
NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods

P.O. Box 253, Minocqua, WI 54548, <http://nuuf.com>

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April 7,

2003 **Coming Sundays**

Taking the Pulpit

Sunday, 10 AM, April 20, Terry Hoyt

Sunday, 10 AM, May 4, Rev Sydney Morris

Sunday, 10 AM, May 18, Rev Max Gaebler

Sunday, 10 AM, June 1, Rev Sydney Morris

Sunday, 10 AM, June 15, Rev Denise Tracey

Sunday, 10 AM, June 29, Dr. Nels Oas

Adult Religious Education

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

The President's Message

Here I am in San Francisco attending a school board convention. I know my President's message is due so I am using computers available at the convention center to write this report before going into hear a debate between Newt Gingrich and Ralph Nader on education. Yesterday Walter Cronkite was the featured speaker and spoke about how the war is bankrupting our country and that the money we were spending would be much better spent on education. A very few people walked out while he gave his observations to this group of thousands of school board members.

As our board gets ready for the annual meeting on May 31st our Finance Committee is involved in our annual pledge drive. It is particularly important in this time of spiritual crisis in the world that we do not forget our Fellowship's need to keep our Beacon of Light

burning brightly in the Northwoods. We have increased doing many good things for ourselves and our community since we have called Rev. Morris to be our part time minister. I encourage everyone to keep up their commitment and keep up your good works.

I am particularly sorry to be missing the presentation by the Wisconsin President of the ACLU. As a long time member of this organization I thoroughly support people understanding the seriousness of this legislation on the freedoms we have founded this country on. I hope you were all able to attend and that you will work hard to spread the word on this legislation.

Terry Hoyt ▪

Joys & Concerns

Many thanks to the helpers at the food pantry: Dennis Kobes, Patty Buehler, Doris and Art Eberlein, Sydney Morris accompanied by a friend from the Houghton UU fellowship, Tim Kratz, Alan and Sharon VanRaalte. Under the guidance of the indomitable Paul Braunstein, together they served a near seasonal record 130 bags of food to the most needy of our neighbors.

Mark your calendar on Friday, evening, April 11, for Margaret,s Museum. This is a Canadian film that Irma and Paul highly recommend. "Breathtaking." Bring a friend to our next movie night at the fellowship. ▪

Announcements

The **Social Justice Committee** will meet on Wednesday, April 23 at 3 p.m. at the Fellowship. We will be talking about the Civil Liberties discussion with Chris Ahmuty and identifying new projects. Everyone is welcome to attend. ▪

Spring Conference for Midwest UU Women at Bloomington Illinois, April 25-26. Call or write Sherlyn Hogenson for details, 309 828-6635
s.hogenson@verizon.net ▪

In honor of Earth Day, "mother earth," and our community we will be conducting our bi-annual **highway cleanup** Saturday April 26th at 10 AM. Please join us at the corner of STH 47 and CTH F (circa 2.5 mi north of Woodruff). For safety sake, please wear bright reflective clothing and gloves. Many hands make light work.... ▪

There will be a **Finance Committee meeting** on Sunday, April 27, at 11:30 at the fellowship building. The committee will discuss the budget for the next fiscal year. ▪

The **Annual Meeting** of the Congregation will be Saturday, May 31st, at 10 AM, followed by a cook out. According to the By Laws: The annual business meeting shall be held each year in the month of May at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Executive Committee... The business to be transacted at all meetings shall be set forth in the notice of the meeting, which shall be sent to all members by mail fifteen (15) days prior to the

meeting. Thirty (30) percent of the membership or 12 members, whichever is greater, shall constitute a quorum. Absentee ballots and/or proxies may be used in the conduct of business meetings. ▪

From Waskos: Yes, we have moved again. This time we ended up in the Land of Enchantment--New Mexico. Dawn came upon a job opportunity that was too good to pass up and were not missing the high cost of living of N. California. So far, so good but we could use some rain. Solomon seems to be adjusting well and anxious for dad to get a job so he can go back to daycare. Hope this finds everyone doing well. Here is our new contact info. (Rio Rancho is just N. of Albuquerque and not far from Sante Fe so if anyone is visiting nearby please look us up.) 4529 Rockaway Lp., NE

Rio Rancho, NM 87124

(505) 896-3573

mwasko@msn.com (same as before) ▪

Mark your Calendar for the **First Annual Fellowship Auction** on Friday June 6th starting at 6:30 PM. Refreshments and snacks will be available during the evening. For Members and Friends of the Fellowship who have not attended an auction elsewhere, the auction will consist of two parts: a Silent Auction of good "White Elephant items" and then the main auction consisting of services such as dinners in your home or catered, tickets to concerts, babysitting, yard work, housecleaning, canoe trips, or planned hikes and picnics, or examples of your special talents such as painting, sewing, craft work, baked goods etc. There will be a sheet given out with additional suggestions available after the Fields get back to Wisconsin in early May. In late May there will be a list of available items to bid on. If you have any questions or suggestions or want to volunteer to help please contact Mary Ann by e-mail (fields@pikx.com) or by phone. ▪

Adult Midwest Unitarian Universalist Singles Enrichment (AMUUSE) announces three recreational programs for this summer. See amuuse.org for details.

The second annual Bed and Breakfast **weekend hosted by The UU Fellowship of Door County** (UUFDC), in Sister Bay, WI will be held July 18, 19 and 20, 2003. See webpage uufdc.org ▪

Midwest UU Leadership School: Sessions July 16-23 or July 26-August 2, foster effective lay leadership to benefit congregations. Email Jan Steinmark, Registrar, mrsmosaic@aol.com ▪

Nominating Committee Report

Sharon VanRaaltes, Doris Eberlein, and Jerry Woolpy bring the following nominations for consideration at the annual meeting May 31: Mark Bruhy for Secretary of the Board, Ruth Erbs for Treasurer, Joan Hauer for Member-at-large, Jim Williams for the Memorial Garden committee. Each has accepted the nomination and is willing to serve if

elected at the annual meeting. They would serve two-year terms from July 1, 2003, to June 30 2005. ▪

From East Africa

Amy Holt

“Jambo” from East Africa! Where to begin...As we came into Dar es Salaam I got to see dolphins! They were right next to the ship in the sunrise. It took forever for the ship to clear but we eventually got off and my friends and I went to a market. Our driver didn't understand us and took us to a local produce market. It was really interesting and I have never been so conscious of being white as I was there. It was a little uncomfortable when a man behind us started talking about terrorism and what was going to happen to Bush. We did eventually get to where we wanted to go and everything worked out. I spent the next 3 days on a safari in the Maasai Mara game reserve in Kenya. It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. I was within feet of lions and cheetahs with kills, surrounded by 14 elephants. We also saw zebras, giraffes, wildebeasts, gazelles, and every other animal you would expect to see in the Serengeti (except a rhino or a leopard). There were hippos right outside our lodge the first night we got there! We also got to visit a Maasai village and see how the Maasai people live. It was pretty interesting. I can't imagine living in such close proximity to lions and such. But it was an incredible 3 days. This morning I went with a group to meet some students from the University in Dar es Salaam. It was great. And tonight we leave. I can't believe how fast time goes in port. Well, I guess I'm off. Hope all is well with all of you. Take care. More from India. I miss everyone. ▪

From India

Amy Holt

Well, I left India last night. This was one of my favorite ports so far but also one of the most challenging emotionally. One of the best experiences I had in India was a homestay I did with a retired couple. They were the nicest and most generous people I have ever met. It was really an amazing 2 days living with them. I also went to an orphanage in Chennai as well as a Dalit village to do some service work. The service projects through Semester at Sea are some of the best day trips to go on because you actually get to do something rather than just gawk at the poverty that some people live in. Both of those trips were wonderful experiences - lots of fun as well as productive. The hardest thing I did was go to a housing project on the last morning I was there. It was incredibly depressing. India was beautiful and ugly all at once. I loved it and hated it. I can't explain this trip and I think I'm going to be processing this one for a long time. I know this email is really superficial, but I'm back on the ship and this is expensive and I haven't quite figured out what I think about India. I know I want to go back. Other issues: This morning we were told about the US attacks on Iraq. I'm very concerned and feeling frustrated being in the middle of the ocean. We are also on

top of the virus in Asia so please don't worry about me. Otherwise, I miss you all. Take care. More from Viet Nam in a couple of days. ▪

PS from Amy

Hi everyone. So here I am in the middle of the ocean with no destination. Really. Due to the virus in Asia we were told yesterday that we are no longer going to Vietnam or Hong Kong. I'm disappointed (especially about Vietnam) but I guess it's all for the best... Well, I'm headed to Nagasaki. We should get there around April 1. Then I guess we're trying to keep the itinerary the same for Pusan and Osaka. More from Japan. ▪

From Japan Amy Holt

Hello all. So after much confusion and way too much time on the ship, I am in Nagasaki. An itinerary update - I leave Nagasaki tonight, one day on ship, 5 days in Korea, two days on ship, four days in Osaka, in Seattle around the 30th, home on the 7th. That's if everything goes according to plan, so who really knows.

But, I got to spend the last 4.5 days in Nagasaki. Well, actually I spend the first 2 days in Kumamoto with a group of friends. We took a train down there and stayed at a Japanese style hotel and did some good sightseeing. After two days there, we came back to Nagasaki. They have a peace park and a museum dedicated to the atomic bomb. It was pretty incredible. It's the strangest feeling to be walking around memorials dedicated to something done by my government to this country and have people from here say hi and smile at me. But it was pretty incredible. I also spent a bunch of time seeing temples and some gardens (the gardens were actually in Kumamoto) and they were so beautiful. It's been mostly rainy here and cold (that means around 60 degrees). This was an incredible port to come into. It was all misty and rainy and there were islands. It was great. And almost no one was up for it because of the weather. I'm not sure what the seasons are doing at home. It's kind of sad to miss spring in Wisconsin, but the other day I got to eat fresh strawberries. They were amazing. Today I'm going grocery shopping before we have to be back on the ship. This is one of the few ports we leave in the middle of the day, which is nice because at night it's hard to see what's going on.

What about life on the ship...Well, the two weeks from India to Japan was really long. And the stop for fuel and food off the coast of Singapore was a horrible tease. Classes are nearly done. I can't believe how quickly it's gone by. While I can't wait to see everyone from home, it's going to be hard to leave all of this behind. But, I still have a month left to enjoy. Take care...So my itinerary has changed again. When I leave Korea in 4 days we will go to Osaka, Japan as planned and then on to Seward, Alaska and Victoria, Canada before returning to Seattle on May 6th as originally scheduled. Just thought I'd let you all know

what's going on. As things are continually changing, check the SAS website for updates:
www.semesteratsea.com. ■

Meet The Zoars

Jerry Buerer

The Zoars arrived as year round residents of the Northwoods about five years ago, moving from La Grange, Illinois, Sherry's home town, where they lived most of their married lives. Speaking of married lives, for Unitarians they are somewhat of an odd couple, this being their very first marriage and now approaching their fortieth anniversary. They have two or three children, depending how you look at it. Their son Owen, resides in Chicago while their married daughter, Libby lives in Seattle. At one time the Zoars hosted a foreign exchange student from Germany, Sarah. She is married and lives in Deutschland with her husband and two children who Tony and Sherry consider grandchildren. The Zoars visit them quite often. If all goes well, next August we in the fellowship will have the opportunity to have them visit.

Tony and Sherry met while students at the University of Illinois where both majored in math. Sherry also took a major in English. Tony comes from a Catholic background, Sherry from a Methodist one, although she recalls as a youth attending lectures at the local Unitarian church with her father. Although married by a minister friend in the Methodist church, soon after they became involved in the Unitarian group in Hinsdale Illinois, close to their home in La Grange. In over thirty years there they both were active, serving as church officers at times as well as participants in a host of other activities.

When their children were young, the Zoars frequently cared for foster children. Tony applied his math skills in the computer field for his entire working life.

The Zoars are the only year round, full time members who drive to services from out of state. Their home is at Marion Lake, east of Watersmeet, just over the Wisconsin-Michigan state line. Before moving there for years they camped in the area. Tony says (and I have it on tape) that when they retired, he wanted to settled in a northern town or small city while Sherry wanted to live "out in the middle of nowhere." According to Tony, "We compromised. We moved out in the middle of nowhere."

In warmer weather, the Zoars frequently attend the UU fellowship in Houghton, Michigan. Here in our fellowship, Sherry devotes considerable time to the Social Justice Committee. I'm sure I echo the rest of the fellowship when I say we are glad to have the company of such a good couple in our midst. ■

NUU Views

Question: Unitarian Universalism is a catholic religion in that we are in sympathy with all people and attuned to a wide range of ideas not limited to our immediate experience. Explain and provide an example that illustrates our roots in this descriptive word that comes from the Greek, *kata*, in regard to, plus *holos*, the whole.

Answer from Alan VanRaaltes: As Unitarian Universalists we are open to the idea that there is more than one path to enlightenment. I believe that truth and facts are not the same things. Truth is largely a matter of perspective and perspective a matter of geography of birth. I think we all realize that most religions claim exclusivity to truth and the certainty of that claim is the root of prejudice and the basis on which evil is perpetrated by one religious group against another.

But UUs also understand that while no religion occupies an exclusive path to truth and enlightenment, each travels a section of the road. All religions own a piece of the truth and it is that ownership that we UUs celebrate. A visual example of the celebration of our heritage of inclusive universal understanding is the Rehnberg Memorial Window in the Rockford Unitarian Universalist Church to which Sharon and I belonged for 16 years.

The window is in the form of a wheel or circle within which lie six interlocking circles, each with symbols representing the six major world religions: the Celtic Cross representing Christianity, the Star and Crescent representing Islam, the Sign of the Ohm representing Hinduism, the Star of David representing Judaism, the Yin and Yang representing Taoism and the Eight-Spoke Wheel representing Buddhism. These circles in turn surround and are interlocked with a seventh circle that is in the center of the wheel and displays the Flaming Chalice of Unitarian Universalism which represents our willingness to accept whatever insight the other major traditions may offer, as well as a determination to explore all new claims to truth and understanding.

I like to think that the chalice is fueled by the truths of the other traditions, but that its flame shines light into those traditions and illuminates their shadows and dispels some of their myths and hypocrisies. The wheel however, is incomplete. I think that at least three more circles need to be added.

One circle would contain a tree or laurel wreath to symbolize Paganism or the Earth-Centered religions. Surely the Covenants of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPs) who find refuge in our churches bring ancient traditions to which we all should be attuned and from which we can all learn. Another circle would contain a question mark, not only to symbolize Agnosticism, but also to celebrate the questioning which seems to be inherent in all UUs. The third circle would be clear glass as a deliberate absence of symbolism to represent Atheism. It is perhaps the Atheists among us who see things the clearest, unencumbered by faith and mysticism. Humanists may feel they've been snubbed by my hypothetical nine-circle wheel, but I think threads of Humanism run through all the other

traditions and is best illustrated by the Flaming Chalice that is the symbol of our catholic religion. ▪

Answer from Jerry Buerer: First of all, I don't think we UUs are in sympathy with "all" people. There are limits. I think back to about ten years ago when my home congregation in southeast Wisconsin had a small, but quite active, UU Pagans group. Like other sub-groups in the congregation, they petitioned to do a Sunday service. They had to fight tooth and nail to win approval—even the minister was against it, although the Sunday Services committee did eventually approve it. Many of my most liberal friends boycotted the service. I attended out of curiosity and thought they did a rather admirable job. But again, their philosophy overstretched things a bit for a majority of the congregation. While I never felt it, our minister in a sermon once noted many cases of intolerance toward UU Christians within some UU congregations. In other words, we must guard a bit about becoming too self-righteous about our "catholic" attitude. We seem willing to tolerate about anything if it's far enough away (not limited to our immediate experience) but sometimes we don't do quite as well with those closer to home.

This being said, the good Dr. Woolpy has me stumped this time. While I've never actually seen him smoke anything, particularly rare substances, at times I have wondered how he comes up with some of these questions. My Ph.D. exams were a piece of cake compared to some of his stumpers, this one being a prime example. I think I need to take a course in the history of UUism—I simply don't know enough about "our roots" to tackle this one. Sorry! ▪

Answer from Wenda Shread: I have two problems with this question. First, unlike Jerry's other questions, this question does not evoke an immediate and emotional-laden response from me. This question requires intellectual foreplay before the essence of the question can reach the emotion/spirit/heart place from where my best answers erupt.

Second, I disagree somewhat with the premise behind the question. Although theology is not my strong suit, I have a sense, perhaps a naive sense, that all religions aspire to be in sympathy with all peoples. Although simpletons in some religions sometimes interpret their religions as prohibiting exposure to a wide range of ideas, I believe that at the deepest levels all religions attempt to attune their adherents to a wide range of ideas not limited to their immediate experience.

Two years ago, while I was doing research surveying high school students in the Dallas area in order to ascertain their levels of tolerance for those unlike them, I learned a big lesson. The survey instrument, before asking tolerance-specific questions, asked the students to identify a group of people, which the students disliked more than any other group of people. The public school students in honors classes tended to pick the "right" groups.... groups we "should" dislike.... groups famous for disliking others.... Nazi-like groups. I imagine most Unitarian-Universalists would pick such groups as their "most disliked" group.

The students from evangelical Christian high schools surprised me. Some simply couldn't answer the question. They explained to me, "We don't dislike people or groups of people; we dislike sins." Hearing that explanation over and over again gave this born-Unitarian-Universalist the distinct feeling of being one-upped by evangelical Christian high schoolers.

Yes, we Unitarian-Universalists are catholic in that we are in sympathy with all peoples and we are attuned to a wide range of ideas. But we miss the point of our theology if we make assumptions that other religions, at their cores, are not. Just as evangelical Christians love the sinner and hate the sin, we must love other religions and hate their misinterpretations and perversions by power-hungry simpletons. We can't be catholic unless we seek to explore our commonality with others. ▪

The question for the next NUUSLETTER is: According to UUA President William G. Sinkford, "The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations adamantly opposes the pre-emptive military action against Iraq." It is difficult to express political dissent to a war during or right after that war. How do we do this most effectively avoiding the misunderstanding of undermining the troops and giving aid and comfort to the enemy? Send answers to jerryw@earlham.edu by May 18th. ▪

Getting the NUUSLETTER

In addition to the usual Microsoft Word format, the NUUSLETTER is now available in Adobe PDF format that is readable by any computer, Mac or PC. If you do not have an Adobe Reader you can download one free at

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

With this software the NUUSLETTER will be formatted as it is in Microsoft Word, but the Word program will not be required. Let me know if you want it sent to you in PDF format, jerryw@earlham.edu.

Previous NUUSLETTERS and the congregation directory are available at nuuf.com. Click on "Members Only." The user name is NUUF. But you need to remember the secret password. If you have forgotten it, contact me. **Next NUUSLETTER Deadline, Sunday, May 18, 2003**

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