

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Missoula – Volume 18 Issue 3

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Email and Hardcopy Edition

www.uuf-msla.org

November 2007

News From the Prez

Hello Everyone,

Our second weekend with Wanda Daniel, our consulting minister, was again an enjoyable, inspiring time. Her workshop on "Clearing the Clutter" gave some good ideas for the Fellowship house and for our own homes, emotional and physical selves, as well. We're going to carry that first step even further by using our fall clean-up on November 3, to take everything down off the walls to see what is really important to keep. Her recommendation is to take it all down and leave the spaces bare for a few months to see how they speak to us. Please come and join in the deconstruction. We'll be raking leaves too. Her Sunday morning message on "Releasing and Receiving" echoed that theme in our own lives--what do we need to let go of in order to receive the most meaning from life? As with previous talks, her ideas give food for thought long after the words end.

Attending the MDD conference in Billings was a fun, uplifting experience for first-timers, Dove and me, and like a taste of GA there were great speakers, interesting workshops, and fellowship with a few hundred UUs. I hope many of us will be able to attend the 2009 General Assembly in Salt Lake City to have this wonderfully enriching experience of the larger UU world.

In the next weeks, there will be interesting services, fall spruce-up with lunch provided, our holiday craft & treasure sale, Abaki's chili feed, the Thanksgiving potluck, Wanda's next workshop and service, and the fall Words and Music service. I hope you can take part in many of these aspects of our church community.

As always, take care, do good work, and keep the faith.

Bonna Graham-Hall

Thank You for Pennies, Pencils and Bulbs

Thanks to everyone who gave time and money to the UUFM's contribution of funds in honor of the U.N. International Day of Peace on the weekend of September 21. Between the UUFM congregation and 40 fourth graders in St. Ignatius Elementary School we generated \$124.54 for the Central Asia Institute's Pennies for Peace project to build schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We also collected more than 100 pencils that were donated to the St. Ignatius Elementary School since many of the students there do not come to school with their own supplies. The Spring bulb sale that same weekend generated \$80 for the Mahankhal Chautari School in Nepal. – Marleen Ochs

Wanda's Schedule, November 2007

Office hours: Friday, November 16, 4-8 PM.
Please call Wanda (406-697-8369) to schedule!

Workshop, "Living in Gratitude": Saturday,
November 17, 11 AM - 1:30 PM.

We can neither make, nor retain, one moment of time; it all comes to us by pure gift; we might as well regard the sun and moon as our chattels.

~~C.S. Lewis

Living in Gratitude

As I watch the snow fall softly in the moonlight, I remember those days as a child when snow brought messages of play and fun. I also remember those days as an inner city minister in Washington, DC, when snow brought messages of cold and miserable wetness for the homeless. During those years I met a most amazing old woman who had lived on the streets for many years. She never tried to diminish the hardships of her life, and yet, she possessed a most unusual gift of maximizing the ordinary joys. Like catching snowflakes on her tongue on a particularly raw night in the city . . . “find the beauty where you are” she told us, “and live in gratitude, no matter what happens.” Her daily tasks revolved around bringing some comfort and joy to those who lived with her on the street. She died one snowy night, and those who found her remarked about the wondrous smile on her face.

On this snowy night in Montana, far away from the inner city of our nation’s capital and very snug in a warm house, I remember her. Her difficult life, filled with so many hardships. Her story, a sad one. Caught in a culture that did not value her enough to make sure she had the basic necessities. And yet, an extraordinary testimony to the human spirit living in gratitude.

Simple day to day, ordinary things . . . the touch of a friend’s hand, the warm cup of coffee, the falling snowflake so unique. How often do we simply pause and smile at those ordinary wonders?! When questioned, the old woman always said it could be worse, so why trash what it is. I know we would question that wisdom, especially as we awaken in our warm houses with more than enough to eat and to wear.

At the same time, a doorway of understanding opens. IF one finds the courage and strength and love, no matter what, to live in gratitude . . . what happens? Aurora, she called herself. Never knew her legal name. Aurora, the dawn, did not change the world. Not even her particular corner of it. What she did do is bring the whispers of joy into a full chorus of song in a most unlikely space. No one who knew her walked away untouched by that song.

On this snowy night in Montana, it does not seem odd to me that of all the memories of those many years in Washington DC, her face shines most brightly . . .

Movie Night Possibilities

We are looking at options for the return of our monthly Movie Night. There will be a sign-up list at the Fellowship for those who are interested in attending, and whether there is a preference for a night other than Saturday. The list of movie suggestions from "Popcorn Theology" will be with the sign-up sheet. If you have other recommendations or questions, RSVP to Bonna: bgrahamhall@gmail.com or Mary: mnordhagen@alpsnet.com

Unitarian Universalism History Corner

In the year 1579, Francis David, a Unitarian leader in Transylvania, died while held in prison for his Unitarian beliefs. He was first Lutheran, then Calvinist, before converting to Unitarianism. David began to dispute the nature of Christ and rejected the Trinity. The Calvinists challenged him and a debate between David and the Calvinist bishop was held at Torda in 1568, presided over by Prince John Sigismund. Sigismund declared David the victor and issued the Edict of Torda, declaring tolerance for other religions. As a result of the debates, Sigismund converted to Unitarianism. It was the first time in Western history that a ruler allowed his subjects to practice a religion different from his own. After his death, Sigismund's successor had David arrested and put in prison.

In 1813, King William IV of England signed the Trinity Act which repealed penalties for Unitarian belief. It was said of this act, "Unitarians became for the first time free men in their native land." For 115 years prior to the Trinity Act, denial of the trinity was a treasonable offense punishable by death. We have made progress.

Chalice Lighters – What Does it Mean to Light the Chalice?

Lighting the chalice means helping a Unitarian Universalist society cross a major threshold towards growth. It is an opportunity for individuals to provide financial support:

- for starting a new congregation
- by helping an established society to call a minister
- by assisting in the purchase of a building
- by helping establish or improve a Religious Education Program
- by contributing to other outreach projects

"You possess only a small light, but uncover it, let it shine. Use it in order to bring more light and understanding to the hearts and minds of men and women. Give them not hell, but hope and courage."

-- John Murray -- Founder of Universalism in America

By agreeing to be a Chalice Lighter, you pledge to respond either with a \$10 donation four times a year or a single \$40 donation once a year. The final call will go to MDD extension activities. These appeals for financial commitment are issued through the Mountain Desert District Extension Committee which is appointed by the District Board of Trustees.

Chalice Lighters have helped bring ministerial leadership to many congregations in our district. They have helped congregations move into buildings of their own. They have helped new congregations get up and running, and they have helped existing congregations realize their dreams.

MDD Chalice Lighters are champions of spreading the UU word and opportunity to many who will be Unitarian Universalists when given the opportunity.

The District Extension Committee has over-all supervision of the program, especially in deciding which calls to make and the annual deadline to receive applications is January 15th.

If we – as UUFM - want to apply for a Chalice Lighters grant, we need to have a number of Chalice Lighters in our congregation. Mac Palmer is the Chalice Lighters contact for UUFM. See him for enrollment forms.

Become an Eco-Maniac

At the MDD annual meeting in Billings, Dove and I attended a workshop on "Getting to Zero Waste."

If you talk a 10, but walk a 3, 4, or 5, here are a few suggestions for recycling, reusing, reducing to improve your number:

- 1) Local pack-and-ship stores will recycle foam packing peanuts.
- 2) Staples partners with the Sierra Club to recycle batteries, and for \$10 will recycle electronic equipment such as printers. Check with them for other items they take.
- 3) For a small fee, GreenDisk's Technotrash program will send you a box in which you can ship them up to 70 pounds of used CD's, DVD's, audio and video tapes, cell phones, pagers, rechargeable and single use batteries, ink/toner cartridges. The fee covers shipping & recycling fees; 1-800-305-GREENDISK, www.greendisk.com.
- 4) Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program turns old shoes into playground and athletic flooring: www.reuseashoe.com
- 5) One World Running will send still wearable shoes to athletes in need in Africa, Latin America, and Haiti: www.oneworldrunning.com

For more ideas go to www.coopamerica.org or www.simpleliving.net

For a resource list & live links go to www.museco.org/LiveSoftlyOnTheEarth.html

November Events

Fall Deconstruction, Leaf Sweep, and Lunch ~10:00- 12:30, Saturday, November 3

Our fall clean-up has a new focus this year as part of the "clearing the clutter" theme that started with Wanda's October workshop. Come join in the fun of taking everything off the walls at the Fellowship. Lunch will be provided. We'll also rake leaves to be ready for the city sweepers toward the end of the month. Bring a rake and/or a hammer if you can.

Double Fundraiser: Holiday Sale + Chili Feed

Sunday, November 11, the second annual holiday craft and treasure sale will be held after the service along with Abaki's famous Chili Feed. A free -will donation will be requested for the lunch. Funds from the lunch will go toward the "Giving Tree" project. Funds from the holiday sale will be donated in part to Josh's school in Nepal and part to the youth RE holiday project.

Fall Music and Words Service

Our popular semi-annual service to inspire our creative sides will be Sunday, November 25. If you can add poetry, readings, stories, skits, or music, please join in to make this service even more enjoyable. Sign up on the list at the Fellowship starting November 4.

Thanksgiving Potluck

Our Thanksgiving potluck will be after Wanda's service, Sunday, November 18. Look for a sign-up after the first of the month.

Schedule of Services

November 4: Bonna Graham-Hall with Albert Borgmann's talk "On Evolution and Ethics"

November 11: Barbara Berens with Norm Lavery's talk "Community Circles--A Restorative Justice Program in Missoula"

November 18: Wanda Daniel "Living in Gratitude"

November 25: Words and Music-Unwrapping Our Creativity

December 3: Josh Davis, to be announced

Program Committee Meeting

The Program Committee will meet at 7:00 pm Wednesday, November 28 at the Fellowship. If you have any suggestions for services, please let a committee member know: Carol Gordon, Marleen Ochs, Dave Beck, Barbara Berens, Ethel MacDonald, Bill Flanery, or Bonna Graham-Hall.

Book Club

The Book Club will meet at the home of Ellen Strommen, 3646 Brandon Way, at 7:00 pm on Thursday, November 8th to discuss Exile by Richard North Patterson. Our December book is Imperial Life in the Emerald City by Rajiv Chandrasekaran.


Dowd's New Book Free Online November 1st

UU evangelist Rev. Michael Dowd's acclaimed, "Thank God for Evolution! How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World" is available as a free PDF download November 1.

His book has been endorsed by 5 Nobel prize-winners and 120 other luminaries, including prominent UU ministers. <http://www.ThankGodforEvolution.com> Inexpensive hardcover copies are also available from Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Who can be certain where the self stops and the universe begins?
When we breath, it is the air from the passing wind that fills our lungs.
To our nostrils drifts the fragrance of the woodland flower.
When we taste, it is of the earth's flavors and its saltiness.
When we eat, it is of the field's corn and its wheat.
When we open our eyes, they are filled with sunlight and starlight.
Who can be certain where the self stops and the universe begins?
~~Todd J. Taylor

November 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Fall Deconstruction, Leaf Sweep, and Lunch from 10 am - 12:30 pm
4 Bonna Graham-Hall with Albert Borgmann's talk "On Evolution and Ethics"	5	6 Scrabble Night @ 6:45 pm Fellowship	7	8 Book Club @ 7 pm Ellen Strommen's House (3646 Brandon Way)	9	10
11 Barbara Berens w/ Norm Lavery's talk "Community Circles--A Restorative Justice Program in Missoula" Holiday Sale & Chili Feed after service	12 Women's Lunch @ Noon -- China Buffet	13 Scrabble Night @ 6:45 pm Fellowship	14	15	16 Wanda's Office Hours from 4 pm – 6 pm -- call Wanda (406-697-8369) to schedule	17 Workshop: "Living in Gratitude" from 11 am - 1:30 pm
18 Wanda Daniel "Living in Gratitude" Thanksgiving Potluck after service	19	20 Scrabble Night @ 6:45 pm Fellowship	21	22	23	24
25 Words and Music- Unwrapping Our Creativity	26	27 Scrabble Night @ 6:45 pm Fellowship	28 Program Committee Meeting @ 7 pm Fellowship	29	30	

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