



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Missoula Volume 20 Issue 5

Chairperson: Mary Nordhagen

Vice-Chair: Marleen Ochs

Secretary: Carol Marsh

Treasurer: Melissa Steinike

Email and Hardcopy Edition

January 2010

Monthly Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
3 New Year Traditions w/ Tammy Ravas	4 Tibetan Buddh. w/ David Curtis 7:00 pm	5 Game Night 6:45 pm	6	7	8 Lunch w/ Mary Bernice's Bakery, 12 pm. RSVP	9 Veg. Potluck, 12:00 pm "De-Junk Your Life" workshop, 2:00 pm
10 Towards a More Civil Discourse w/ Bill Flanery 2 nd Sunday Potluck	11 Tibetan Buddh. w/ David Curtis 7:00 pm	12 Game Night 6:45 pm	13 Chalice Circle 7:00 pm	14 Planning for Death Penalty Abolition event @JRPC, time TBA	15 Lunch w/ Mary Bernice's Bakery, 12 pm. RSVP	16
17 Music Sunday w/ Beth Youngblood Chalice Circle 12:00 pm	18 Tibetan Buddh. w/ David Curtis 7:00 pm	19 Game Night 6:45 pm	20	21 Book Club: <u>Descartes Bones</u>	22 Lunch w/ Mary Bernice's Bakery, 12 pm. RSVP	23
24 <i>TBA</i> Program Committee Mtg after the service	25 Women's Lunch, El Cazador, noon Tibetan Buddh. w/ David Curtis 7:00 pm	26 Game Night 6:45 pm	27 Chalice Circle 7:00 pm	28	29 "Women, Power, and Policy" In Helena. See below.	30
31 Imbolc w/ Jeremy Johnson Chalice Circle 12:00 pm	1 Tibetan Buddh. w/ David Curtis 7:00 pm	2 Game Night 6:45 pm	3	4	5 Lunch w/ Mary Bernice's Bakery, 12 pm. RSVP	6
7 A Psycho-Spiritual Exegesis of "The Cremation of Sam McGee" w/ Josh Davis	8 Tibetan Buddh. w/ David Curtis 7:00 pm	9 Game Night 6:45 pm	10	11	12 Lunch w/ Mary Bernice's Bakery, 12 pm. RSVP	13 "De-Junk Your Life" workshop, 2:00 pm

Thoughts from the Chair:

Happy New Year!

As we all start this new year and new decade, I embark on the second half-century of my life. I am sure that to some of you 50 seems really old, and I imagine to others it seems quite young. At a time when it is almost certain that I have fewer years ahead than I have behind, it seems appropriate to think about what is important, what is meaningful and lasting.

I have heard many remarks over the years concerning how important it is to have a place like this Fellowship, where we are not expected to think alike. We may not look like a diverse group. However, we do have a richness of experiences and perception. At our best, we learn from and celebrate this diversity of perspective.

Being UU is not easy. We are expected to think for ourselves. Add in the small size and lack of professional staff and minister at UUFM, and it can be a bit overwhelming. It is difficult to hide in the crowd, and we really do depend on all to do their part, whatever that part may be. On the positive side, that also means that everyone does matter, everyone can make a difference.

I have a couple of resolutions that I am making for this coming year. I rarely make New Year's resolutions, other than to resolve not to make any. However, this year I am making an exception. First, my personal resolution is to deepen and widen my connections within this Fellowship. This fits in well with my resolution as Board chair to find out as much as I can about what the UUFM membership needs and wants from this Fellowship. I am referring not just to those "official" members who have signed the book and made their annual pledges, but to all who attend services, however sporadically. I also include all those whose only connection at this time is through reading the monthly newsletter and weekly announcements. As I wrote in last month's newsletter, if you are reading this, you have opinions and suggestions which I would appreciate having you share with me.

So, starting January 8, I am planning weekly lunches, Fridays at Bernice's. I would like each lunch to be a gathering of 3-5 people where we can honestly share what we find to be the positives and negatives of the Fellowship as it is now, as well as what we most want for it to become.

Help me fulfill my resolution. Tell me which Friday in January or February works best for you. If that is just not a time or place which fits your schedule, let me know and we'll work something out. Contact me at mnordhagen@live.com or 529-0857. (Bonus points to Joyce and Carol G. for already responding!)

Cheers!
Mary

UUFM in Action

The holiday bazaar raised \$100 for the food bank, and Carol raised \$145 for Doctors Without Borders. The kids brought in \$50 for Pennies for Peace (actually, it was \$47 and some odd change, but we decided the Fellowship could kick in the small amount to round it up.) And even with the small turnout for the last Sunday in December, we raised \$50 for New Dawn MT animal sanctuary. Sue Eakins sends her thanks!

For those new to UUFM, or just those, like me, who tend to forget, we donate one offering a month to a non-profit organization. Currently, the donation is from the last Sunday of the month. Any money put in the collection basket which is not specifically marked as a pledge will go to that organization. If you have any ideas for where you would like to see this money go, please share your suggestions with any board member.

And, as always, the Helping Hands box is ready and waiting for donations for the Food Bank!

DE-JUNK YOUR LIFE

What: A monthly workshop to help deal with "stuff"

When: Begins Saturday, January 9, 2:00, continues monthly

Where: Fellowship House

Details: Do you have too much "stuff", material and emotional, weighing you down? Take a positive, easy step towards managing and reducing that stuff. You can do that by attending these monthly workshops. We will begin each session by listening to a CD from "Secrets to De-Junking Your Life" with Peggy Doolittle. Each CD lasts from 40-45 minutes,

and will be followed by a discussion. We will finish up by spending a short time de-junking the Fellowship.

There are a total of six CDs in the series. How far we get will depend on how much interest there is. The topics on the first CD are: Meet Peggy; Identifying Your Junk; Stuck in a System?; Circle of Life; A Balanced Life; Laws of Stuff (1-6); Maintaining your “A” Zone; Laws of Stuff (7-8). Come early and join in the vegetarian potluck!

UU History Corner

January 6, 1568—The Diet of Torda, called by Prince John Sigismund to settle disputes between the Calvinists and the Unitarians, opened in Transylvania. The minister Francis David represented the Unitarians, and the bishop Peter Melius represented the Calvinists. As a result of the debates, Sigismund converted to Unitarianism and issued the Edict of Torda which declared official toleration for other religions. It was the first time in Western history that a ruler allowed his subjects to practice a religion different from his own.

Western Montana Vegetarian Society

The monthly “2nd Saturday” Potluck will take place on January 9th at 12:00 pm at the UU Fellowship. Sue says, “With your New Year’s resolution to eat a healthier, kinder diet, come to this plant-based food event and enjoy the best way to eat.” Come enjoy the good food and good people. RSVPs are appreciated but not required. Bring a vegetarian dish to share, or a \$3 donation. Beverages are provided. For more information email NewDawnMT@gmail.com or visit the website at www.NewDawnMT.com

Eclectic Readers

The next Eclectic Readers book discussion will be Thursday, January 21st at Ellen Strommen’s. The book under discussion will be [Descarte's Bones](#) by Russell Shorto. Contact Ellen at 251-3441.

Descarte, as everyone knows, is famous for the philosophical maxim, “I think, therefore I want a ham sandwich.”

Women, Power and Policy

Please join us for the 4th Annual Women's Policy Leadership Institute, “**Making Connections: Women, Power, and Policy**” January 29th and 30th, 2010 in Helena, MT.

Hosted each year by Montana Women Vote*, the goals of WPLI are to create a progressive training and mentorship network, and to help transfer practical policy skills and experience from current women leaders to future women leaders.

Learn more about this interactive conference at Montana Women Vote.

Registration details available online: visit www.montanawomenvote.org/wpli.html. Cost: \$50 for the conference fee, \$75 for the conference fee with shared lodging (4 people to a room), and \$110 for the conference fee with shared lodging (2 people to a room). Lodging is at the Best Western, Great Northern Hotel. Childcare and most meals will be provided. Limited need-based scholarships are available. To request a form please email us at olivia@montanawomenvote.org. The registration deadline is January 22nd 2010. This is a great opportunity to learn from some amazing women who are involved in policy efforts in Montana--we hope you can take advantage of it!

Warmly,

Jamie Silberberger
Campaigns Manager

*WVE is a founding member of Montana Women Vote (MWV) and currently serves on MWV's state steering committee.

Poetry Corner

Dust of Snow

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

~Robert Frost

Chalice Circles

We are planning to start Chalice Circles in January. There will be two Circles, each meeting twice a month. One will meet the first and third Sunday, shortly after services. The other one will meet on the second and fourth Wednesday evenings. Both groups will meet upstairs at the Fellowship. The first Wednesday evening Chalice Circle will be January 13 at 7:00 pm and the first Sunday chalice circle will be January 16. The starting time for the Wednesday evening service can be adjusted to fit schedules.

We will be using the book *heart to heart* by Christine Robinson & Alicia Hawkins. Every Chalice Circle member will have a copy of this book. The book has various activities suggested for preparing for each circle. While we would hope that everyone will spend a little time before each meeting, the amount of preparation is up to each. Most of what follows comes from the book.

A Chalice Circle is a safe, supportive container for deep sharing. This sharing has a very firm structure, without the conversational back and forth most of us are used to. This firm structure fosters a sense of safety and fairness in the

group. The three Chalice Circle services in October, November, and December provided just a taste of what a Chalice Circle can be.

Each gathering of the Chalice Circle follows a consistent pattern that includes the following elements:

Candle Lighting. The gathering begins with a short reading as a member of the group lights the candle.

On Our Hearts. Some weeks you will come to the group with wonderful news or a heavy heart, and it will be important for the group to know what's going on with you. A few minutes are set aside for this kind of sharing. In addition, the leader will let you know about any absent members at this time. This is not meant to be a check-in, where each group member talks about his or her week. It is really only for the major highs and lows, the things you'd like everyone to keep in their hearts or in their prayers for you.

Silence. Each gathering has a time of silence, at least three minutes. Groups may want to build to longer times as group members become accustomed to the silence. Initially, people are often reluctant to give enough time for this silence; but in our society, where silence is so rare, even three minutes of silence can be a precious gift.

Shared Readings. Going around the circle, each person will read a poem or short paragraph, or the leader may ask just one or two people to do the readings. The readings are designed to further deepen and broaden the theme of the gathering.

Sharing. In the first round of sharing, the leader will pose a question related to the topic of the gathering. Going around the circle, everyone will have an opportunity to briefly respond. After a short silence, you will have a second opportunity to speak. This time each person speaks when ready, not necessarily in order. Each speaker

will speak more personally than in the first round about something that touched that person, to share what they are feeling, or to tell a story about an experience they have had with this topic. The listeners are expected to keep an open heart for what is shared. Everyone should have the opportunity to speak, but anybody may pass. Time permitting, the third round is used to talk more deeply about what has been said or to share thoughts about what others have said. Probably not everybody will speak. Although this round is more informal than the first two rounds, it's still not casual chit-chat.

Closing Activity. This is an interactive exercise, a question for people to comment on, or a ritual to help wrap up your time together. The ritual addresses the topic in a different way. The leader will guide you through the ritual.

Closing Words. Every gathering has a reading to reflect upon following the Closing Activity.

Song. Stand in a circle and sing the song "Thank You for Your Loving Hands" by Judy Fjell.

Announcements. This is an opportunity for the leader to share plans or give reminders to the group, such as what to bring to the next gathering.

Meetings generally last an hour and a half to two hours. The first gathering may last a bit longer, since the group will need to decide on a covenant.

Josh will be leading the Sunday circle, and Mary N. will lead the Wednesday evening service. Feel free to ask them any questions you may have. Child care will be provided.



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