



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Missoula – Volume 20 Issue 1

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News From the Chair:

Happy New Year!

I know, it's not the traditional New Year, but we are beginning our new Fellowship year. What a wonderful summer we've had. New and familiar faces have been showing up each week.

Maybe I'm just prejudiced, but every summer our programs just seem to get better, and our discussions more interesting. Or maybe it's just because I didn't actually lead any of the services this summer!

A recurring theme has seemed to be an exploration, individually, of where we are and how we got here, as well as where we want to go. I think we've all learned at least a little more about each other, and possibly even about ourselves, than we knew last spring. It is in this telling of and listening to our individual stories that connections, and community, are formed and strengthened.

Margaret's service on Visitors and Growth took that theme to a group level and sparked much energetic discussion and many great ideas about what people would like to see happening. At the In-Gathering everyone will have a chance to decide how they would like to contribute to the life of the Fellowship. There will be several different opportunities presented, each with different levels of involvement, for people to choose from. We will be starting with more choices, and may end up combining some of the teams. However, we want to see the level of interest in many different areas before we start limiting those choices. If you have an idea that isn't included in the choices, speak up.

This seems a good time to think about Fellowship goals for the coming year. Last year, I said on becoming chair that my goals would be to work towards better communication, continue to make the Fellowship a community where people can feel safe to be their authentic selves, and to increase participation. While I think we have made great progress that we should celebrate, we do have more than a little room for improvement. Also, it has become crystal clear that many members, newer members especially, would appreciate a clearer vision of how we do things and where they fit in. The Board has begun to look at our policies and procedures to see what they actually are, whether they still fit within the Covenantal Community we continue to build, how best to adopt and modify policies, and how to communicate those policies. On a less formal note, how do we best inform people about our "culture" and our ways of doing things? These are questions that we all should think about and help to communicate, especially since I doubt there is anything approaching unanimity in agreement about just what the answers are. We need to work towards clarity about just what the framework is, within which we are free to be flexible. The difficulty is in maintaining clarity, without over-simplifying. Heaven forbid, UUs should over-simplify anything!

Elsewhere in this newsletter are listed both the characteristics of healthy congregations, from the workshop given by Nancy Bowen, our District Executive, this spring, and also patterns of healthy communities, from a recent presentation by Margaret Wheatly. Look them over. Think of ways you can help us to achieve the ones you agree with. I will end with a couple of "rules" Margaret Wheatly listed for conversations, which I think have much broader applications. Facilitate yourself and others (don't wait for somebody else to **fix it**, whatever *it* is), and if you don't like what's going on, change it.

Take care,
Mary

September UU Events

Tuesday evenings - Game Night, mainly Scrabble, sometimes Go, Fellowship House, 6:45.

September 5 - Weed pull, playground spruce up, 10:00 am, lunch provided by Maggie, if possible RSVP to maggie@montana.com so she knows how much food to provide.

September 6 - Potluck picnic - no service. Meet at Greenough park, across the bridge from the south parking lot.

September 9 - Last monthly evening Fellowship house cleaning, 6:30-8:00. (No, the Fellowship will not magically start to clean itself. After sign ups at In-gathering we will hopefully come up with a better idea.)

September 12- Monthly Vegetarian Potluck at the Fellowship, hosted by Sue Eakins. This month the potluck is preceded by a rummage sale to benefit the New Dawn Animal Sanctuary. If you would like to make a donation to the sale, contact Sue at newdawnmt@gmail.com.

September 18 - Rock Against Racism, Caras Park, 5 pm to 10 pm. UUFM will again sponsor a table - last year we were the only church to do so. Table set-up begins at 3:30 pm.

September 20 - Youth RE Organizational meeting for anybody interested in helping out or just knowing more about what goes on, 8:50 am. (That meeting day/time insures that the meeting will not drag on and on and on . . .)

September 21, 28, October 5 - Intro to Tibetan Buddhism with Lama David Curtis, 7:30 - 9:00, Fellowship House, \$25 for all 3 classes or \$10 for individual classes.

October 16 - Judy Fjell concert at Fellowship House - more details as they become available.

October 16-18 - Mountain Desert District Annual Conference, Fort Collins, Colorado - If anybody is interested in attending, talk to Mary. It is a long way, but if even one or two others were willing to take the time, it would be a good investment. It would be a **long** day's drive, but what a great opportunity to talk and make connections!

PRINCIPLES OF HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

From a workshop given by Nancy Bowen, MDD District Executive, Spring 2009

- x Focus is on mission.
- x Has a vision of the future.
- x Roles and responsibilities are clear.
- x History informs the present.
- x A clear process exists for conflict management.
- x People know when and how to ask for help.

Sunday Programs for September

September 6th Potluck picnic at Greenough Park. We will meet at the picnic tables located across the foot bridge from the south parking lot on Monroe Street.

September 13th Annual In-Gathering Service. Bring some water from a special place (or use our "symbolic" water) for our Water Ceremony (yes, Virginia, there is ritual in Uuism...)

September 20th The Philosophy of Unitarian-Universalism.

September 27th Music with violinist Beth Youngblood.

October 4th What is a Chalice Circle and what is it for? Come and find out this Sunday, as Mary, Bonna, and Josh introduce what we hope will become a permanent part of our congregation.

Community Events

September 12 – Buddy Walk – 11:00 am, Playfair Park, "The goal of the Buddy Walk is to bring about education, acceptance and awareness of Down Syndrome and to create a camaraderie within our own community – making the connection between community and individuals with Down Syndrome."

September 13 – University Neighborhood ice cream social, 3 to 5 pm on the 400 block of University Avenue.

September 20 – JRPC Peace Party, Caras Park, 4-9 – maybe we could get a UU group to go together?

October 3 – Heart Walk and Diva Day. Too bad they're on the same day. If anybody wants to join Mary N. at the Heart Walk, we'll decide a place to meet. If anybody wants to put together a team for UUFM to sponsor to run or walk in the Diva Day festivities, contact Mary.

PATTERNS OF HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

From a presentation given by Margaret Wheatley, Summer 2009:

- ✓ Knows itself as a community, does not draw boundaries to exclude parts of itself.
- ✓ Focus is on what's possible rather than on what's wrong.
- ✓ Talks to itself and keeps expanding the conversation.
- ✓ Includes its youth in meaningful and respectful ways.
- ✓ Expects leadership everywhere.
- ✓ Knows its history.

"A healthy community is one in which the children sing the songs taught to them by the elders."

More Upcoming Events

(Dates to be determined)

Saturday in October, which one still undecided – **MUAUA** (I think that stands for Montana Association of Unitarian Universalist Associations, but I'm probably wrong) brainstorming session in Kalispell. Let's get a carload together and make sure Missoula is well represented.

Sessions on Getting to Know UU and Getting to Know UUFM will be offered alternate months. These will be informal sessions to which everyone is welcome, newcomer and seasoned member alike. Let's continue the discussions about what it means to be UU, what it means to be UU at UUFM, what UUFM should expect from its members, and what those members are looking for from UUFM.

Leadership sessions – monthly for 2-3 months. Since a pattern of a healthy community is that it looks for leadership everywhere, let's look at what it means to be a leader. Are leaders born, or do circumstances call leaders forth? I found few differences between the lessons taught at Russell Lockwood Leadership School, the "official" district UU leadership school, and corporate leadership programs I have taken. Mary will lead the first session – expecting input from everyone. Hopefully others will volunteer to lead later sessions.



UU History Corner

September 4, 1793: The first General Convention of the Universalist Societies was organized in Oxford, Massachusetts. It included delegates from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and New York, but continued to expand as new states came into the Union. Rechartered in 1942 as the Universalist Church of America, its business sessions became known as the General Assembly. In 1961 the General Assembly voted to consolidate the Universalist Church of America with the American Unitarian Association, forming the Unitarian Universalist Association, whose full business sessions are still called General Assemblies.

(from [This Day in Unitarian Universalist History](#) by Frank Shulman. Thanks Google Books!)

Hilda Doolittle (1886–1961), *from Tribute to the Angels*

29.

We have seen her
the world over,

Our Lady of the Goldfinch,
Our Lady of the Candelabra,

Our Lady of the Pomegranate,
Our Lady of the Chair;

We have seen her
with a single flower

or a cluster of garden-pinks
in a glass beside her;

we have seen her snood
drawn over her hair,

or her face set in profile
with the blue hood and stars;

we have seen her head bowed down
with the weight of a domed crown,

or we have seen her, a wisp of a girl
trapped in a golden halo;

we have seen her with arrow, with doves
and a heart like a valentine;

we have seen her in fine silks imported
from all over the Levant,

and hung with pearls brought
from the city of Constantine;

we have seen her sleeve
of every imaginable shade

of damask and figured brocade;
it is true,

the painters did very well by her;
it is true, they missed never a line

of the suave turn of the head
or subtle shade of lowered eye-lid

or the eye-lids half-raised; you find
her everywhere (or did find),

in cathedral, museum, cloister,
at the turn of the palace stair.

.....

37.

This is a symbol of beauty (you continue),
she is Our Lady universally,

I see her as you project her,
not out of place

flanked by Corinthian capitals,
or in a Coptic nave,

or frozen above the door
of a Gothic cathedral;

you have done well by her
(to repeat your own phrase),

you have carved her tall and unmistakable,
a hieratic figure, the veiled Goddess,

whether of the seven delights,
whether of the seven spear-points.

38

O yes—you understand, I say,
this is all most satisfactory,

but she wasn't hieratic, she wasn't frozen,
she wasn't very tall;

she is the Vestal
from the days of Numa,

she carries over the cult
of the *Bona Dea*,

she carries a book but it is not
the tome of the ancient wisdom,

the pages, I imagine, are the blank pages
of the unwritten volume of the new;

all you say is implicit,
all that and much more

but she is not shut up in a cave
like a Sibyl; she is not

imprisoned in leaden bars
in a coloured window;

she is Psyche, the butterfly,
out of the cocoon.



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