



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Missoula – Volume 20 Issue 2

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www.uuf-msla.org

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News From the Chair:

Greetings!

This new church year is well-started. Thanks to all who have been attending Sunday services. We all have so many claims on our time, it does take a real effort and commitment to make it here each week. Hopefully, that effort has been rewarded. If we haven't seen you lately, we do understand. Just remember, you are missed! Each of us has something unique and valuable to add to our Fellowship.

We were lucky to enjoy a visit from Nancy Bowen, our Mountain Desert District Executive. The short time she had to share with us was taken up with a fruitful discussion, the details of which are summarized elsewhere in this newsletter. I won't repeat what you will find there, but I do want to touch on something that came up. Members over the years, and still today, comment on how difficult it seems to be to actually get something done. When asked, Nancy says that while this can be a common problem, this Fellowship seems to be more "stuck" than most. This seems to have been the case for many years and through many membership changes. Why that is so remains a puzzle to all I have spoken with. I'm not sure at this point if it is even possible to determine just what caused this, but I do know that it is something that needs some work.

I recently attended a seminar on time management – stay with me, I'll try to demonstrate the connection here! One of the lessons the instructor emphasized was that behavior can be learned, and unlearned, but that it takes a real decision to do so. And more than that, it means moving out of the comfort zone we have created for ourselves and doing the tough work of actually trying something new – not just reading about it, not just talking about it, and not just telling someone else they need to change! Lama David also brought that up in the Buddhism class he has been giving at the Fellowship on Monday evenings – spiritual practice requires discipline. Sometimes it takes a while to see results, but to make it to the reward we need to stick it out through the discomfort. In other words, there is no magic wand.

How many times, from how many people (including myself) have I heard the statement "I don't like confrontation" used as a reason not to address a problem. Very few people do enjoy confrontation, but sometimes it is necessary. The word itself has such negative connotations. Nobody wants to be confrontational, and indeed I don't believe being confrontational will improve many situations. But I do believe that many times the difficult work of addressing a situation is much more productive than avoiding one. In the long run, it may even prove to be less distressing than putting up with things as they are.

Looking ahead, we are lucky to have Judy Fjell, accompanied by Beth Youngblood and Janet Haarvig, performing in the Fellowship House. Let's make some joyful noise! And wasn't the service Beth did a spirit-lifter? We're hoping to have her on a regular basis, so if you missed out last week, you'll still have a chance to experience her wonderful way with music.

Be well,
Mary

October UU Events

Tuesday evenings - Game Night, mainly Scrabble, sometimes Go, Fellowship House, 6:45. If your fave isn't one of those, bring it along and introduce it to everybody.

October 11 - A town hall meeting will be held from 2-4 pm at the Missoula Public Library in honor of **National Coming Out Day**. After the rally the Western Montana Community Center and MT Equality Now will combine forces for a rally at the Court House. Help show that UUs are standing on the side of love by coming out, even if you're not coming out.

October 11 - Our first **Second Sunday Potluck**. Bring some grub to feed the beloved community after we hear from "Clothman," Glen Moyer.

October 12- **Vegetarian potluck** with guest speaker **Jon Camp of Vegan Outreach** at the Fellowship. This October only, the normally scheduled 2nd Saturday noon V-potluck will not occur. It has been re-scheduled to the Monday October 12th evening event. 2nd Saturday V-Potluck will return to normal day and time in November.

October 16 - **Judy Fjell**, along with **Beth Youngblood** and **Janet Haarvig** bring an evening of music to the UU Fellowship at 7:30 pm. Judy is always a big hit when she comes through and Beth Youngblood did a wonderful job of leading us all in song a few weeks ago. There is a suggested donation on a sliding scale from \$12-\$20 and the Fellowship will gladly help purchase tickets for anyone who would like to go but needs a hand.

October 18-Program committee meets after services.

October 16-18 - Mountain Desert District Annual Conference, Fort Collins, Colorado - If anybody is interested in attending, talk to Mary. It would be a **long** day's drive, but what a great opportunity to talk and make connections!

October 26- Monthly **Board Meeting**, 6 pm at the Fellowship House. Board meetings are public and all who are interested are invited to come.

The **Book Club** has changed the book for October to The Surrounded by D'Arcy McNickle, this year's featured selection for the Montana Festival of the Book. Discussion of the book will be at Ellen Strommen's house on October 29th. Contact Mary N. for more information.



“You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time.”

-M. Scott Peck

Sunday Programs for October

October 11th Glen Moyer, also known as Clothman, presents his thoughts on the recent scandal involving a former SHEC minister, "On Pastors and Prostitutes." Glen's Clothman column appears regularly in the Missoulian.

October 18th Bring your rabbits, llamas, pythons and chinchillas with you this week for a special "Blessing of the Animals". The service will be lead by Cathy Riech and her canine companion.

October 25th Sacred Dance. Learn about different traditions of sacred, spiritual and ecstatic dance. Led by Josh Davis and followed by a Samhain (pronounced Saw-win) Circle Dance to celebrate the turning of the seasons.

November 1st We celebrate Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a Missoula favorite. Led by Dove Flanery and Jeremy Johnson.

...and get ready for round two of Chalice Circles, coming November 8th to a Fellowship near you...



Community Events

October 12th-Insight Dialogue: Interpersonal Suffering and Freedom- An Evening with Gregory Kramer, 7-9 pm. Insight Dialogue is an interpersonal meditation practice bringing the mindfulness and tranquility of traditional silent meditation into our experience with others. It is based on the fundamental fact that we humans are relational beings, and the lucidity of meditation can illuminate suffering and freedom from suffering. Gregory Kramer is a meditation teacher, author, director of the Metta Foundation, and a visiting faculty member of the Barre Center of Buddhist Studies. Goodwill offering. Taking place at 115 University.

October 22nd to 24th-The Montana Festival of the Book-showcasing more than 75 authors in a variety of readings, panels, exhibits, demonstrations, signings, workshops, receptions and other special events (see below). For more information, visit www.humanitiesmontana.org on the web.

October 23rd-Festival of the Book Poetry Slam-come clap loud for Josh's poetical stylings and help him place higher than 4th this year! (**shameless self-promotion alert**)

More Upcoming Events

(Dates to be determined)

The Summer may be dying, but **Movie Night** is about to be resurrected. A little birdie told me that some of our younger folks are getting set to restart an old tradition (well, not that old). Look for details in upcoming weekly updates. The birdie mentioned something about Thursday evenings...

Around the beginning of November, keep an eye out for an **Estatic Dance** group at the Fellowship. Hopefully our Sacred Dance service will spur some interest in bodily (as opposed to mentally) exploring the potentials of devotional dance. Likely to include some traditional **Nepali food**...

"October is nature's funeral month. Nature glories in death more than in life. The month of departure is more beautiful than the month of coming - October than May. Every green thing loves to die in bright colors."

-Henry Ward Beecher

UU History Corner

*October 2nd, 1755. Hannah Adams, the first woman in America to earn her living as a writer, was born in Medfield, Massachusetts. A pioneer in comparative religion, Adams wrote **A Dictionary of Religion (1817)**, **A Summary History of New England (1799)**, **The Truth and Excellence of the Christian Religion Exhibited (1804)**, **History of the Jews (1812)**, and **Letters on the Gospels (1824)**. James Freeman, the Unitarian minister of King's Chapel in Boston, was a strong supporter of Adams, and she was the only woman allowed into the Boston Athenaeum. Adams's writings were standard Unitarian Sunday school texts for two generations. She never married and often lived as a long-term guest in prominent Boston homes, where her conversation enlightened her host families and their guests. She died on December 15, 1831.*

[from This Day in Unitarian Universalist History, by Frank Schulman]

Notes from the Future Directions Task Force meeting with Nancy Bowen, MDD Executive
September 23, 2009; compiled by Joyce Clarke

Task Force members present were: Mary Nordhagen, Marlene Ochs, Josh Davis, Bonna Graham Hall and Joyce Clarke. Interested member Ellen Strommen also joined the group.

We discussed other possible meeting places. The Christian Science Church and Grace United Methodist were mentioned as possibilities. Ministerial options were next on the agenda. Possibilities include “sharing a minister” with another congregation. Nancy suggested that before we try to hire a minister, we might look for an interfaith chaplain through a local hospice or hospital, who we could hire temporarily to provide the caring and concerns aspect of ministry.

The main theme of our meeting was exploration of what new people who come to us are looking for, and what current and past members are looking for, and how we do or do not provide what our UU faith promises.

Newcomers generally expect: (1) a warm welcome, (2) a community that is easy to become part of, and (3) a strong social justice commitment: support of GLBT/gay marriage, immigrant issues, active peace involvement and other current social issues; poverty, homelessness, violence ,etc.

They are looking for guidance for their personal spiritual development, how and where to get started on a spiritual path, and what that path might look like. They come to us looking for meaning, a sense of belonging, and deep connection. Nancy reminded us that Unitarian Universalism is a faith that saves lives from bitterness, unworthiness, and feelings of being unlovable. She stressed that we need to be expressing love in all that we do in our fellowship and in our community. Our main focus should be that what we do on Sundays and how we behave together needs to be congruent with our UUFM website and the UUA website, since that is where many first find us.

Chalice Circles are an important way to help people get started on their spiritual path. These circles help deepen relationships, and affirm each person at whatever place they are spiritually. Our covenantal faith allows us to support one another’s beliefs without having to agree with them.

Unitarian Universalism is a faith made up largely of introverts. We are challenged to find ways, even as introverts, to encourage and nurture the deep connections that we are looking for, both for ourselves and to help newcomers. We need to find ways to illustrate the importance and relevance of UUism. We discussed ways to make newcomers feel more welcome.

We left the meeting with renewed energy and enthusiasm about a fellowship where all will continue to work toward sharing and experiencing the promises of UU!!

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[These notes have been redacted for length. To see the full notes, visit our website at www.uuf-msla.org and go to the newsletter page.]

“Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns.” ~George Eliot



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