



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

GORGE UU NEWS

September, 2009

LEADERSHIP LETTER

"Be the change you want to see in the world"

Hello, dear friends

Today is an exciting day for me as we now have a date set with the district ministerial placement liaison, Rev. Linda Kaufman. She will be coming to assist us in finding out if the majority of us want to proceed in the next step of church growth by hiring a part-time minister. The board and I want a high degree of fellowship involvement and transparency in this process, so we have planned a workshop, a worship service, and a congregational meeting to consider this big change for us. I am convinced this is the way for us to go if we are serious about making a significant statement in our part of the world about liberal religious values. I do not support "church growth" just for the sake of church growth at all, but so strongly believe in our Principles and Purposes and see it as something that pulls people of the earth together, that I wish to make it easier for other like-minded people to find us and enjoy the benefits of church community. For me, it is good to be together with one another, and it is helpful to have good leaders while at the same time appreciating each and every one of us for what we can learn from each other also.

In our Principles and Purposes (included below), we promote really good values. Yes, we have deep values, in my mind, and I want more of a presence in this world for that to shine through. That is my vision. I wish we could do this with just lay people, like us, and the district leadership have alluded to the fact that we have done a remarkable job of developing our church already. We have quadrupled our budget over the last 4 years, we have great Worship services with greeters and hospitality volunteers each week, and also vibrant Religious Education programs for Adults, Children and Youth; we have many Small Groups, a Care Team, and paid Administrator and Children's RE Coordinator. And I give a huge THANK YOU to each and every one of you who have helped to make our church the joy that it is to be in.

Now having a minister isn't the only way for UU churches to go certainly. Some churches are able to make a stand in their cities to a moderate extent, if they have many people who are willing to spend a large amount of their lives helping out their church. None of these churches seem to be able to get past the moderate sized category for some reason, though some of them are great churches also. But alas, the reality of life is that most of us have jobs and families and therefore don't have the time and energy to put toward this as completely as it could be done. We also don't have as much spiritual/religious training as a trained minister, from whom I love to hear good teachings. Those are some of the reasons why I am behind this idea, though I am sure there are more. We do want to hear from all of you about your ideas and also hear what Rev. Kaufman has to say, so I ask that you please read the information listing in this newsletter, and join us for these informative meetings where we can all come to a decision together.

Peace,

Cynthia Horton, Congregation President

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 we 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;
Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
Jewish and Christian teachings;
Humanist teachings;
Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions.

SUNDAY SERVICES

September 6 - Listening to the Messages, Rev. Sarah Shurr. Insight, wisdom, the voice of the divine – these are all around us. The trick is to be able to notice them and get those messages that help us along our way. **Bring your appetite**, this is a sUUp Sunday, and Pam's cooking Indonesian Carrot!

September 13 - Seeing Through Self: A Buddhist reflection. Kakumyo Lowe is a monk at the Dharma Rain Soto Zen Center Temple in Portland where he has been doing full-time communal, contemplative practice for 11 years and has been ordained for 7. He has done practice periods at 4 other monasteries in the US and Japan. He leads the residential training program at Dharma Rain and is the teacher for the Hood River Zen Association.

September 20: "Awakening Desire, a Poetic path to Simplicity," Jerry Bryan. Through reflection on the poems of the nature mystics, people committed to voluntary simplicity awaken to healthy desire, restore connection to the Ineffable, and cultivate lifestyles of conscious simple living for the common good. Come explore this with us!

September 27 - Story teller extraordinaire, Will Hornyak. Will has captivated audiences throughout the region. Don't miss this fun service!

CALENDAR

Book Discussion: "**When Bad Things Happen to Good People**" by Harold S. Kushner.

When: **Thursday, Sept. 3 . 3:00pm-4:15pm**

Where: Doppio's Coffee&Lounge . 310 Oak Street, Hood River

Even if you haven't had a chance to read the book, come join us. – Anita Johnston

A discussion group focused on Don Miguel Ruiz's book **The Four Agreements** will be offered beginning **September 6th**. We will meet in the Grange dining hall at 9:00 AM before the regular church service for five Sundays. If you're interested in exploring this book of wisdom, contact Judith Tenbrook or simply show up. Please read this small book before coming to the discussion group.

HUUrah! The **annual retreat** has transformed into a one afternoon/evening event, to be held **September 12**. We'll be at the Toll Bridge County Park in Parkdale, and we will gather for the Water Communion at 11 am. This is our annual ceremony that recognizes our return to community after a summer of travel and adventures. (Remember to collect and bring water from your summer travels!) And the day will carry on into food (catered Mexican anyone?), games, workshops, and, rumors say, even some Bollywood dancing. Questions? Contact mcuuf1@gorge.net!

Love Makes A Family, Inc. invites you to volunteer at the **Oregon State Fair** (August 28- September 7). We are continuing our tradition of sponsoring booths at the fair where we will engage in meaningful conversations with Oregonians about our values and vision for society. The "**Family Equality**" booth and "**Peace is a Family Value**" booth are coordinated by Love Makes A Family Inc and co-sponsored by community groups. For further information please contact us by email (lovemakesafamily@gmail.com) or phone 503-228-3892.

FISH—It is coming up on our church's turn to serve at our local food bank - FISH. Tamara Thiel would like to begin signing up volunteers to help with this need. Please let her know if you can fill in to help on the following dates and times.

Monday, Sept 21, at 3:15 to 5 PM

Wednesday, Sept 23, at 3:15 to 5:30 PM

Friday, Sept 25, at 3:15 to 5 PM

Newsletter Deadline for October Issue - Sunday morning, September 26.

OTHER FELLOWSHIP NEWS

New Member Ceremony and our own, "NEW UU" class coming in September. Interested in joining or finding out more? Contact President Cindy Horton.

"Our Whole Lives" Comprehensive Sexual Curriculum - Coming Soon!

MCUUF and Riverside Church will be jointly offering an OWL (Our Whole Lives) class for 7th – 9th graders starting in November. We anticipate receiving county grant funds to send up to eight adults to a facilitator training in Bellevue in October. We have spaces available for adults who would like to train to become OWL facilitators. Karen and Keith Harding have volunteered to be the lead facilitators for the upcoming Jr. High level program. However, other adults who take the training could serve as substitutes or consider offering a different level of OWL in the future. UUA recommends that the OWL facilitators NOT be parents of the OWL students.

Information on the OWL curriculum can be found at

<http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/ourwhole/>

Volunteers who want to know more about teaching and parents who are interested in signing up their 7th – 9th grader for the upcoming OWL class should contact Peggy Neuman.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

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

Spiritual Practice Group—Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The Teachings of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky form the basis for study and discussion. Meeting place is at Tolya's home.

Refreshments after service provide a welcome to visitors and give us all a reason to stay around and visit. Call Pam Morneault to arrange a week that would be convenient to host. She will e-mail instructions to you and make sure you have what you need - Pam

FROM THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

Pastoral letter on health care policy reform from the Rev. Peter Morales, President

Friends,

The current hysteria and rancor in the debate over health care policy are profoundly disturbing. The issues here go far beyond normal public policy debate. Religious principles central to our shared Unitarian Universalist (UU) faith are involved.

The first religious principle at stake is compassion. We must be a strong, persistent voice that reminds our nation and our leaders that compassion is central to all major faith traditions. We must insist that health care reform protects those without political clout: children, the poor, the disabled, the elderly. To stand on the side of love is to stand with those who are on the margins.

The second principle of our faith we must affirm today is our commitment to the democratic process. We are witnessing cynical demagoguery that plays on fear in order to defend privilege. There is no place for intimidation in our public discussion. Demagogues foment fear and panic that lead to violence. As religious people we must oppose intimidation.

True democracy can only exist where each voice is heard, where debate is open and civil, where people can disagree without being threatened. Good people can and do disagree about health care policy. However, we must all join together to demand open, respectful debate.

As religious people, let us insist on two things: We must create a health care system that protects the most vulnerable, and we must insist on a democratic process that is open to all.

Faithfully,
Peter Morales

The complete text of Rev. Morales' letter is at <http://www.uua.org/news/newssubmissions/145341.shtml> .

Rev. Morales comments on the health care debate:

http://www.uua.org/videos/index.php?movie=peter_morales/0908_peter_health_care_debate.mp4

FORGOT WHAT IS HAPPENING, WHEN, AND WHERE? Go to <http://mcuuf.org/> .

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