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# NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

*A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods*

P.O. Box 253, Minocqua, WI 54548 <http://www.newnorth.net/~beckratz/nuuf/>

Tim Kratz, President, 277-3476, Jerry Woolpy, Editor, 356-6276, [jerryw@earlham.edu](mailto:jerryw@earlham.edu)

Volume 3, Number 5

July 2,

2000**Coming Sundays**

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## Taking the Pulpit

**Sunday**, July 16, 10 AM, Reverend Robert Reed, A Pathway to Spiritual Enrichment: serving inner-city kindergarteners.

**Sunday**, July 30, 10 AM, Reverend Max Gaebler, "Who Are We?" Article II of the UUA Bylaws (reprinted on pages 3-4) contains a statement of Principles and Purposes. How did these evolve and what do they mean to us?

**Sunday**, August 13, Barbara Kellett, candidate for the UU Ministry, Certified Spiritual Director, Labyrinth Facilitator, "Weaving Hope Within Suffering—from Tibetan Buddhist to Heart Transplant we will ponder the many facets of hope."

**Sunday**, August 27, Rev. Chomingwen Pond, Experience as a Missionary in Africa.

**Sunday**, September 10, Terry Hoyt, "Vince Lombardi--The Devil's Advocate"

**Sunday**, September 24, is open.

## Adult Religious Education

**Sunday**, July 9, 10:30 AM

Philosophy & Religion in Modern World, Video Lec 23: Hegel--A Philosophical History of Religion.

**Sunday**, July 23, 10:30 AM

P & R in Mod World, Video Lec 24:

Marx and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion.

**Sunday**, August 6, 10:30 AM, P & R in Mod World, Video Lec 25: Kierkegaard: Existentialism and the Leap of Faith

**Sunday**, August 20, 10:30 AM, P & R in Mod World, Video Lec 26: Nietzsche: Critic of

Christian Morality

**Sunday**, September 3, 10:30 AM, P & R in Mod World, Video Lec 27: Neo-orthodoxy: The subject and Object of Faith

**Sunday**, September 17, 10:30 AM, P & R in Mod World, Video Lec 28: Encountering the Biblical Other: Buber & Levinas

## **Notes from the President:**

One of many things that makes our Fellowship strong is the willingness of individual members and friends to volunteer time and effort to make the Fellowship work. From arranging programs to being greeters to improving the building and grounds to running an award-winning RE program to planning finances and so much more, people have been willing to step forward. Over the history of our Fellowship, a series of committees have evolved (or were they created?) to ensure that our Fellowship meets the goals of our mission statement.

Yet, one of clear messages I heard at our annual meeting in May was that many committees need new life, energy, and members. Interestingly, in individual conversations, I have also heard many of you ask what you can do to help. I think that one of our highest priorities over the next several months should be to reinvigorate the already strong sense of volunteerism in the Fellowship, direct it in the most meaningful ways, and thereby build a community that can make our beacon of light in the Northwoods shine a little bit brighter.

So in the next month or two expect to see, either in the newsletter or in a mailing, a description of each committee's purpose. You can join any committee in which you have an interest. I am confident that you will respond with the generosity of heart so evident in our Fellowship.

In the meantime, enjoy the stars, lakes, woods, and people that make the Northwoods a great place to be. Peace.

Tim Kratz \*

## **Children's RE News**

Dawn Holt

HELP! HELP!

The children's R.E. program needs used furniture to meet the needs of our teenage youth. These young people make up 70% of our fellowship youth. We have budgeted money to meet the needs of our younger children and make our children's area more welcoming for prospective members. Now lets meet the needs of our current youth members. Please check your basements, attics, storage sheds for used furniture such as

couch, chair, end tables, etc. (NO JUNK). If you have something to donate or wish to pledge money for this cause please contact Dawn Holt at 543-8168 or holthouse@centurytel.net  
Thanks. \*

## Joys & Concerns

The dedication of Nathan Christopher Hietpas, son of Terry and Barbara Reed Hietpas, and grandson of **Charles and Janice Reed** will be conducted by Max Gaebler, prior to the sermon on July 30. UUs Barbara and Terry met at the UU church in Appleton and now live in White Bear Lake, MN.

Congratulations to **Jack Hafner** honored by Lawrence University with the George B. Walter Service to Society Award for his work with the Family Resource Center in Lac du Flambeau and the Koinonia Residential Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center in Rhinelander. Dr. Hafner was Director of the Resource Center, 1982-89, then consultant there until 1994 when he became consultant for to Rhinelander Abuse Center until 1999. \*

## Announcements:

There will be a farewell party for Pat Harrington, Sunday, July 9, 4-6 PM, at the Senior Center in Woodruff. Written or oral memories or memoirs requested and to be collected at the party. Call Irma Braunstein, 356-6276 for more information.

Rob Pennock's book, Tower of Babel can be ordered from Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble (bn.com). If you don't have access to the internet ask Jerry Woolpy to order it for you.

There will be a dedication of new members at the service on Sunday, July 30. New members should plan to attend. If you would like to join and have not already done so, please contact Mary Ann Fields 385-2975 or Patty Buehler 356 6276.

Our Fellowship members are invited to participate in a family picnic with the Keweenaw UU Fellowship and the Marquette, Mich. UU Fellowship on August 6th at 11:00 a.m. at the Van Riper State Park in the pavilion. It would be an excellent time to get acquainted with members of these two UU Fellowships and exchange ideas for programs, R.E., membership and other areas of mutual interest or concern Both Fellowships use a student minister for eight to nine times a year. If you are interested please call Mary Ann Fields 385-2975.

There will be potluck cookouts after services on July 16th and Aug.13th. \*

## UUA Bylaws

To be studied in preparation for Max Gaebler's sermon, July 30

### Article II: Principles and Purposes

## Principles

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil which justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

## Purposes

The Unitarian Universalist Association shall devote its resources to and exercise its corporate powers for religious, educational and humanitarian purposes. The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organized new congregations, extend and strengthen Unitarian Universalist institutions and implement its principles.

## Non-discrimination

The Association declares and affirms its special responsibility, and that of its member societies and organizations, to promote the full participation of persons in all of its and their activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to race, color, sex, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin and without requiring

adherence to any particular interpretation of religion or to any particular religious belief or creed.

### Freedom of Belief

Nothing herein shall be deemed to infringe upon the individual freedom of belief which is inherent in the Universalist and Unitarian heritages or to conflict with any statement of purpose, covenant, or bond of union used by any society unless such is used a creedal test. \*

## NUU Views

**Question:** In his discussion of The Creation Controversy, Rob Pennock explained why Creationists think the teaching of creation is so important versus the teaching of evolution. On the other hand, why do you think it is worth our time and effort as Unitarian Universalists to oppose the inclusion of the creation story in the science curriculum of our children and to fight for the continued inclusion of evolution?

**Answer** from Dick Fields: Fundamentalists and creation science advocates are very active at the local school board level to install creation teachings not only as a companion to the teaching of evolution science but where ever possible as a substitute for evolution. As Rob Pennock explained during his Sunday service they have met with a fair amount of success and unless the other side is heard and fights to stop them they will become even more successful. These advocates have targeted local school boards to get creationism taught after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1987 that it was unconstitutional for a State to mandate the teaching of creationism in public schools, as it amounted to an intrusion of religion in the school. If local school districts are allowed to teach creationism and other religious teachings it is an intrusion of religion in the school and those that do not agree with the particular religion being taught would feel excluded and isolated. Many are also opposed to teaching of religion in public schools as their tax dollars would be spent teaching a religion they do not believe in.

Teaching of creationism in the public schools is a concern to Unitarian Universalists, non-Christian religions and many Christians who believe in the separation of Church and State. I have the same problem with prayers being said before a football game, as it inflicts a religious point of view not necessarily held by others. Why do some people have to make such a public display of their religion? It is not a concern of mine if creationism is taught as one possible explanation for the beginning of life in a comparative religion course, but not in a science curriculum. Subjects taught in a Science course should be based upon facts and reason, not on myths and fairy tales.

**Answer** from Terry Hoyt: Despite what some far right Christians like to say today the thinking of our country's leaders at the time of the writing of the constitution was much

closer to Unitarian Universalist beliefs than to the creation story advocates of today. Religious freedom was why many came to this country. The separation of church and state was seen as very important if people were going to enjoy true freedom. Being forced into religious belief "slavery" by a government is not a way to create all people as equal.

Teaching a creation story as science pressures children in school to give credence to a "story" that may or may not be consistent with their religious beliefs. This would be the case whether the "creation" story came from Christians or Native Americans or Hindus. There are practically as many "creation" stories as there are religions in the world. Who chooses which one should be taught? And who decides what the answers are supposed to be when the students are tested?

Unitarian Universalists need to continue the fight for religious freedom in the world. And as long as there is so much scientific support for evolution it should be taught in our science classes. At this point in my life I think only Franz Kafka could have written the story where evolution was not a fact.

P.S. No sooner had I sent off my well thought out response to the question for this NUUSLETTER when the real issue came up at the dinner table. Terri, I and Kayla were sitting discussing head lice when Kayla asked the classic question, "Who created nits?" and then like the sun coming up over the primordial swamp she asked the next one, "And, who created us?"

I'd like all of the members of our Fellowship (or readers of the NUUSLETTER) to write in the response to those questions. Please keep in mind that you must answer the question in a reasonable response time for the attention span of a ten year old. I'll have to say I roughed out my version of the Darwinian theory. I had a lot of trouble with nits though and skipped over them. My casual science background had skipped over the evolution theory of lice. But I don't think wild-eyed Creationists have a very good explanation about why a god would want lice and nits. The whole thing left me scratching my head.

**Editor's Comment:** Let me confront the question first in theory and then more substantively. According to Neo-Darwinians today, the evolution of a species, for example head lice, does not involve changes in a particular louse or any particular lice. Nor does it involve directed or purposeful changes. The first essential is a population of lice that vary in all sorts of characteristics. The second essential is that these variations must be heritable. The third is that the heritable variations must have different reproductive potential. In other words, nits that like human hair might have more offspring than those that like dog hair or bare human skin or.... Then in the fullness of time, after many generations of a breeding population replacing itself with offspring born to parents in the population, the proportion of human hair preferring individuals will increase relative to those that prefer other habitats.

Now you ask, "But how did they come to prefer human hair in the first place?" "Well,

my little ten year old, it's thought to be this way..."The variation of liking human hair is of no consequence until humans are available in the louse environment. However, when the coincidence of humans and lice occurs, then the variation becomes important and those lice that like human hair may flourish at the expense of those that prefer other hairs that are less readily available. Moreover, in the presence of human hair, any variations (mutations) that arise among these lice will be advantaged in reproduction and hence the population will change through generations in the direction of becoming the nits that you ask about today.

And, my best beloveds, human beings, like you and I, evolved from variations in populations of primates called Australopithecines in much the same way. Can you say, "Aus-tra-lo-pi-the-cine"?

We believe this because of evidence found among the variations of bones and teeth and such in the fossil record, correlated with geologic changes observed in climate and habitats when these bones were part of living beings. And, because of the close association of the biochemistry of related species living today. And because of the developmental patterns of species that go through stages that resemble their presumed ancestors. Moreover, the process has been demonstrated in the breeding of domestic animals and plants, and experimentally, with organisms that reproduce very rapidly like fruit flies, and even bacteria. Finally it has been observed repeatedly in natural populations that under go changes in their environments. \$

Readers are encouraged to share their answers to these questions and to suggest questions for others to consider.

In answer to the question in our last issue, a reader discusses her feelings about her children becoming UUs.

**Answer** from Patty Buehler: When I told my father that I wanted to go to dental school, he was very pleased. My father had graduated from Marquette Dental School in 1950, the year I was born. When I see my son hugging and speaking lovingly to our dog, I am very pleased. I have been an animal lover since I was five.

If my children choose to embrace Unitarian Universalism as adults, I will be happy and proud that they decided to make the same choice I did. Parents naturally react positively to their children following the same paths they did. It's as if the child is saying, "You did it right, Mom," which is something rarely heard from a child.

We are tempted to direct our children down our own paths, but we should resist that temptation. Teens and young adults need to distance themselves from their parents to establish their own identity. Often the choices they make are good, responsible, productive choices.

I will be pleased if my children become UUs, but as a UU I respect the right of others, including my children, to find their own truth in another religion or no religion. As

Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, or atheists my children might teach me new truths and offer me valuable lessons in life that I might miss if they choose to be UUs.

**Attention those who are not members of the Northwoods UU Fellowship:** Please let us know that you want to continue getting our NUUSLETTER by sending a note to NUUSLETTER, Box 483, Minocqua WI 54548, providing your name and address, and stating that you would like to continue receiving our

Next NUUSLETTER Deadline,  
Sunday, August 13, 2000

NUUSLETTER. Else we will stop sending it to you. Thanks for your help.





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P.O. Box 253  
Minocqua WI 54548-0253

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