



THE NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

We are a Welcoming Congregation.

A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods

Volume 9, Number 5

December 15,

2007 Coming Sundays

Services at 10 AM

Taking the Pulpit

December 23: Jerry Buerer *"Whatever Happened to Baby Jesus?"*

January 6: Suzanne Wasilczuk *"Believe It or Not: Faith Matters"*

January 20: Don Timmerman

"Worship is the central act of the religious community.... The root of the word worship is the Anglo Saxon for worth, and worship is the way we celebrate what we hold worthy."

---Rev. William Sinkford

Adult Religious Education

On alternate Sundays we meet at 10 AM to discuss topics relating religious and ethical issues to current events and considering ideas that contribute to the spirit and meaning of our group.

From the President

On December 9 the congregation made an emphatic statement in support of our first and second Unitarian Universalist principles that affirm and promote: 1, the inherent dignity and worth of every person; and 2, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. Thirty-three members attending a special meeting of the congregation (and six represented by proxy) voted unanimously to become an Endorsing Religious Organization of the

National Religious Campaign Against Torture.

Not only is torture the antithesis of our first two principles but it violates the Geneva Convention and marks our own citizens – particularly military personnel and the diplomatic corps – as targets of revenge. And most experts agree that torture is a counterproductive means of obtaining reliable information. Most people will tell an interrogator whatever they think the interrogator wants to hear, whether they have useful information or not, to stop the torture. Moreover, the interrogator who engages in torture and the society that condones it has, I believe, relinquished any claim to humanity. Nietzsche advised us to be careful of the enemies we choose lest we become like them. I think when we assign to our enemies the darker demons of our own nature we subject ourselves to the philosophical rebuke made by the cartoon character, Pogo: “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

I urge you to stand up for the humanity that is in everyone and tell our leaders and elected representatives in Washington, DC that we object to their dragging us to the level of depravity that they ascribe to others. In this season of hope and peace, let us remember that Jesus of Nazareth told us to love our enemies. Therein, will we find our humanity.
In peace and love, Alan

News and Announcements

NUUF Dates of Importance

January 12th: Women’s Friendship Circle

January 21: MLK Day program with Peggy McIntosh

Upcoming Services

January 6: *Suzanne Wasilczuk writes:* When we gather together we call it *worship*. We gather to discover, to remember, to shape that which is of worth to us. We may speak of faith. Or we may discard the concept of faith altogether. What in the world might *faith* mean in a Unitarian Universalist context? Suzanne Wasilczuk, a recent Meadville Lombard Theological School graduate, explores faith matters.

Introducing Suzanne Wasilczuk (who joins us for six services during the next six months): I was born and raised in southern Wisconsin. My family name – Wasilczuk – is Ukrainian (though my ethnicity is Polish) and is pronounced Wuh-SILL’-chuk (the anglicized version) or Vah-SHEEL’-chook

(the Eastern European version).

I have a degree in English literature, a diploma in nursing, a master's in philosophy with a teaching ethics emphasis, and a Master of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago.

I found Unitarian Universalism after picking up some pamphlets on my way to an Amnesty International meeting in the basement of my neighborhood UU church (1st Unitarian in Milwaukee). I formally joined the UU Fellowship of Sitka, Alaska four months later. In Missoula, Montana I served as newsletter editor, vice president, chair of the Sunday Program committee, coordinator and teacher of our one-room children's RE program, and president. It was during this time that I received my call to ministry.

My student minister internship was served in Bangor, Maine.

My immediate family consists of my husband, Tim Stratton. We met in Sitka where I was the charge nurse on the day shift and Tim was the hospital pharmacist at the 24-bed community hospital.

Tim is a registered pharmacist, has a PhD in pharmacy administration (the sociological side of the field), and is currently a professor at the University of Minnesota-Duluth School of Pharmacy.

Tim and I enjoy canoeing, walking, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, and contra dancing together. I enjoy reading, especially mysteries and novels; gardening (when I'm home long enough to do any); baking (and giving away handmade foodstuffs); singing; feeding the neighborhood birds, chipmunks and squirrels; and keeping in touch with friends, some of whom I've known since 3rd grade.

Thanksgiving Dinner

About two dozen members, their families, friends and neighbors enjoyed our annual Thanksgiving dinner. The food and the company were enjoyed by all.

Holiday Service

On December 15, about 60 members and friends attended our annual holiday service, followed by a potluck supper. The service included a variety of readings, music by the NUUF Brass, the recorder quartet and the choir. The

choir was joined by 4 members of the St. Matthias Church choir. It was truly festive evening.

2008 Poinsettia Sponsors

Remembering

Sally Back	Donna Hilbert
Don & Joyce Barnes	Mom & Dad: Elie & Morrie
Don & Barb Bratcher	Our Families
Paul & Irma Braunstein(2)	My deceased son & grandson
Mark & Katie Bruhy	Our families
Patty Buehler	Uncle Harold
Art & Doris Eberlein	Our families
David & Lynn Deinard	Greetings from Florida
Joan Hauer (2)	Joe and Jerard
Mel & Kay Hoff	Northwoods UU Fellowship
Terry & Terri Hoyt	Traditional Yuletide
Dwight & Barbara Logan	Tom Elchuk
Trish Kirk & Tim Muensch	Margaret Kirk & Verna Muench
Eileen Schultz	Mom
Tom & Elinore Sommerfeld	Tom's parents
Ella Toigo	Bruno, our 15 yr. old puppy
Alan & Sharon VanRaalte	Sharon's mom, Marian Rudy, Alan's dad,
Bill VanRaalte, Sr.	

A "Thank you" to all

Home Concert at the Woolpy's

Jerry and Tara will once again welcome dulcimer player, Alan Darveaux, to their home for a concert on Saturday, December 29, at 7 pm. Last year's concert was a treat. To make reservations, get directions or more information, contact Jerry at jerryw@earlham.edu or call 356-6276.

The Women's Friendship Circle

The Women's Friendship Circle will meet on Saturday **January 12th** at 10:45. Sally Back will present the January program "Poetry in Song". Suzy Foster and Jan Reed will hostess the potluck luncheon. Mark this on your calendar! Call Mary Ann Fields 715-385-2975 for more info.

We will also discuss whether to continue meeting on the second Saturday of the month or to return to our original time of the second Thursday at 10:45.

Special MLK Day Event

On Monday, **January 21**, at 7 pm, the Social Justice Committee will sponsor a presentation by Peggy McIntosh, a nationally recognized expert on privilege systems, feelings of fraudulence and cultural diversity, and Ernie St. Germaine, from Lac du Flambeau, an Adjunct Professor of Tribal Law for the University of Nevada Judicial College and Adjunct Professor of Education for the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. They will speak on white privilege and the effect it has on relations between Indian and Non-Indian communities in Wisconsin. This will be a community-wide event of great importance, one of the most ambitious events we have ever attempted. Please mark your calendars now and plan to participate.

UUA News

District Assembly in St. Louis Friday April 25 through Sunday April 27.

The highlights of this year's assembly will be conversations, speeches and worship services about taking lessons of the past and using them to shape our religious future.

General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale, June 25-29, 2008

UU's in the News

Israeli customs holds Beacon Press book A Beacon Press book, Philip Winslow's *Victory For Us Is to See you Suffer: In the West Bank With the Palestinians and the Israelis*, was supposed to launch in Jerusalem at the end of September, but was confiscated as "incitement." Following weeks of protest from the publisher and diplomatic intervention, it was announced on November 8 [in a report from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency](#) that the books were scheduled to be released, but a statement from Beacon Press notes that as of November 13 the books were still undelivered. (JTA.org - 11.8.07)
Read [more about the book](#). (Beacon Press)

Sinkford in Washington, DC, for World AIDS Day; Calls on Government to Confront HIV/AIDS

On Friday, November 30, the eve of World AIDS Day, the Reverend William G. Sinkford, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), joined hundreds of activists in the nation's capital to call for greater governmental leadership in confronting HIV/AIDS at home and abroad. Rev. Sinkford emphasized the religious support for effective programs, based on

the moral responsibility to put evidence and human lives ahead of ideology. To see the complete story, go to: <http://www.uua.org/news/newssubmissions/59381.shtml>.

Civil unions legal in New Hampshire

Starting December 10, same-sex couples across New Hampshire were able to obtain civil union licenses, which go into effect New Year's Day. The UU Church of Portsmouth, N.H., [plans to celebrate with a party](#) (Portsmouth Herald News - Portsmouth, NH 11.29.07)

Special Holiday Offer from Beacon Press

Order books from www.beacon.org through December 31st and receive 20% off your order. Enter code HOLIDAYUU at checkout. Free standard shipping on all orders.

Green Tips

Getting too many catalogs? Go to www.catalogchoice.org where there is a free service that lets you stop unwanted catalog mailings. (From the KUUF newsletter)

Milestones

Diane Reupert	12-19
Bob and Marilyn Feser	12-22
Suzy Foster	12-27
Marilyn Hendry	12-27
Dan Padberg & Sally O'Brien	12-30
Peter Frost	12-31
Tony & Sherry Zoars	01-01
Barbara and Don Bratcher	01-04
Minetta Kobling	01-05
Sharon VanRaalte	01-07
Bob Feser	01-07
Cindy Rusak	01-09
Jessica Rosenberg	01-09
Melanie Cyra	01-10
Harley & Ruth Erbs	01-12
Kimberly Norris	01-12
Don Barnes	01-15

Joys and Concerns

WANTED: Knowledgeable, articulate, engaging, passionate religious liberal seeks like-minded young/old male/female visitors for lively conversation and stimulating discussion. Contact Irma Braunstein, 715-356-5745.

Laura Erickson, a regular speaker in our pulpit, well known for her audio sketches, "For the Birds" and a UU from Duluth, has recently been appointed a professor at Cornell University. You can read more about this new opportunity at:

<http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/articles/index.cfm?id=56068§ion=homepage> or on her blog: <http://lauraerickson.blogspot.com/2007/12/cornell-lab-here-i-come.html>

News From Afar

From Kayla Norris in Venezuela: As of November 19th: I have been here for almost 3 months. The time has flown by rapidly and I'm half thankful for it. My home in Venezuela is beginning to actually feel like a home! My home in America. You know the feeling you get when you are comfortable where you are? That is where I'm at right now in relation to my home. When it comes to having someone to talk to, I'm almost there. I have my best friend, Octavio. I know enough Spanish to explain to him how I'm feeling or what is going on with me when he sees me sad. Sometimes I don't have to explain it because he just gets it. I miss my family and friends very much. But I understand my classes now, which is wonderful. I'm doing well in school and get good grades on tests. I never have homework so there is one less thing I have to worry about! I ride in taxis a lot by myself. Never did that in America, so that is always interesting! Even walking down the street is amazing even more so now because I know where I'm going!! It's wonderful. I'm going on a tour of Venezuela mostly on the west side of the country in January. All month! I will see Angel Falls, the jungle and northern part of Brazil!! I'm so excited.

This past summer the Care Committee gathered information and made a display highlighting activities of many of the young people who have passed through our fellowship during the last several years. Over the next few

months we plan to include these stories in the NUUSLETTER. This month we are featuring Avery and Minetta Koblings and Eliot and Peter Frost

Last summer Avery played varsity tennis. He and his playing partner, Will Montz, were the number one doubles team at Lakeland. Last winter he participated in forensics and went to State for the second time. Preferring humor, Avery performed a prose by Dave Barry called Pro Golf: A Game of Nonstop Boredom. As Avery readily admits, he gives his best to his schoolwork even though he hates school. He continues to play trumpet in the jazz and concert bands and plays soccer when he has the chance. You saw him working at Dairy Queen last summer.

Minetta is in her sophomore year at U.W. Madison. She has declared History as her major through the honors program and will most likely earn an English-as-a Second-Language certificate as well. Last summer she did an internship in Madison, continuing her research on the McCord Indian village near Tomahawk for Larry Nesper in the Department of Archeology. Minetta attended the university in Quito, Ecuador this fall and will return to U.W. Madison for the Spring term.

Eliot is now 15 and is a sophomore at Conserve School. He loved his freshman year at Conserve where he took freshman classes, including Chinese language and a one month "Winterim" course on Genetics. He participated in Quiz Bowl, Cross Country Skiing, Robotics Club, worked the lights for school drama productions and helped with the Clean Boats Clean Waters program on Black Oak Lake. This past summer he worked at Culvers. In his free time he enjoys writing computer programs, listening to music, and exploring the internet.

Peter is 13 and will be an 8th grader at Arbor Vitae Woodruff School. Peter loves school, sports and friends. Over the past year he played soccer, football, basketball and baseball, and also enjoyed a few days of downhill skiing. Last summer he was on a traveling soccer team, participated in several sports camps, and went to Cincinnati on a mission trip with the United Methodist Church of the Pines. He also volunteered at the AV-W Camp Jorn. Peter loves spending time with his friends, watching TV and playing on the computer.

Closing Thoughts Toward the Winter Solstice By Timothy Steele

Although the roof is just a story high,
It dizzies me a little to look down.
I lariat-twirl the cord of Christmas lights
And cast it to the weeping birch's crown:
A dowel into which I've screwed a hook
Enables me to reach, lift drape and twine
The cord among the boughs so that the bulbs
Will accent the tree's elegant design.

Friends, passing home from work or shopping, pause
And call up commendations or critiques.
I make adjustments. Though a potpourri
Of Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jews and Sikhs,
We all are conscious of the time of year;
We all enjoy its colorful displays
And keep some festival that mitigates
The dwindling warmth and compass of the days.

Some say that L.A. doesn't suit the Yule,
But UPS vans now like magi make
Their present-laden rounds, while fallen leaves
Are gaily resurrected in their wake;
The desert lifts a full moon from the east
And issues a dry Santa Ana breeze,
And valets at chic restaurants will soon be tending flocks of cars and SUVs.

And as the neighborhoods sink into dusk
The fan palms scattered all across town stand
More calmly prominent and this place seems
A vast oasis in the Holy Land.
This house might be a caravansary,
The tree a kind of cordial fountainhead
Of welcome, looped and decked with necklaces
And ceintures of green, yellow, blue and red.

Some wonder if the star of Bethlehem
Occurred when Jupiter and Saturn crossed;
It's comforting to look up from this roof

Place
Stamp
Here

And feel that, while all changes, nothing's lost,
To recollect that in antiquity
The winter solstice fell in Capricorn and that, in the Orion Nebula,
From swirling gas, new stars are being born.

“Toward the Winter Solstice” from *Toward the Winter Solstice* (Swallow Press/Ohio University, 2006, www.ohioswallow.com)

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