their first meeting September 21, four writers began making plans to conduct a Sunday Morning Service preferably January 4, 2015 with the suggested theme of "Renewal." John Miersch will coordinate planning and will lead the service. During the meeting, they talked with guest, Mark Anderson (Luke's son), about his experiences teaching School on the Red Lake Reservation. The Writer's Group will continue to meet the 3rd Sunday of each month at 9:15 a.m.

Overview of the Bible

Bob Worner is leading the Adult RE Bible study and had five of us in attendance Sunday, September 28. They decided to study the gospel of John along with John Shelby Spong's book: THE FOURTH GOSPEL, Tales of a Jewish Mystic. They will continue to meet the 4th Sunday monthly at 9:15am.

New Member Orientation and Welcome

New members will be officially welcomed October 19 at the Sunday Service with orientation held October 12 at 9:15 a.m. If you wish to become a member of the Unitarian Church of Underwood, please see JoAnn Larson to sign the book and arrange for orientation and welcoming. We look forward to your joining us!!

Habitat for Humanity

There will be no Habitat for Humanity fund raising dinner this November. Due to a number of circumstances it has been moved to April 9th. Thanks to everyone who supports this. Please put it on your calendars for 2015. Also, funding for Habitat continues to be crucial. You will receive a newsletter from Habitat shortly. It will contain an envelope in which your contribution may be sent. Please join in this continuing important work.

Fall Roadside Clean-Up and Potluck October 16th

The annual UCU fall roadside clean-up along our stretch of CR 1 is scheduled for Thursday, October 16th. Please meet at Sandy Barnhouses home at 4 pm. Following clean-up, we will celebrate with a potluck, so please bring a dish to share. Bags and vests are provided for clean-up, but you may want to bring a pair of gloves. For more information, directions, or *in case of poor weather*, call JoAnn at 218-405-0752.

Celebrating Our 125 Years

To recognize the 125 years this church has existed, we have:

- Celebrated our history (January 19th with Stefan Jonasson)
- Celebrated our long time current members (May 19th)

- Shared with our community at the Underwood Harvest Festival (August 30th).

Now for our final event on October 19th, we will recognize new members and celebrate each other by joining together in small groups at a progressive dinner following church services.

The goal of the progressive dinners is to provide a smaller, private setting for groups of 8-10 to gather at member homes for good food and a fun format to get to know each other and exchange ideas on how UCU will thrive in the future.

We will begin with appetizers at church and then have several hosts in the Underwood area open their homes to provide the entrees. The reason for inviting Underwood area hosts is to accommodate easy travel and timely access following church. After some time together to eat and visit at the entrée host site, the attendees will disperse for desserts at other host sites, hopefully close to their home of residence, again to accommodate travel time and access.

To carry this out, we need volunteers for:

- 1) Appetizers at church (2-3 people to bring an assortment of appetizers)
- 2) 3-4 Host homes in the Underwood area to serve the entrée with help from one or more other volunteers.
- 3) 4 Host homes to serve desserts with help from other volunteer(s) in Fergus Falls, Battle Lake, Pelican Rapids and Otter Tail or other accessible areas.
- 4)

To volunteer please contact: maryanderson8380@msn.com or call 218/346-6638 or sign your name on the sheets in the upstairs foyer. Once hosts are known, members/friends can fill in your names at the sites of your choice. That way the hosts will be able to anticipate how many to prepare for and you will know where you are going!

Christmas Eve Service

October may seem a little early to start talking about Christmas, but this is too wonderful to wait until December to announce. UCU will be holding a Christmas Eve Service this year. The candlelight service will start December 24 at 5 p.m. and will last no longer than 45 minutes, giving you the evening for the Christmas celebrations and traditions that are dear to you. Please help spread the word.

Planned Giving Task Force Becomes Foundation Advisory Committee

In the past years, UCU received two large monetary gifts that not only provided our ability to maintain our facility and contribute to the community through our Empowerment Grants, but assured our longevity. Since then, we've been challenged on how to manage and administer those gifts and still invite further bequests. Efforts have been underway for some time to set up a process and procedures for members/friends to donate gifts to the church with the assurance that they will be well managed. The responsibilities of the new Foundation Advisory Committee have now been established and approved by the board. The committee will move forward to establish an endowment fund and work on fundraising. To join this committee, please contact Dave Sanderson, Program Chair: dssand@ptel.com or 218/736-2616.

Unitarian Church of Underwood Nomenclature

As the church has grown and various committees have been formed to do the work of UCU, nomenclature (naming) became confusing. The Board on the recommendations of a small work group (Ellen Eastby, Mary Worner, Mary Anderson) approved an outline of UCU's structure. Besides the governance of the UCU Board, there are three designations that describe the work of UCU: Program, Outreach and Facilities. A "committee" is designated to do long term work to establish or maintain the work and upkeep of UCU. A "task force" is a small work group charged on a short term basis to do a special project. "Coordinators" are one or more individuals charged with leading a group for specific duties. The new Nomenclature outline is included with the Board minutes below.

Extracts from Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Association E-Letter

**MUUSJA's General Meeting 2014:
"Faithful to the Work of Justice:
How Our UU Identity Informs Social Action"
Saturday, November 9
1:00-3:00pm
The White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church
328 Maple Street, Mahtomedi, MN 55115**

Why have Unitarian Universalists so consistently worked for progressive social justice causes throughout our history? How do our shared UU beliefs, history, theology and principles inform how we struggle for justice today? What do our traditions and beliefs call us to work toward as individuals, and as a broader community of faith? This year, join Unitarian Universalists from across the state for MUUSJA's General Meeting, featuring a program that focuses on the intersection of our identity as Unitarian Universalists and our shared yearning for a more just and loving world.

Our program will feature a short opening worship, small group reflection, highlights of our work this past year, an opportunity to hear about MUUSJA's vision and direction from our new Executive Director Ashley Horan, and an engaging presentation from our Keynote speaker:

**The Keynote Faith & Justice Address:
"Drawing on our Faith Traditions to Guide Our Social Actions"**

Everyone has a life journey that includes many different influences along the way. Mark

Ritchie, Unitarian Universalist and outgoing Minnesota Secretary of State, will talk about his faith traditions and how they have guided his public service, reflecting on these influences as he steps forward into a new chapter after the end of his term.

Congregational Spotlight:

St. Cloud Area UU Congregations Create Joint Social Justice Committee, Hold Event Focusing on Challenges to Formerly Incarcerated People

[Spirit of Life Unitarian Universalist Congregation](#) and the [St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship](#) formed a joint Social Justice Committee last year, and have spent the past several months gathering information about how their communities can better achieve their goal of assisting people who have been incarcerated, particularly concerning employment and housing. Recently, the Joint Social Justice Committee invited [Emily Baxter](#), Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at the [Council of Crime and Justice](#) to give a presentation entitled "[We Are All Criminals.](#)"

The presentation grew out of research that Ms. Baxter has done through collecting stories of those who have committed crimes and "gotten away" with them, and addresses the challenges previously incarcerated people face when transitioning out of prison and back into general society. The presentation was quite successful, with an audience of 40-45 attendees, including UUs and other community members. The Joint Social Justice Committee is planning a follow-up event focusing on the particular challenges facing formerly incarcerated people, and how St. Cloud area UUs might join together to respond. This is a particularly important issue because one of Minnesota's largest prisons, the Minnesota Correctional Facility at St. Cloud, is located just miles from both congregations.

MUUSJA enthusiastically commends Spirit of Life UU and the St. Cloud UU Fellowship on their partnership and their shared work for justice! Cooperation and collective action are essential for *all* our congregations, and especially essential for smaller congregations and fellowships, which frequently don't have the financial capacity, paid staff, and membership numbers to organize larger-scale social justice projects and events. Well done, St. Cloud area UUs!

If you are interested in learning more about either congregation, or getting involved with the Joint Social Justice Committee, please contact Committee Co-Chairs [Judy Foster](#) or [Ozzie Mayers](#).

UCU Editor's Note: Spirit of Life UU and St Cloud UU Fellowship members attended last year's fall area workshop at UCU.

U Groups

Four U Groups are again meeting for the 2014-2015 year with meetings beginning in September and continuing once a month through May. Eleven people (yes, we're full!) met at Sandy Barnhouse's lovely home so felt the benefit of a thoughtful start plus the artful beautiful environment. Six people met in Battle Lake at the home of Ross and Mary Larson for a delightful evening and six people met in Perham at Mary Anderson's with more expected to attend in the coming months. Four met at Diana Ziesemer's in Fergus Falls and they have

room for several more to join them. The schedule is:

- **Battle Lake Afternoon Group** – 4th Tuesday of each month from 3:30-5:00 co-facilitated by Bob Worner and Joanne Cress or Kris Warhol at the home of Ross and Mary Larson
- **Fergus Falls/Underwood Evening Group** – 2nd 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 3rd 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 2nd Thursday of each month co-facilitated by Mary Anderson and Mary Worner at the home of Mary Anderson

September Topic: “Silence”

“When I am liberated by silence,
When I am no longer involved
In the measurement of life, but in the living of it,
I can discover a form of prayer in which
There is effectively no distraction.
My whole life becomes a prayer.
My whole silence is full of prayer.
The world of silence in which I am immersed
Contributed to my prayer.” Thomas Merton

**Unitarian Church of Underwood
Board Minutes for August 20, 2014**

Board members present: Ellen Eastby, Norman Kolstad, David Sanderson, Kris Warhol, Mary Worner, Don Siems, Alisha Piekarski, Mary Anderson, John Miersch and David Wass. Absent: none. Also present: JoAnn Larson and Lee Hamness.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ellen Eastby at 6:34 p.m.

Norman Kolstad shared a reading/meditation.

The agenda was approved (Miersch/Sanderson).

The minutes of the June 18, 2014 meeting were approved as printed (Anderson/Wass).

Lee Hamness asked the board to consider solar panels on the church. The issue was referred to the Facilities Committee.

Reports:

Treasurer: David Wass

Program Committee: Mary Worner

Outreach Committee: no report

Facilities Committee: John Miersch

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson

Old Business: A nomenclature/organization policy was approved (Warhol/Miersch). Other topics: 125th Anniversary activities, handicapped accessible parking.

JoAnn Larson presented the Administrative Coordinator report.

New Business: a Foundation Advisory Committee Operational Guidelines policy was approved (Anderson/Warhol). Other topics: information on church website, policies needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 17, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Kolstad, secy.

**Unitarian Church of Underwood
Nomenclature Outline
Board Approved August 20, 2014**

I. Board Activities

Committees (Long term):

Finance Committee

Stewardship Committee

Foundation Advisory Committee

Task Forces (Short term):

Endowment Task Force

Other:

Celebrants

II. Member and Community Services

A. Programming

Committees:

Speaker Committee

Membership Committee

Task Forces:

125th Anniversary Task Force

Coordinators:

Special Music

Kitchen

Children's Religious Education

Adult Religious Education

Other:

U-Groups

B. Outreach

Committees:

Empowerment Grant Committee

Social Justice Committee

C. Facilities

Committees:

Facilities Committee

Coordinators:

Chili Dinner

Community Thanksgiving Service