



Unitarian Church of Underwood

October 2015 Newsletter

www.ucofu.org

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.

Sunday Services Begin at 10:30 a.m.

October 4 - Ellen Eastby, "Finding Grace" – Principle #3. Also, New Member Welcoming, with Celebrants Katy Olson and Ellen Eastby

October 11 – Dr. Patrick West, "Environmental Justice: From Toxic to CO2"

October 18 - Gary Robinson, "Mindfulness"

October 25 - Bill Thomas "How Do You Do Death?"

Children's Halloween Celebration

Note: Ten minutes prior to beginning of service, there will be issued a "Call to Gather" to alert folks to assemble in the sanctuary so that the service can start promptly.

Adult Religious Education

October 4 (1st Sunday) – Adult Religious Education, John Minge, 9:15 – 10:15 a.m., lower level

October 18 (3rd Sunday) – Mindfulness Sitting, Stan Carignan – 9:00-10:00 Ellison Room

October 25 (4th Sunday) – Bob Worner will lead a study of the Old Testament using HOW TO READ THE BIBLE by Harvey Cox, 9:15-10:15 a.m., lower level

Children's Religious Education

October 11 and 25 (2nd & 4th Sundays) – Children's RE (U Kids)

October 11 – Teen's Bake Sale (U Teens)

October 25 – Halloween Festivities and Treats

Note: Child Care will be provided on alternate Sundays when there is no Children's RE

Other Meetings

October 4 – U Teen's Planning Meeting following Sunday Service

October 18 Board Meeting following Sunday Service

October 20 - Plan to Grow Task Force 7 p.m. at Katy Olson/Roller's

October 21 – Foundation Advisory Committee, 6:30 p.m. at church

October 25 – AED & CPR Training following Sunday Service

October 27 – U Group Facilitators (4th Tuesday of each month) at Connie Stigen’s
October 28 – Green Sanctuary Task Force 6:30 p.m. at church

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

More about October Speakers

October 4 - Ellen Eastby, Finding Grace – Principle #3 – A free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Ellen states, “I spent a good part of the last year and a half trying to understand grace. What was grace? What is grace? What could grace become? And why do I really care about grace anyway? During the October 4th Sunday Service I invite you to join me as I recount my journey that ultimately led me to finding Grace.”

New Member Welcoming, Celebrants Katy Olson and Ellen Eastby. Membership Committee will provide treats following service to welcome new members. (Note: no Progressive dinner).

October 11 – Dr. Patrick West, “Environmental Justice: From Toxic to CO2”. Dr. West will introduce the field of environmental justice; its origins and his own work on toxic fish and environmental justice [the differential exposure to toxics due to high fish consumption by low income minorities]. He will then argue that the field needs to embrace the wider issues of injustice to the poor and dispossessed of the earth by the growing environmental climate change crisis that will soon eclipse all other sub-fields of environmental justice.

Dr. West is an environmental/natural resource sociologist who specializes in a range of social and economic justice dimensions of environmental issues. He is retired Samuel T. Dana Endowed Chair at the University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources and Environment. He received his Ph.D. from Yale University. (Incidentally, Pat is also a member of the Perham U Group).

October 18 Gary Robinson, “Mindfulness.” Dr. Robinson will discuss mindfulness from the perspective of the Anapanamata Sutra (the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing) and his own personal practice and experience. He is retired from medical practice and is married to the artist, Pam Robinson. They make their home in New York Mills. Gary will also be sitting in on the Mindfulness hour preceding the Sunday service.

October Board Meeting following service. Please stay for it.

October 25 Bill Thomas “How Do You Do Death?” “Death has a medieval meme – the Dance of Death, with Death leading the peasant, the princess, the merchant, and all to the same end. In 19th century America, death was present to all – knick-knacks such as pictures made from a dead person’s hair decorated parlors. Lately, many have outsourced much of the experience of death. So what do we think about it, how do we meet it, what of an afterlife? Poems, songs, new approaches and personal stories will help us think about death’s place in our experience.”

Children’s RE will be celebrating an early Halloween downstairs during their hour and they will also be serving some “ghoulish” treats. Boo!

The Month that Was

September 6 – Bob Worner, "Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters" UU Principle #2, "Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations".

- One of the inspirations for Bob's talk was the teachings of the Old Testament prophet Amos
- We come to our UCU church for a variety of reasons including: finding a comfortable church home; a supportive community; a beautiful historic building; and the music. One thing that keeps us here is that we are a justice seeking people who are looking to be a part of a positive change in the world.
- Many of us are already involved in activities (within and without the church) that strive for justice – Habitat for Humanity, tutoring students, the chili dinner which provides funds for the Underwood Senior Center nutrition program.
- We support each other by sharing involvement – within UCU and with other agencies (such as joining Sverdrup in a day of volunteer projects).
- It would be great to see a more active Social Justice Committee within our church.

September 13 – God's Work, Our Hands. On Sunday, September 13th Sverdrup Lutheran Church was part of God's Work Our Hands (GWOH), an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) national morning of community service work. This year the Unitarian Church of Underwood, along with Tingvold Lutheran Church, joined Sverdrup in GWOH. The day started at 9:00 with a worship service at Sverdrup. Ken Hamrum played his harp during the service, which was enjoyed immensely by the congregation. At 10:00 the work began on the community service projects. There were a total of 14 projects to be done. They included young children picking apples and delivering them to Tamarac Manor, trimming trees in Underwood, cleaning the Community Center basement, painting curbs, and cleaning the Underwood school library. At 11:30 GWOH participants had lunch and fellowship at Sverdrup and a drawing was held for free admission for two to the Jim Scott concert. About 20 UCU members participated in GWOH! It was so successful that we hope to join Sverdrup next year too. A slide show of the event will be shown on the television in the lower level of UCU during coffee time for the next few weeks.

While the work was going on, a small group met at our UCU experiencing what a U group is.

September 20 – Rod Broding, "Misfits, Part 2". Rod had talked to us previously about "misfits." Today he talked about the significance of "naming" and the importance of our names. Our names are personal and part of our being. In the scriptures, we are "named as children of God." It is important to be important to someone else. Rod gave examples of people who had provided helps for him and what that meant to him. Keep in our hearts the names of our friends, others – even if we haven't seen them for a while. That is one way for us to "keep one another."

September 27 - Kris & Wally Warhol, "Francis Ellison, the Gift That Keeps on Giving"

Kris led off her talk with a quote from **Stefan Jonassen** from when he spoke here last May, “Life is now prevailing” was stated with the formation of the UCU church in 1889. Kris then went on to talk about 4 individuals who kept the lights on and breathed life into this church, “the light on the prairie.”

The first individual Kris spoke of was **Borghild (Moen) Brewer** who after the 1979, 90th anniversary celebration of UCU, wrote a letter to Marguerite Andrews. She was raised at UCU, her grandparents having been founders. She was a WAC during WW II. Her grandfather built the pulpit that we are using yet and the chalice metal sculptor on the wall was donated by her and her husband, Wilbur, in memory of her sister, Valdine.

Francis Ellison who made UCU the large gift of \$430,000 in 2004. She had told Kris in their visits together that if she didn't outlive her money, she'd leave it to the church. She loved this building and was a member here for 20 years. She served in the military from 1943 until retirement. Kris read excerpts from her sister, Viola's letter to Francis while Francis served in WW II. She volunteered in many capacities and she and Jim Gray as WW II veterans had much to visit about in the nursing home where they later resided.

Jim Gray was born in 1915. His grandfather served in the War of 1812. Jim started as a paper boy, had some other jobs, became a reporter and then was editor 50 years at the Fergus Falls Journal until retirement in 1980. He co-wrote with Marge Barton, “Lake Alice.” He never married or had children but was active and instrumental in many organizations. He wrote a letter for the UCU's 100th celebration and commented on Kristopher Johansen, the early founder.

Harold Gray's mother died during the flu epidemic and so he was adopted to John and Mathilda Gray. Harold stuttered badly but went to the U of M clinic and his speech improved to the point where he was recommended to and graduated from college. He received his MA in 1958. He began working at the Fergus Falls State Hospital in 1953. From 1962-71, he said his job as Director of the Adolescent Ward was both “exciting and exhausting.” Harold changed the trust he had set up to UUA to UCU, instead.

None of these individuals asked for anything. But they gave extensively with time and money to UCU. Diana Ziesemer commented that without their contributions, we would not be here today.

Kris acknowledged **Marguerite Andrews** who stood in for John Gronner to receive the UUA award but, Marguerite also received an UU award herself, the Betty Gorsche Award for Church History. Marguerite had conducted taped interviews in the 80's and 90's of many of the “founding fathers” of Camp Unistar. Her daughter, Katy, drove her to Davenport to accept that award. Marguerite also won an award for Volunteer of the Year. Marguerite told the story that she had been hospitalized in 1945 and her only visitor brought her lily of the valley flowers. She remembered that kind act so as a volunteer to the hospital, she always left flowers and did

other things— she thought what she did was private but, she was then nominated by several to receive this award.

Kris's last question – “What story will you write in our history?”

Dave Sanderson then acknowledged briefly the legacy left us by these individuals and what an impact it has had on our church. Brochures were distributed that explains, “A Gift for Today, A Legacy for the Future.” (for more information, see below).

New Member Invite & Welcome

We celebrate the addition of new members twice a year, with the next special welcoming of new members scheduled for **October 4, 2015** during Sunday service. To become a member, you can at any time sign the silver book. Please see JoAnn Larson, Administrative Consultant, on becoming a member and the many ways you can become involved with our UCU community.

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your ideas and articles for the Newsletter to: maryanderson8380@msn.com. Editing is provided by Stephanie Sanderson and emailing/ mailing is provided by Ellen Eastby and JoAnn Larson. Mickie Edmonds provides one of her paintings each month for our appreciation! When you have photos of a UCU event and are willing to share, please forward them to Mary.

Handicap Accessible Parking

Please be aware that the curb immediately in front of the church entry has been painted blue to designate handicap accessible parking for those with handicap parking stickers. Please extend every courtesy to assure that persons in need are accommodated.

News from our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)

Social Justice

From <http://www.uua.org/justice>

“We have a legacy of ‘deeds not creeds.’ Our work for a better world calls us to unexpected places as we harness love’s power to stop oppression. From grassroots community organizing to interfaith state, national, and corporate advocacy; in protest marches, prayer vigils, and press conferences; in homeless shelters and in prisons, Unitarian Universalists put our faith into action.

Our justice efforts are grounded in our congregationally-driven social justice statements and our call to break down divisions, heal isolation, and honor the interconnectedness of all life and all justice issues. We model these commitments by creating just, welcoming, and inclusive congregations. We act in partnership with groups and

communities most impacted by injustice on local, state, national, and international levels.

Our justice ministries focus on key priorities for our congregations and communities:

- economic justice
- environmental justice
- immigrant justice
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer justice
- racial justice
- reproductive justice
- voting rights

Our ministry includes service, education, advocacy, and public witness (the spiritual practice of taking a public position in support of justice). Our Standing on the Side of Love campaign harnesses the power of love to end oppression. Our UU College of Social Justice provides experiential learning opportunities to deepen the work of justice for people of all ages. Our work is led by our denominational staff, congregational leaders, and a wide variety of coalition partners and UU groups focused on justice and identity.

Learn More

Access tools for creating effective congregational justice programs.

Read stories of our congregations doing powerful justice ministry through partnership.

Connect with us: subscribe to our justice email newsletters to get campaign updates, learn what congregations are doing, and participate in local and national events.

Check out Just Acts, our monthly email newsletter for social justice leaders.

Find a congregation near you or join Standing on the Side of Love.”

Bob Worner in his talk on September 6th itemized many of the actions the UCU church and its individuals are doing in the way of social justice. Could we do more? How? Contact Ellen Eastby, eastofellen@hotmail.com, Kris Warhol, mwarhol7up@gmail.com, Stan Carignan, stanley.a.carignan@gmail.com or Mary Anderson, maryanderson8380@mns.com with your ideas.

Habitat for Humanity

“Several church members gave a day on a Thursday in September to the new building being erected in Fergus Falls. Wally Warhol, Steve Berg, Cathy Stone, Stan Carignan and Bob Worner worked on the build and Ellen Eastby and Linda Quistad Berg brought a delicious lunch. Stan has worked almost every workday since. We are being asked to come again whenever possible, I think it was the lunch that did it.

Meanwhile, Habitat has put out a call for applicants for its Executive Director’s position. That is truly a venture of hope and trust in the future since we do not have the money currently to pay for such a position. Events like the recent House Concert sponsored by the Battle Lake U Group are a small but, significant source of ongoing revenue.” *Bob Worner*

Hats for Shan Kids Due to be done by October 25

Hat makers: Please bring your finished hats by October 25 to Mary Anderson so we can get them to Bernice Johnson before she leaves in November.

Mary Worner, who is on the Shan Schools 501(c) 3 Board of Directors, reported that the budget for Shan Schools has been met for 2015-2016. Jim Scott donated 60% of the donations he received from his Pete Seeger concert to this project. With the budget assured, Mary said that: "Now Bernice wouldn't have to turn any student away for lack of scholarship money."

Adult RE

Secular Prophets with John Minge

1st Sunday of each Month, 9:15-10:15 a.m.

"During our first session--in early September--we talked about what it was to be a prophet and then began to consider the materials that discussed Vaclav Havel and others as modern-day prophets. We didn't get very far into those materials. So, we decided to carry the same topic over to the session to be held in early October.

The focus of our discussion was meant (by me!) to be on recent secular prophets--whether there was such a thing, who they might be, how we identify them, how we respond and take guidance from them, etc. The group expressed the fairly strong sentiment that it would prefer to select some individuals--Martin Luther King and Gandhi being good examples--who would probably fit the definition of a prophet and focus on their lives and not worry too much about what a prophet is and whether they satisfied the definitional criteria of a prophet. Ultimately, the group is the boss. But I do want to have the discussion include issues such as whether there are people that we should recognize as "prophets" (because of the significance of what they have to say) and to what extent we find it too easy to criticize those who have gone before us in their willingness to ignore important voices and our own inability to know a prophet--or some such thing--even when confronted with one.

The discussion was good and, as noted above, will pick up where we left off in our September session. We will be basing our discussion in October on the materials already identified by me and available (at no cost) online." *John Minge*

Mindfulness

3rd Sunday of Every Month

9:00-10:00 a.m., Upstairs Ellison Room

"The first mindfulness gathering at the UCU was a success. Twelve attended this first session, ranging from first time sitters, two from the Quaker tradition, several who have practiced for some time and a few long time sitters. Connie Stigen was "amazed at how fast 20 minutes flies by!" Maggie Meehan mentioned the words of Jesus, "where two or more are gathered". Personally, I was amazed at the energy I felt sitting in a group. I thought of Thich Nhat Hanh's words of "feeling free dwelling in the Ultimate." It was the highlight of my day and week.

I will post signs next month and I ask that all members honor our use of the Ellison Room from 9 – 10 a.m., the 3rd Sunday of the month. We ask that you refrain from walking through the group during the 20 minutes of silence. Our plan is to end the quiet period 45 minutes before the service thus, giving musicians and anyone else needing access to the sanctuary adequate time to prepare.

On October 18, we will be joined by Dr. Gary Robinson, who will be presenting a talk on Mindfulness during the Sunday service. He will be joining us for meditative sitting from 9:00 – 10:00. The Sunday before, October 11, Pat West, a practicing Buddhist, will be our service speaker. Pat is a member of the Perham U group and moved to the area last year from Grand Rapids, MN, where he was part of the UU Fellowship. Hopefully he will have a chance before or after the service to discuss the sitting group they have in Grand Rapids. While both of these speakers happen to be adherents of the Eastern tradition of meditation, there is also a rich and deep contemplative tradition in the west. Thomas Merton, a 20th century Trappist Monk, is one good example of this western tradition. It is my hope that we will explore all of the ways in which silence can lead to a rich interior life and nurture a vibrant spirituality.

If you choose to join us, please remember to bring a cushion for easier sitting.” *Stan Carignan*

4th Sunday of Every Month
Looking at the Old Testament
With Bob Worner
9:15 – 10:15 a.m., Lower Level

“For the first session in September, there were seven of us. We studied Genesis, beginning with the creation stories and moving through the expulsion from Eden, the early onset of sin, Noah’s ark, Abraham’s story and a bit of Jacob and Esau. We will stay in Genesis another couple of times. We will continue on with Joseph in Egypt, and the story of the exodus next month, basically the book of Exodus.

It is such a good group of knowledgeable and receptive individuals and the time was filled with humorous and kind interactions. We are suggesting the book HOW TO READ THE BIBLE by Harvey Cox, although none of us had it this first session. Join us when you can.” *Bob Worner*

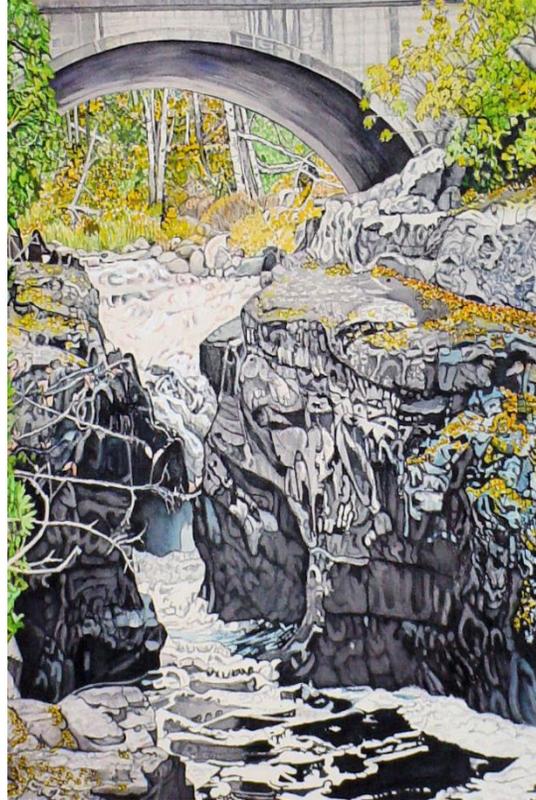
Children’s Religious Education

Children’s Religious Education is divided into two classes: U Kids - for little ones through 6th grade, and U Teens - for 7th grade and up. Katy Olson will act as coordinator with JoAnn Larson, Alisha Piekarski and other assistants for the younger children and Betsy Wells for the older youth. U kids will be held the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month during Sunday Service. For October, U Teens (with the help of U Kids) plan to have a bake sale on October 11 and work with the younger kids on October 27 to do Halloween type activities and make treats to serve at coffee time. There will be a short meeting of the U teens after the service on Oct. 4 to get organized for the bake sale.

If you wish to contribute baked good or garden canned goods for the bake sale, please bring the items on October 11th. You are also invited to provide healthy snack items or activity items to be used during Children’s RE and child care times.

The children are upstairs through the candle lighting portion of the service and it is such delight to hear what they light candles for!

Child care will continue to be available on the alternating Sundays.



Temperance River in October by Mickie Edwards

Harvest Festival Parade

Kris Warhol coordinated efforts for UCU to participate in Underwood's Harvest Festival Parade. She recruited Kathy Stofer and her six grandchildren to march in the parade and Pat Dufault to provide and drive his snappy, yellow truck. Kris also painted the green and blue t-shirts and banner with sayings that UCU is "going green." Other marchers included: Mary Anderson, Lee Becker and Stephanie Sanderson. Marchers were surprised at the huge turnout for the parade. Next year we hope to see you marching too!



Kathy Stofer and six grandchildren and Pat Dufault, "trucker"

Walking the Tightrope

On September 18-20, there were 540 people who attended the play, "Walking the Tightrope" directed by Lowell Carpenter, written by Lowell and others, and performed by a cast of local actors. Lowell reports: "That's an excellent attendance for a play of this type. The feedback from the audience questionnaires was all positive with comments with such terms as 'very educational,' 'emotional and educational,' 'interesting and moving.' The cast of 34 was very enthusiastic about the chance to perform in a play portraying real characters and situations.

Judy (my wife who coordinated the costuming), Victor Marchart, (a featured character, former patient and recent attendee at UCU), Jen Walla, David Merz (who both acted in the play and wrote one of the scenes), and I (writer/director) are all Unitarians. One of the characters, James Gray, was a former member of UCU. Tere Mann operated the slides during the performances. Bert Whitcomb was in the cast. Maggie Meehan was an usher."

So all these Unitarians plus, many other community members came together and met their noted objectives: the stories were interesting, they captured the history and drama of the people and events and the thinking of the time, and did it in a way most compelling. The costumes were great, covering a span of many generations. It was sad that battered women only had the hospital back then as a place of shelter from abuse and further had to endure the pressures put upon them by the church and their families. Bureaucracy and other budget priorities were challenges to the two directors of the hospitals over their many years. And what courage Victor Marchart displayed in sharing with us his memories and how well all was enacted. It was especially helpful that Lowell had spoken at UCU on August 30 on the history and other background information on the Fergus Falls State Hospital and the making of this production.

Kirkbride looms local but cuts across the whole nation with the issues that "Walking the Tight Rope" helped portray regarding mental illness. Bravo to the writers, director, actors and crew and to all those who attended!!

Jim Scott featured Pete Seeger

“For those of us who attended the concert at UCU on September 20, we got a glimpse into the life of Pete Seeger through stories and song presented by his friend Jim Scott. Jim, a musician, activist, and Unitarian Universalist, knew Pete and performed with him on numerous occasions. With the audience often singing along, Jim performed songs like *If I Had a Hammer* and *Turn! Turn! Turn!* Jim also performed songs that he has written. (He has several songs in our hymnal, including *Gather the Spirit*.) Just before the last song, Jim led us in singing *We Shall Overcome*. It was moving moment as we stood, holding hands, swaying together in time to one of the most well-known protest songs of our time. The evening came to an end with audience singing *Goodnight Irene* with Jim. It was a wonderful evening remembering Pete Seeger, an old friend to many, and getting to know Jim Scott a new friend to UCU.” *Ellen Eastby*

House Concert

“Steve and Linda Quistad Berg performed a wonderful house concert for the Battle Lake U Group and invitees at the home of Jerry and Mary Larson on Friday evening, September 25th from 7-9 pm. We gathered at 6:30 for finger food and conversation. The concert featured Steve on guitar and Linda on keyboard and a few other instruments, and their lovely voices in harmony. They sang songs of Minnesota, Wyoming and Arizona, songs of the Bighorn Mountains and songs of love. During intermission we ate again. All in attendance gave a free will offering that the musicians and the Battle Lake U Group agreed would go to Habitat for Humanity. Steve and Linda got only our gratitude and applause. They are available to do other house concerts on request and are well worth hearing.” *Bob Worner*

Solar Task Force

The solar task force will be meeting in mid to late October. We will be looking at both the ethical/environmental aspect and the financial/practical aspect of the possibility of using a solar electric system for the church. This will probably be a fairly long range project as there is a lot of information to review and study. If you wish to help out with this project contact: Ron Roller at rollerolson@gmail.com. Task Force members include: Ron Roller, Reid Becker, Susan Groff, John Miersch, Lee Hamness and Wally Warhol.

Plan to Grow Task Force

An initial small group has met three times to assess how UCU has grown and is growing and what we might do to assure our future growth. Growth can be defined in many ways. It doesn't just mean numbers. It can also mean more opportunities for spiritual development and ways to become involved and live out the UU Principles. The Task Force plans to involve members and friends as much as possible in determining what is wanted/needed for UCU to be visible and accessible to those who share in our commitments. We marvel at the new members who have come within the last couple of years. We are grateful for the number who volunteer to give of themselves sharing their gifts, skills and talents. There is so much that we love about UCU that we don't want to lose what we have. We are using as our guide, *The Growing Church, Keys to Congregational Vitality*, Thom Belote, Editor.

Task Force members to date include: Luke Anderson, Mary Anderson, Stan Carignan, Katy Olson and Bob Worner. Others will be asked to join as we move forward in developing a plan for growth to present to the Board of Directors and the UCU membership at the April Annual Meeting.

“Green Gossip”

The Green Sanctuary Task Force held their initial meeting to talk about whether it would be beneficial for UCU to seek accreditation from UUA to become a Green Sanctuary. They reviewed what is currently underway across the program with speakers, the facility, outreach and special events, empowerment grants, etc. that raise environmental awareness among UCUsers. Then they brainstormed ideas on what UCU might do further. One idea was this “Green Gossip” column to bring tips and questions on our/your efforts to be green.

So, do you run the water while brushing your teeth? If so, see

<http://gogreeninyourhome.com/water-conservation/how-to-save-water-brushing-teeth/>
And/or

Did you know that if, just 2,000 households raise three hens, it could divert 252 tons of waste from landfills annually? JoAnn has made it a habit to take scraps home after treats to feed her chickens. For more on raising chickens, see <http://www.rodalorganiclif.com/wellbeing/5-reasons-raise-chickens>

The Green Sanctuary Team will continue to explore accreditation. Task force members include: Mary Anderson, Judy Carpenter, Maggie Meehan, Janell Miersch, Judy and Stephan Patrick, Alisha Piekarski and Kris Warhol. The next meeting will be October 28 at 6:30 p.m. at church. Others are welcome to join our team. Contact Mary Anderson @ 218/346-6638 or maryanderson8380@msn.com. Meantime, let’s continue to “gossip” about ways of going green!

Safety Committee

The Safety Committee has been working on signage, building security, fire safety, content inventory, and the AED (Automatic External Defibrillator). A short presentation on the use of the new AED and CPR is scheduled following Sunday service on October 25. The Safety Committee members include: Chair, Norm Kolstad, Susan Groff, Tere Mann, Dave Sanderson, and Wally Warhol. For further information, contact Norm at kolstadn@yahoo.com.

Foundation Advisory Committee

A brochure, “A Gift for Today, A Legacy for the Future, has been developed and was initially distributed September 27 with the Sunday programs to describe what gifting can mean. That day, Kris & Wally Warhol shared “The Gift that Keeps on Giving,” the story of four individuals who greatly contributed both time and money to UCU. In particular, Francis Ellison, in 2004, left a very large bequest to the Unitarian Church of Underwood, part of which was used for the remodel of the building and much of which is invested and from which the funds for the Empowerment Grants are made possible. Harold and Blanche Gray also left a large gift.

Further ways to get information to members on the value and means to gifting are being planned. The Committee includes: Chair: Dave Sanderson, Stan Carignan, Steve Nagle, Donn Siems, Connie Stigen, Kris Warhol and Mary Worner. For further information, contact Dave at dssand@prtcl.com.

U Groups

Four U groups resumed meeting monthly in September with 40+ participants, both members and friends of UCU. Suggestions for church projects that U Groups could do were sought from the Board and others. Along with a church project, each U group will identify a community project that they can also do during the year.

The website (www.ucofu.org) has updated U group information. New topics are being drafted for the monthly lessons. Co-facilitators meet monthly to evaluate sessions, address business and review the next month's lesson.

The U groups are open to additional members at any time – we always have an empty chair waiting to be filled. If interested in a U group, or for more information, questions or concerns, contact: Connie Stigen at dcstigen@gmail.com or phone: 218/731-1445 or Tere Mann at teremann@gmail.com or phone: 218/205-4931.

2015-1016 Schedule

- Battle Lake Afternoon Group – 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2:45 p.m. at the home of Ross and Mary Larson, 531 E Summit St., Battle Lake. Co-facilitators: Bob Worner, Joanne Cress and Kris Warhol,
- Fergus Falls/Erhard Evening Group – 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at the home of Carole Mitchell, 33928 County Highway 27, Erhard. Co-facilitators: Diane Johnson and Carole Mitchell.
- Fergus Falls Evening Group – 3rd Tuesday of each month, 6 p.m. at the home of Tere Mann, 1319 N Park, Fergus Falls. Co-facilitators: Bonnie Bell Albers and Tere Mann.
- Perham Afternoon Group – the 2nd Thursday of each month 3:30 p.m. at the home of Mary Anderson, 455 5th St. SW, Perham. Co-facilitators: Mary Anderson and Mary Worner.
- Alexandria vicinity group forming – dates to be announced later. Co-facilitators: Lee Becker, Connie Stigen, Tere Mann.

October Topic: “Discovering your Gifts.” “We cannot be ourselves unless we are true to our gifts.” – Elizabeth O’Connor

**Unitarian Church of Underwood
Approved Board Minutes for August 19, 2015**

Board members present: John Miersch, Kris Warhol, David Sanderson, Alisha Piekarski, David Wass, Norm Kolstad, Mary Anderson, Diane Johnson, Stan Carignan. Absent: Lee Becker. Also present: Joanne Larson.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President, John Miersch.

Mary Anderson shared a reading.

AGENDA:

Mary Anderson had additions to the Agenda: Safety Committee is not considered a Task Force, but now has the status of a Committee. The Solar Energy and the Green Sanctuary are still in Task Force status.

The minutes of the July 15, 2015 meeting were approved: (Anderson/Warhol).

REPORTS: Old Business

Treasurer – David Wass made corrections to savings and assets amounts; Profit and Loss for June, July.

Administrative Consultant: Joanne Larson noted Flower Committee and \$240 gift for Beverly Backstrom memorial.

Program Committee – Stan Carignan – Mindfulness Group beginning 9/20/15.

Outreach Committee – Kris Warhol on UU participation in Underwood Harvest Festival parade as “Going Green,” scheduled for 9/5/15.

Facilities Committee – Update from Norm Kolstad about lift malfunction. John Miersch reported electric boiler installed but not wired, will contact Bjorn to co-ordinate and yes, see no problem if we later want to add solar. Discussed: Solar and air conditioning. Kris Warhol will follow up on pricing of air condition units.

Speakers Committee – Judy Carpenter has replaced Lowell Carpenter. Speakers booked through September and into October.

Membership Committee – Mary Anderson suggested progressive dinners and questionnaires about growing of church membership.

Safety Committee – Norm Kolstad reported walk through with fire chief, concern about combustible materials in furnace room.

Stewardship Committee – No report.

Foundation Advisory Committee – Dave Sanderson on increased expenses to \$35,000; suggestions such as automatic bill pay.

Green Sanctuary Plan – Team forming and will meet sometime in September with the goal of developing a plan by April annual meeting.

No old business.

New Business:

Mary Anderson re: UUA congregational survey (details, age group, per cent).

“God’s Work, Our Hands” 9/13-2015 with Sverdrup; t-shirts – no.

Jim Scott concert (Ellen contact): 9/18, 19 or 20th; motion for \$200 (Carignan/Sanderson).

Next Meeting, September 16th at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Diane Johnson, sect.