



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

GORGE UU NEWS – January, 2012

FROM OUR MINISTER

“Come sing a song with me, Come sing a song with me, Come sing a song with me, that I might know your mind. And I’ll bring you hope, when hope is hard to find. And I’ll bring a song of love, and a rose in the winter time.” – Carolyn McDade

Pastoral care is one of my three top priorities (along with worship and support to the board and committees). But what the heck is “pastoral care?” In short, it’s singing a “song of love” for each other in good times and bad; it’s caring for each other’s spirits and bodies. Pastoral care is something we do as a whole community, with leadership from our Care Team (Ray Klebba, Jay Larsen, Mike Hendricks, Anita Johnston, Tom Pencheon, and Jane Fetisoff).

I have a particular role as your minister in offering professionally trained and confidential pastoral care. I’m available every weekend I’m in town to meet with you for a meal or a private conversation, and I’m reachable by phone anytime. There’s no cost to meet with me - your pledge dollars already pay my salary (thank you!). But when should you call me?

Here’s a version of a much shared column originally by UU minister Peter Lee Scott wrote a column called “When to Call the Minister.”

Call the Minister When....

- When you don’t know me, but would like to.
- When I don’t know you, but you’d like me to.
- When you’re thinking about calling, but you don’t want to bother me.
- When your child doesn’t know me, but would like to or you would like them to.
- When you are looking for a way to deepen your spiritual life.
- When your children have questions of faith and you would like me to visit with them.
- When you have questions about Unitarian Universalism.
- When you are celebrating one of life’s joys and want to share the good news.
- When you or your child are feeling sad, lonely, or lost.
- When you have lost your job, found a new job, been promoted or demoted.
- When you or a family member is ill.
- When you’re facing frustration or challenging decisions with your children or parents
- When you are going to the hospital or know of someone else in the congregation who is.
- When someone close to you has died or is critically ill or you’re dealing with another significant loss.
- When you would like your child dedicated.
- When you are planning or considering marriage or divorce.
- When you are pregnant and glad you are or wish you weren’t, also if you want to be pregnant but aren’t.
- When you are retiring and glad you are or scared of all the time; also if you want to retire but can’t afford to.
- When you feel ready to join the congregation, or have questions about membership.
- When you have concerns or suggestions or ideas for the Fellowship.
- When you are upset with me or would like to express appreciation
- When you’re looking for a way to get more involved or less involved in the Fellowship
- When you have won the lottery and want to make a large donation to the church, or when you’re struggling with money and need to cut back on your pledge.
- When you just want to talk

I look forward to getting to know more of you more deeply in the coming months.

Be well,



Cathy's Calendar

I will be in the gorge January 14-22 this month. Please call or email me to set up time for tea, a walk, or a meal – I would love to spend time with you.

LEADERSHIP LETTER

Just what does the Board do?

You may have noticed that the Board meetings are being announced in the eNews now. And starting this month, you will be able to read a summary of the Board meeting minutes each month on mcuuf.org. We want you to know who is serving the Congregation, and when we meet. We welcome you to come to Board meetings and observe, or even bring a concern to our attention.

But how does that Board get appointed? The Nominating Committee chooses candidates for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and three At-Large Trustees before the annual Congregational meeting each spring. Their slate of candidates is announced at the Congregational Meeting for election. Any MCUUF member not on the slate can be nominated from the floor as well. When there are no more nominations, you, as congregational members, elect the Board for the coming fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. This year your Trustees are: Holly Harrel, President; Maya Trook, Vice President; Elaine Castles, Secretary; Bruce Bolme, Treasurer; and Denise Endow, Leanne Hogie and Tom Hons serve as Trustees At Large.

Your Board is an administrative body and also a planning committee—a visionary group. Both parts are very important! We make decisions about what is going on, and also think about about what we want to become as a fellowship, and follow the guidelines set out in the By-Laws when doing both parts.

As an administrative group, we create and oversee the annual budget that is approved by members at the Congregational meeting; negotiate and sign contracts with staff, insurance, and others; create and/or approve new committees; and do a lot of deciding what to do about requests from members, MCUUF committees, and outside entities. We elect interim Board members when necessary, as we did this year with Maya, our Vice President .

As a visioning body, your Board of Trustees thinks about what our future could look like, and how we might be able to get there. We envision all sorts of things, big and little, from how to better communicate among committees to how we might have a building of our own someday. It was this visioning that led to our minister, Cathy Rion, being a vibrant part of our MCUUF family.

Each member of the Board serves as a liaison to one or more MCUUF committees, to make sure that committee chairs know who to approach with questions and concerns. For example, Tom Hons is the Board's liaison to the Care Team, our Small Groups, and the Set-up group. Every three months, the Board liaison asks their committee Chairs to give us a short update on how their committee or team is doing. This report is included in the minutes. We also each take on projects, or parts of projects, such as Denise overseeing how we might better streamline our Treasurer's and Adminiatrator's responsibilities.

We also take turns welcoming everyone to the service each Sunday morning. We do that so that hopefully everyone is familiar with the faces of the Board members, and knows who to approach with questions or concerns. If you attend service on New Year's Day, Leanne will be greeting you at the beginning of the service.

Elaine, our Board Secretary has several duties aside from taking the minutes at each meeting. She also summarizes the Committee Chair reports for the other Board members, sends the summary of the minutes to our webmistress and Administrator, lets the Administrator know when the next Board meeting is scheduled, and in general is a wonderful support to the Board and the President.

Bruce has been doing the huge job of being Treasurer for five years. He is responsible for keeping track of all the pledges made during the year; depositing the money from the plate on Sunday and from pledges, paying bills, reconciling accounts, keeping track of investments, and creating budget reports, balance sheets and profit and loss statements, just about every month. When our minister became part of MCUUF, Bruce had the daunting job of making sure we learned how to do payroll taxes. He seems to be on call 24/7 for consultation about the budget.

It is my job as President to conduct Board meetings and congregational meetings; to set the agenda for those meetings; to nominate new committee chairs to the Board when necessary; to help with new membership classes; to sign contracts in MCUUF's name; to communicate with other members of the Board and our Administrator Kristen Dillon as necessary throughout the month. I meet with our minister Cathy Rion each month to check in about the upcoming month. Currently, the President is also responsible for the archives of the Fellowship, and of course, writing a letter for the monthly newsletter.

The Vice President traditionally spends their term learning the jobs of the President, in order to take on the position when the current President steps down. This is a very important role, because it ensures continuity of leadership for the Board.

Even though not an official member of the Board, we have been thrilled to have Cathy Rion take a very active part of Board meetings and business. She has provided fresh perspectives on how we do what we do on every level, and is invaluable for helping us see “outside the box”.

There are admittedly times when being on the Board is a lot of work, and nobody likes to interrupt their schedules with meetings, emails etc. But it is rewarding, and an honor, to know that what we do helps our Fellowship survive and grow, and continue to be a place where all are welcome.

If you have not served on the Board of Trustees in the past, I invite you to consider it!

Holly

Summary of Minutes of December 16, 2011 Board Meeting

Note: The Board of Trustees is now posting summaries of its regular meetings in the newsletter and on the website. Anyone who would like to see a copy of the complete minutes can get them from secretary Elaine Castles

Announcements - The Worship Team is continuing to experiment with formats for announcements, with the goals of providing more time for the RE program and creating a more worshipful atmosphere. The Team is asking people with announcements about non-Fellowship events to post them on an easel near the welcome table. We are also encouraging those with Fellowship-related announcements to clear them with the Board Welcomer prior to the service.

Administrator Position - This position will most likely become open sometime within the next few months. The Board is beginning to develop a position description prior to beginning recruitment in January or February. Ideally, the new administrator would have the discretion to handle sensitive issues, possess skills in bookkeeping, data entry, and web maintenance, and would have the ability eventually to increase her/his time to 20-25 hours per month.

Parking - There continue to be ongoing issues between the Fire Department and the Grange about parking. The Grange is trying to meet with the Fire Department to resolve this issue. Meanwhile, we will encourage people to park in the lot across the street and to leave the places close to the entrance for those who have trouble walking.

Memorial Service Expenses – When a member of the Fellowship dies, it is the sense of the Board that the congregation should offer space, ministerial services, and basic Orders of Service without charge, although a contribution from the family to help defray these expenses would be appreciated. Additional expenses would be covered by the member, as would all memorial service expenses for nonmembers.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, January 20 at 6:00 PM at the Riverside UCC Church.
Respectfully submitted, Elaine Castles, Board Secretary

SUNDAY SERVICES

January 1 – “Never the Water, Only a Wave,” **Tom Penchoen**. Tom will present a sermon written by Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed.

January 8 – “Faith in the Borderland,” **Rev. Abhi Janamanchi (video)** The pastor of UU Church of Clearwater, FL, Rev. Janamanchi delivered this sermon at GA 2009. He explores the challenges and opportunities for Unitarian Universalism in our pluralistic world. Kristen Dillon will present this sermon. **This is a Youth Sunday with planned activities for ages 11-18.**

January 15 – “El Sueño Americano,” **Cathy Rion**. Wave after wave of immigrants over hundreds of years have faced discrimination and violence when they come to the US in search of the “American Dream.” That same dream is crumbling for so many under the weight of the economic recession. Anti-immigrant sentiment is sweeping the nation, meanwhile UUs prepare for General Assembly in Phoenix focused on immigration and justice issues in June. This MLK weekend, we’ll explore how our faith calls us to action, and ponder what Martin Luther King would say to us about the state of the American Dream today. **** Join us after worship for a forum on Local Immigration issues and Justice General Assembly****

January 22 – “Though you’ve broken your vows a thousand times,” **Cathy Rion**. The Sufi mystic Rumi wrote “Come, come, whoever you are.... Come, even if you have broken your vow a hundred times. Come, come again, come.” Ours is a faith in which revelation is not sealed, in which redemption is always a possibility. Our hymnal’s version of this poem doesn’t include this line about breaking our vows most of the time, even though life is full of mistakes and broken vows. How do we keep coming back to our vows after we break them? How can we cultivate hope and possibility even when we feel irreparably broken? **This is a Youth Sunday with planned activities for ages 11-18.**

January 29 - TBD

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

For the younger crowd: With the wonderful and bright holiday season coming to a close so does our unit on Christianity. We will be transitioning into our evolution based curriculum, and will begin exploring some of our more common theories. – Alicia Bhatti, Religious Education Coordinator

Alicia’s recommendations for children's books:

For smarts- [Evolution](#), by Lane Anderson

For fun- [The Enemy: A Book About Peace](#), by Davide Cali & Serge Bloch

Youth Sunday schedule will be Jan 8 and 22nd, then back to the first and third Sundays for Feb through May.

Mid Columbia Unitarian Universalist High School and Middle School Retreat Weekend of February 4th in Trout Lake

What: A UU retreat just for our high school and middle school aged youth!

Who: All Mid-Columbia UU middle and high schoolers

Where: At the Buddhist Abbey in Trout Lake. Carpooling will be available from Bingen

Cost: \$15 for middle schoolers/\$25 for high schoolers. Scholarships available.

Schedule	High schoolers will meet at the Bingen park and ride at 4:45 p.m. on Friday, spend two nights at the Abbey and return around noon on Sunday.	Middle schoolers will meet at the Bingen park and ride at 11 a.m. on Saturday, spend one night at the Abbey and return around noon on Sunday.
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Both groups will have time for religious education, games, group activities, music, a tour of the Abbey, meditation, snow play and more. Our minister, Cathy Rion, will be attending for most of the day on Saturday.

If you have questions about the retreat, would like additional information, would like to help with planning or chaperoning, please contact Peggy Neuman.

Registration due by January 9th.

Every year the youth at Seattle’s [University Unitarian Church](#) host a con focusing on social justice issues. **CONSUUme - the March 9-11, 2012 con** - will feature workshops and action projects focusing on today’s consumer culture, our planet’s limited resources, and what we can do to take action. For more information about **S.P.A.G. Con 2012**, see the [registration packet](#). (SPAG is University Unitarian Church’s Social and Political Activism Group.)

CALENDAR

Newsletter Deadline for February edition is Sunday, January 29.

Wednesday Book Discussion Group: Open to new members. A group of us have been meeting for several years now every other Wednesday morning from 10 am to noon to read and discuss an eclectic mix of books about religion, beliefs, society, culture and science. We typically cover about 40-60 pages each session. **We are starting a new book on January 4th**, "Good Without God" by Greg M. Epstein, a humanist chaplain at Harvard.

The Women's Awareness Circle will meet on **January 6th (Friday) 7pm**. Awareness Circle is an open circle welcoming all women, especially those new to the fellowship. Please call Irene if you plan to attend. Robbie Lapp will lead a discussion comparing our aging process with that of our parents. This is a continuation of the discussion from November based on an excerpt from the book *The Myth and Marketing of the New Old Age*, Never Say Die by Susan Jacoby.

Celebrants' Training

Wednesday, January 18, 6-9pm, Paul Blackburn's house, light dinner provided

All celebrants are asked to attend this training that will include worship theory, hands-on training, visioning, and calendaring. This is a mandatory training - we really want all of celebrants there so we can get everyone on the same page and go deeper with each other. If you're unable to come, please let Paul know. Interested in becoming a celebrant? Contact Cathy or Paul.

Considering Membership Class – Jan 19 and 22, Ceremony Feb 4

Do you want to join MCUUF? Have questions about Unitarian Universalism or what it means to be a member? Please join minister Cathy, Board President Holly Harrel, and Membership Team leader Pam Morneault for this 2 session class on for an introduction to Unitarian Universalism and life in our congregation. For those who decide to join, there will be membership ceremony Sunday, February 4.

Details:

Thursday, January 19, 6-8pm at Riverside Church (4th & State St, parking lot in back on Sherman), light dinner provided.

Sunday, January 22, 12-2pm at the Grange, lunch provided.

Please plan to attend both sessions. Childcare provided if you RSVP by January 15.

RSVP to Pam Morneault

Seminary For A Day: Yearning For Depth

Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at First Unitarian Church of Portland

Are you yearning for greater depth in your spiritual life? If Unitarian Universalism calls your spirit to explore your theology more deeply; if you've always wanted to know more about the Bible and other sacred texts; if you long to grow in your understanding of our Unitarian Universalist history and heritage; if you seek spiritual practice that might inspire and sustain your own bending toward justice --- then Seminary For A Day may be the best way you can spend Saturday, Jan. 28. A unique day of seminary-level classes, featuring Rev. John Buhrens (author of *A Chosen Faith*), Rev. Bill Sinkford, and a team of area clergy. Check here for details: <http://www.firstunitarianportland.org/our-programs/other-news/325-seminary-for-a-day>

COMMUNITY ACTION AT MCUUF

Our next days at FISH Foodbank to help distribute food to those in need will be Jan 9, 11 and 13 from about 3-5 in the afternoon. We currently need 2 more people for each day that week. Contact Dennis Carlson if you'd like to help!

Interested in making community action a part of MCUUF? We need you!

The Community Action committee is looking to expand by 2 new members. Our purpose is to help MCUUFers connect with community activities that further social and economic justice, and to establish MCUUF as a leader for community action in the Gorge. We work by email and occasional meetings (with food!). Contact Paul Blackburn or Bonnie New.

How MCUUF Members & Friends Can Engage the Fellowship in Community Action Activities

MCUUF members and friends often wish to bring area social action activities to the attention of the fellowship. Our Community Action Task Force (CATF) has created avenues for doing just that:

1. You can publicize a social action activity to the Fellowship and invite interested people to participate. The CATF will get the activity posted in our Sunday Order of Service, in our weekly and monthly e-newsletters, and on our website.

How to do: Email your activity info to us on the [Community Action Request Form](#).

2. You can seek the support or endorsement of MCUUF for a social action initiative in which you are significantly involved. The CATF will consider your proposal/request, requesting additional information as needed, and will bring it to the MCUUF Board for consideration as needed.

How to do: Email us the activity/project information and your specific request on the [Community Action Request Form](#).

Please note - MCUUF does not have dedicated staff to initiate or run social action projects. Any proposal brought to MCUUF for support, endorsement, or other action must be driven by the volunteer effort of one or more members of the Fellowship.

For more info: <http://www.mcuuf.org/communityaction.php>

Have an item to submit? catf.mcuuf@gmail.com

ONGOING PROGRAMS

sUUps On First Sunday of Every Month—Plan to stay for a savory lunch after the service.

Women's Awareness Circle meets in the odd numbered months, alternating between private homes in Oregon and Washington. It is intended for all MCUUF women, and newcomers are particularly welcome. The monthly meetings are from 7:00-8:30 and are publicized in the month's newsletter. The meetings include a brief check-in of about 2 minutes per person followed by discussion of a theme or question.

DISTRICT AND UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

Welcome Chalice Lighters ! Many MCUUF members have joined Chalice Lighters, a collaborative fundraising program of the PNWD. This program enables us to support our neighbor congregations in their growth and allows us to submit a grant request sometime in the future. Please consider joining Chalice Lighters. More info at www.pnwd.org.

Chalice Lighter call to Support Eugene Congregation

The second Chalice Lighter call of this church year will be in your mailbox or Inbox in early January. This is a very important call for one of our larger congregations, **UU Church of Eugene, Oregon**, which is putting the finishing touches on a new facility.

Eugene's growth to a program level congregation has been stymied by the lovely church in the woods of South Hill that is occupied for 50 years. That church has been sold and the congregation purchased a former fraternal lodge in a densely populated area on the edge of downtown. The site is accessible by auto, city bus, and bicycle. They now have the space and location for sustained growth.

The worship area, while providing over twice the space of the old church, is flat. In order for the choir and presenters to be seen by all, they need to be on a raised platform and risers. The cost of that necessary feature is substantial, and the cost of a mobile lift to make the platform accessible for presenters or choir members with limited mobility is also substantial.

The total cost to the congregation will be \$38,702, amounting to barely 1% of the total project cost, but representing 1/8 of the amount needed to complete the renovation and remodeling. The congregation has invested over \$2.5 million of its money and volunteer labor and has a substantial mortgage to repay over the coming years.

A Chalice Lighter grant of \$38,702 would be a record setter, but it is not unattainable. **If each and every PNWD Chalice Lighter responds to this call with a donation of just \$17, Eugene would get their needs met.** Eugene has almost one half of their congregation enrolled as Chalice Lighters and has pledged to not only reach 50%, but maintain that level of involvement to be able to help other congregations on future calls. **So watch for your letter or email and respond generously.** Donations must be received by March 5, 2012 to go towards this call.

District Webinars -The Pacific Western Region of the UUA is hosting a variety of webinars– mini-online workshops– to boost your knowledge and revitalize your focus. Webinars cost \$15 (contact Bruce Bolme for info about a subsidy). Complete info is here:

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http%3A%2F%2Flibrary.pnwd.org%2Fdocuments%2FWinter2012Webinars.pdf>

The offerings include:

- *Creating a Covenant of Right Relations* with Rev. Bruce Davis; January 12-7:00 PM PST
- *Pastoral Associate/Lay Ministry Program Series* with Rev. Stephen Ames; January 19-7:00 PM PST
- *Congregational Safety: Best Practices with Staff* with Barbara Cornell; January 23-7:00 PM PST
- *The Latest UUA Resources Tour* with Judith Frediani; January 24-7:00 PM PST
- *The Philosophy of Policy Governance* with Rev. Margaret Keip; January 26-7:00 PM PST
- *District Assembly in Alaska!* with Rev. Sarah Schurr (This webinar is free! Please join us!). January 31-7:00 PM PST

Allies for Racial Equity Conference in February

Colonization, Privilege and Resistance: Preparing for Justice GA 2012

February 17-19 in Ft. Worth, TX. Workshops will complement keynote speakers Robert Jensen and Megan Dowdell. More info here: <https://sites.google.com/site/uuallesre/news-and-events/2012-annual-conference>

CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHEN, AND WHERE? Go to www.mcuuf.org

Minister and Board of Trustees

Minister
Cathy Rion
541-390-7553
criston@uuma.org

President
Holly Harrel
509 493 2412
hollyharrel@yahoo.com

Vice-President
Maya Trook
503 545 2451
mayatrook@gmail.com

Board Secretary
Elaine Castles
541 296 0655
ecastles@embarqmail.com

Treasurer
Bruce Bolme
509 493 8202
bbolme@gorge.net

Trustee
Denise Endow
541 716 1488
deniendow@gmail.com

Trustee
Leanne Hogie
240 994 6088
lhogie@aol.com

Trustee
Tom Hons
541 386 5771
hons@gorge.net

Coordinators and Staff

Administrator
Kristen Dillon
541 387 4011
kristen@speedfish.com

Children's Program
Alicia Bhatti
541 490 9136
sublime77@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator
Steve Castles
541 296 0655
shcastles@embarqmail.com

Youth
Peggy Neuman
509 493 8322
durkee@gorge.net

Sunday Hospitality
Aera Atkins
541 806 2344

Sunday Setup
David Kao
541 490 4697
waterk9@charter.net

Worship
Paul Blackburn
541 387 4011
paul@speedfish.com

Greeters
Debbie Olson
509 493 3493
kesslerolson@netscape.net

Retreat
Nicole Schrankel
541 354 1955
schrankel@embarq.com

FISH Food Pantry
Jane Fetisoff
541 386 6346
jfetisoff@gorge.net