



THE NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP

We are a Welcoming Congregation.

A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods

Volume 10, Number 6

December

15, 2008 Coming Sundays

Services at 10 AM

Taking the Pulpit

December 21: Alan VanRaalte *Winter Solstice*

January 4: Rev. Denise Tracy *So Long Paul and William*

January 18: Ada Deer *“How You Sustain Yourself Through Controversy and Criticism and Keep Moving Ahead”*

“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.

We continue a sixteen lecture series entitled *Power Over People: Classical and Modern Political Theory*. The course is taught by Dennis Dalton, PhD, of Barnard College. “These lectures examine some of the fundamental

questions that have shaped Western political thought since its inception in Athens in the fifth century BC, together with some of the most influential answers that political theorists have proposed.... The first involves the essential characteristics of human nature and the good society.... The second set of fundamental questions involves the relationship between the individual and the society.... The final set of questions involves theories of change.

December 28: Thoreau's Theory of Disobedience

January 11: Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor

January 25: The Idea of Anarchism and the Example of Emma Goldman

Please join us for this highly stimulating series of lectures.

From the President

As I listened during Saturday's Holiday Service to Dick Fields tell the story of the founding of this fellowship, it made me think of the extraordinary things that can happen when people come together in a common purpose. As he read the names of the founders, I marveled at the energy and dedication that it has taken to come from a small informal gathering in Paul and Irma's living room 19 years ago to our current group of almost 80 members. They should all be very proud of this accomplishment, and those of us who are reaping the benefit owe them our heartfelt gratitude.

But the most important legacy passed on by that small group of visionaries is the spirit of cooperation and strength of purpose that is evident in everything that we do together. Because it all happens so smoothly, we sometimes forget that behind every event and every activity at the Fellowship there are people who have put in a great deal of effort to make it happen. Our worship services, RE classes, and special social events do not organize themselves. It takes the combined effort of many people in the Spirituality, Music, Religious Education, Membership, Social Activities and Hospitality committees to bring them to fruition. These committees do their utmost to ensure that everyone is made welcome and has a meaningful, entertaining, informative and spiritually satisfying experience. Good communication is an essential part of the process, and for that we can thank our NUUSLETTER editor, webmaster, and the Publicity committee. The Building and Grounds, Aesthetics, and Memorial Garden committees make sure that our building and its surroundings are clean, attractive, safe, and comfortable. Being a "beacon

of light in the Northwoods” means putting our values and principles to work in the broader community, and the Social Justice committee has been particularly effective in doing just that. None of this would be possible without the generosity of our congregation, and the Finance, Investment and Endowment committees along with the Board make sure that funds are collected and used wisely to meet our needs. And finally, when troubled times come to members of our congregational family, the Care committee steps in and provides emotional sustenance and support.

So as we close this year and look ahead to the next, let us resolve to take time and say thanks to those individuals who work to keep the vision and spirit of the founders thriving within our congregation. And may everyone experience a safe and enjoyable holiday season. Jim

News and Announcements

NUUF Dates of Importance

- January 3:** Tai Chi with Denise Tracy
- January 8:** Women’s Friendship Circle
- January 19:** MLK Day Program with Ada Deer
- January 25:** Workshop with Rev. Ian Evison
- January 31:** Concert by the Garlic Mustard Pickers (Bobbie Groth’s band)

Upcoming Services

December 21: Because many people are often out of town during the holidays the December 21 worship service will not follow the usual format. Instead, if you have a favorite poem, reading, song or just a happy memory of the season that you would like to share, please bring it with you. Alan VanRaalte will lead the service.

January 4: Rev. Denise Tracy conducts the service she has done the 1st Sunday of the new year annually for the past 30 years. It is an uplifting service about those people who have died in the last year (2008) that have touched or changed our lives. This year she will highlight the lives of Paul Newman and William F. Buckley. It is a face paced and fun service, with something to interest everyone.

Christmas Poinsettia Memorials

GIVEN BY

TO HONOR

Eileen & Tom Schultz	Mom
Doris & Art Eberlein	Christmas Past
Mark & Katie Bruhy	Family we've loved and lost
Barbara Logan	Deceased family members
Joan Hauer	Family
The Sommerfelds	Our families
Sally Back	Nancy Cooper, Donna Hilbert, Ron Winiarski
Mary Ann & Dick Fields	Ellen Stick, Pauline Fields
Patty Buehler	Mom
Elaine Strite & John Viste	Barney & Jerry Viste, Ethel & Lewis Strite
Ella & Teress Toigo	Gramma Theresa Stancato
Trish Kirk & Tim Muench	Our granddaughters: Elizabeth Eowyn Muench & River Hope Lonnquist

Food Pantry News

Tuesday, **December 30th**, is the NUUF day to staff the Lakeland Food Pantry Kitchen. We need volunteers from about 8:30 to 11:30 AM. If you are available to help, please call Mel Hoff at 588-1409 or Joe Strauss at 356-9307.

EAT LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD on February 24th. The local Kids Against Hunger committee is planning a fund raiser with all proceeds to go to the local Food Pantry. We have a supply of the Kids Against Hunger food packets which are given to third world countries. This is a balanced, high nutrition food developed to meet the requirements of severely malnourished children. Each packet contains rice, fortified soybean; dehydrated vegetables, vitamins and minerals, and provides six one-cup servings. We are suggesting that each family prepare this food as your main meal on February 24th. Packets will be available at NUUF in the Founders Room at the regular Sunday services on January 18th and February 1st. We are suggesting a minimum donation of \$10 per packet. If the spirit moves you, more would be welcome and appreciated. Another suggestion is to donate the amount your family would save by not having your normal meal that day. In addition to providing funds for the local Food Pantry, this will give you an opportunity to sample the food from the Kids Against Hunger program.

There is another easy way to donate to the food pantry. The next time you shop at Trig's, you will see shelves of large brown bags just beyond the pharmacy. Each bag contains \$10 worth of non-perishables for the food pantry. Just pay for the bag at the checkout counter and Trig's will deliver the bag for you. Make it a habit to buy a bag whenever you shop.

As most of you already know, the Lakeland Food Pantry is getting a new location. The new location is on USH 51 North of Woodruff in the Highway 51 Plaza. We expect to be at the new location on or about January 15th. Additional details regarding the new location are in the current Lakeland Food Pantry News Letter which is available at the Fellowship. Mel Hoff

Tai Chi Session

On Saturday, **January 3**, Rev. Denise Tracy will offer a workshop on Tai Chi from 9 am to noon at the fellowship. Start the New Year off right! Learn an easy and fun form of ancient, moving meditation. Tai Chi. There are many forms of Tai Chi. This one is the most liberal and most compatible with Unitarian Universalism. All you need to bring is a willingness to enjoy yourself, layered, loose, comfortable clothing and shoes with smooth soles; your favorite comfy slippers are fine. Denise Tracy and Bill Decker have taught Tai Chi for years and love to introduce it to new seekers. No fee for Fellowship Members. \$10.00 for folks from the community or guests.

Home Concert at the Woolpy's

Alan Darveaux

Back for a third year by popular request, in a home concert at the Woolpy's on

Saturday, January 3, at 7 PM

Originally from New England, the lure of the dulcimer brought Alan Darveaux to the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina from where he became the first Kentucky State Dulcimer Champion, Grand Champion Dulcimer at Harper Van Hoy's Old Time Fiddle Convention, and made the top five at the National Flat Picking Championships in Winfield. As teacher of workshops from Bar Harbor Maine to Orcas Island Washington, he was featured at the National Australian Folk Festival. As artisan, Alan's dulcimers are well respected in the dulcimer world. His unique and energetic style of

stand up dulcimer playing adds to the songs and tunes of traditional, old time, folk, contemporary folk and his own singer/songwriter material. He'll be at Tara and Jerry's for a home concert, Saturday, **January 3**, at 7 PM. Let us know that you'll be here and how many there will be in your party.

jerryw@earlham.edu

Women's Friendship Circle

The Women's Friendship Circle will be kicking off a new year with its Thursday, **January 8** gathering at 10:30 a.m. at the Fellowship. All NUUF women and guests are welcome for our 'Potluck' program, followed by our always delicious potluck luncheon.

Ada Deer to Speak for MLK Day

Mark your calendars now for **January 19**, at 7 pm, when Ada Deer speak will be speaking at NUUF for our Martin Luther King Day observance.

2009 Calendar

Please notice the new bulletin board and calendar sheets in the NUUF kitchen. The Board felt that the calendar would be used more if it were in that position rather than in the office and there would be less potential for conflicts in scheduling. There is only room for two monthly sheets on the bulletin board, so if you are interested in a date further in the future, or if you aren't at the Fellowship building, please contact Tom Sommerfeld, who has volunteered to try to keep the calendar up to date. Phone him at 385-2407 or email to tsommer@aol.com.

Leadership Workshop

An Invitation from KUUF

Leadership Workshop

Set for January 24

We're excited to let you know that we will be holding a special Leadership Workshop on Saturday, **January 24**, in the afternoon. Ian Evison, our Central Midwest District Executive, and David Pyle, a seminary student, will be coming from Chicago to participate.

The Workshop will be geared toward the next generation of KUUF leaders.

If you've been thinking about contributing your time and talent to any of our many activities for the first time, getting more involved than you already are by chairing a committee, serving on the board, or starting something new, then this Workshop is for you. If you're already in a leadership role, you too are invited. We need your experiences and insights to pass on to others, and there will be opportunities to deepen everyone's involvement in our ministries. In short, EVERYONE is invited. More details will be forthcoming. We expect the workshop to take place in the afternoon, tentatively from 1 to 5 pm. The location will be in our Sunday meeting space. We welcome participation by members of the Marquette, Bay de Noc, Minocqua, and Ashland Fellowships. I'll keep you advised of details, including an agenda, as they develop. Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.

Our website is www.kuuf.net.

In fellowship, Bill Leder President, Keweenaw UU Fellowship

Please let Jim Williams know if you are interested in attending.

Special Presentation On January 25

Rev. Ian Evison, the Central Midwest District Executive, who will be leading a workshop in Houghton on January 24, will be at NUUF on Sunday, **January 25**, to meet with us. We will share more details as they become available.

The Little Red Truck That Could

On Wednesday, December 3 at 11 am (four hours late because of "little" snowflakes creating a highway problem) an extra long CHURCH CHAIR semi arrived at Peggy's Lane with 100 chairs for the Fellowship. The length of the semi was too much for the narrow, circular driveway. The UU "teamsters" were ready to carry, or drag stacks of ten chairs the 500 or more feet to the building, but Frank Patin's little red truck came to the rescue-it could relay the chairs! With twelve able-bodied UUs all the chairs were in place by 12:10.

Many thanks to: Jim Williams, Katie Bruhy, Paul Braunstein, Frank Patin, Dick Fields, Mary Ann Fields, Joan Hauer, Candy Sorensen, John Viste, Bev Strauss, Mel Hoff and Tom Sommerfeld. Doris Eberlein

Membership Committee News

Please welcome new members Frank Patin, who signed the Membership Book October 26, and John Viste, Elaine Strite and Pam Thul-Immler who signed the book on December 7. We have a program called a Welcoming in Ceremony for all new members. Three people were welcomed into the congregation on Sunday, December 7: Sally Back, Herb White and Frank Patin.

Membership is a commitment to our Unitarian Universalist principles, mission and covenant, participation in church activities, and financial support.

If you would like more information about becoming a member please contact Sharon VanRaalte 715-453-8083 or Mary Ann Fields 715-385-2975.

Consultancy Services

If any committees or individuals would like to meet with Rev. Groth during her visit, please make arrangements by contacting her directly. Her phone number is 414-764-0612, and e-mail is gooseknoll@copper.net (This is her preferred method of contact). She will next be available on January 31.

Ethical Eating Study/ Action Issue

From Trish Kirk: As many of you know, Delegates at the 2008 General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale, FL, selected “Ethical Eating” to be the 2008-2012 Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. This presents a unique opportunity within our congregation: to communicate constructively and compassionately on an often difficult and highly charged issue – and a vitally important one, too. The Guide suggests that congregations organize Ethical Eating Task Forces in November and December, in keeping with the Commission On Social Witness’s Study Action Issue timetable. However, this is a Study Action Issue for the next four year, and I look forward to devoting a Sunday service to this in 2009. In the meantime, I invite you to become familiar with the

Ethical Eating Resource Guide, which is now available both online at:
<http://www.uua.org/documents/washingtonoffice/ethicaleating/studyguide.pdf>
... with a hard copy available soon at our Fellowship.

Green Tips

“As countries around the world struggle with food shortages, local food systems become more important. This holiday season, why not plan your menu around what you can get locally? The website www.localharvest.org will help you find farms and farmers markets in your area that produce fresh, organic fruits, vegetables and meat.” *From World Ark and www.beifer.org. At that website, just enter your zip code and see a surprising number of local farms and merchants in our area that offer organic products.*

For further discussion of Ethical Eating, read the UUWorld article entitled, “Dinner Dilemmas” on page 30 of the Winter 2008 magazine.

Art Display at NUUF

This month, the work of Elinore Sommerfeld is on display at NUUF. She writes of her work: “I discovered my love of artistic expression just over 10 years ago. I have limited formal training, but enjoy studying locally with Peggy Grinvalsky. I work primarily in colored pencil and some charcoal and pastel. My earlier works are mainly representational (*At the Beach, Summer Beauties* and *Tree in Winter*). *Winter Deck* was a reminder of our beautiful Northwoods home, when we still lived in Illinois. I have more recently begun working more abstract (*Sea Horse Fantasy* and *What’s in a Name?*) I am often intrigued by the beauty of the seemingly unusual (*Eye of the Turkey*).”

UUA News

International Convocation of UU Women, February 26 to March 1, 2009,
Houston TX www.icuuw.com

“Hallman, Morales share visions for UUA presidency”

Candidates for 2009 election take questions at New England fall conference.
<http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/123785.shtml?n>

Support Your Congregation and Other UU Entities! Did you know that UUA’s **Umbrella Giving Program** enables you to designate the beneficiaries of your gift as: your congregation, other Unitarian Universalist entities, the

UUA, or a combination of these up to 100%, all managed at no cost to you or the beneficiary? Through the UUA's Umbrella Giving Program, individuals have supported organizations including, but not limited to:

- Their Congregations
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- Meadville/Lombard & Starr King
- Unitarian Universalist Association

Read more about how to put the UUA to work to benefit the UU organizations you love! And email the Office of Legacy Gifts at giftplans@uua.org, or call us toll-free at (888) 792-5885 for more information.

UU's in the News

"UUA urges Calif. Supreme Court to overturn Prop. 8" Proposition 8 threatens the constitutional rights of all minority groups, according to lawsuit filed by religious coalition.

<http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/124055.shtml?n>

"Unitarian Universalist elected to U.S. House" Walt Minnick joins two fellow Uus in the House, one in Senate.

<http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/124043.shtml?n>

"Ad campaign to focus on Google AdWords" UUA moves advertising from 'Time' to cyberspace.

<http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/124011.shtml?n>

How Obama can reform human-rights policy William Schulz, former executive director of Amnesty International USA and UUA president, suggests five initiatives that could help President Barack Obama signal the start of a new era in U.S. human-rights policy. (Boston Globe – 11.25.08)

Taking back Black Friday Bill Doherty, a family social science professor at the University of Minnesota and a UU World contributor, led a gathering at Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul, Minn., on Black Friday urging people to stop the shopping madness and reclaim the holiday season in the name of reflection and family. And his cry has not gone unheard—at least by the media. Some of the stories that talk about Doherty's efforts:

Shop 'til you drop? This group says not (Star Tribune – Minneapolis-St. Paul 11.28.08)

U professor Bill Doherty works to help families recapture the deeper spirit of the holidays (UMNews – 12.5.08)

Shopping frenzy tramples right over the reason for the season (Star Tribune – Minneapolis-St. Paul 12.1.08)

Joys and Concerns

Our condolences go out to Joyce and Don Barnes on the death of Joyce's niece, Karin Johnson, age 53, on December 4 in Furgas Falls MN.

Our condolences go out to Diane Reupert and her family on the death of her brother, Steven, aged 52, on December 4. He is survived by his son, James, who has been to the fellowship and spent some time with Paul fishing. James is 18 and lost his mother three years ago (she was murdered by a neighbor). It would be comforting to know that your thoughts and prayers will be with James and her family.

Our condolences go out to Kay and Mel Hoff on the death of Kay's sister on December 13 in Boscobel, Wisconsin.

Milestones

Diane Reupert	12-19
Bob and Marilyn Feser	12-22
Marilyn Hendry	12-27
Suzy Foster	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
Richard Thieret	01-16
Ed and Jeanine Semon	01-18

Closing Thoughts

Is Christmas Christian?

Excerpt by Fr. Richard Rohr
from *Tikkun* magazine

Reprinted by permission of the author

As a Franciscan priest, I think I have the right to ask that question....We from the Catholic tradition too easily presume that because the title is right, the train following it is on the right track. We are not often open to asking if the train has anything to do with the direction of the original engine. In this case, the birth and message of Jesus of Nazareth.

We all know that the date of December 25th is not derived from Christian tradition. It instead traces back to the third century Roman feast of the Rebirth of the Sun—normally celebrated as soon as they could observe the same, sometime after the Winter Solstice. Right away, that tells us that the first few centuries of the Common Era had no interest in knowing when Jesus was born or even celebrating it....

Frankly, we must confess that it was likely our founder, St. Francis (1182-1226), who began to make Christmas the sentimental celebration that it has become, although his intention was never at all in the direction it has taken. He was the great lover of poverty and simplicity, and would be aghast at the consumer- and group-defining feast that Christmas has become.... For Francis..., the feast of Christmas said that God was saying yes to humanity in the enfleshment of his Son in our midst. If that were true, than all questions of inherent dignity, worthiness and belovedness were resolved once and forever....

But groups need and create their identity symbols, and the celebration of Christmas became the big one for Christian Europe, just as Jewish people need Rosh Hashanah...and Muslims need Ramadan.... The trouble is that *the meaning* became *group defining instead of life transforming*. As we say today, it got “off message”! It was no longer God’s choice of the whole, but God’s choice of us! (In fairness, most religions make the same mistake at lower levels of transformation).

At those lower levels..., the original meaning is always lost and often even morphs into the exact opposite. Strange and sad, isn’t it? In this case, the *self-emptying* God into humble and poor humanity...became an excuse for us to fill, consume, dominate, use and spend at staggering levels for ourselves. In fact, the days leading up to December 25 are the economic engine around which the entire business economy measures itself in Christian influenced countries....

Well, this year we might be *forced* under duress to celebrate the feast of Jesus’ humble birth with honesty! Our economic meltdown is showing for all to see what our real gods have been. It is not the Lord of Israel or his Son that we love, nearly as much as we do our limitless growth, our right to empire, our actual obligation to consume and our sense of entitlement to this clearly limited planet.

In Christian circles, when I call these false gods into question, I am invariably criticized on other grounds of heresy and church protocols, almost so we do not have to look at what our real loyalties have been and are. “Let’s keep talking about Biblical interpretation or papal infallibility so we never have to look at our lifestyle.” For far too many of us, our final loyalties have been to the system of America,... to the protecting of the top and not the bottom where Jesus was....

So, come, let us celebrate the feast anew! May we who have consumed the mystery of Jesus now consume his whole meal, and may it free us from needing to consume so much of everything else. If you really love *the One*, you should not need more and more of *the other*. Maybe our humble Jesus is stealing our idols from us, and inviting us back into his Bethlehem stable.

Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
P.O. Box 1881
Woodruff, WI 54568-1881
<http://nuuf.com>

Jim Williams, President
715-762-3434, blockhouselake@yahoo.com

The NUUSLetter is published (usually/mostly) monthly. **Next Deadline: January 15, 2009.** Send submissions to Elinore Sommerfeld, editor, at esommerf@aol.com. **For distribution of announcements between newsletters or email/address corrections, contact Alan VanRaalte at vanraalte@klinktech.net.**



NUUSLETTER
Northwoods UU Fellowship
P.O. Box 1881
Woodruff WI 54568-1881

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED