



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

GORGE UU NEWS – November, 2009

LEADERSHIP LETTER

*"At moments of change in your life, it is good to carefully examine your past and current life."
– Unitarian minister Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Hello, my beloved UU compadres,

I think Waldo's musings above, which I have gleaned from his written works in the past, seemed especially relevant this month as we are now at a moment of change in the life of our fellowship. We had a unanimous vote to proceed, for the first time in the life of the fellowship, with hiring a 1/4 time minister and work is now underway to do just that. The Search Committee/Board are working hard to make the best choice that we can for our fellowship and where we are right now. So I think, it is a good time to carefully examine our past and current fellowship life as well as where we want our future life to go. That's where the Congregational Survey comes in which the "Packet Posse" have so wonderfully prepared for us. It includes some of the things that we did at the Minister Workshop with Rev. Kaufman but goes several steps further than that and will be extremely helpful to the search committee as we make choices based on our needs.

One could also apply Waldo's advice to the service on 11/1 where I invite you to examine your life from the point of view of being the change you want to see in the world. And then after doing the examining, please share w/ us some of the things that you are doing. Who knows? It just may motivate someone to join you, and the fact is that we make much more of an impact as a group than individually at any one thing. I believe we are here on this planet to LOVE and LEARN, and to use those attributes to make the world a better place, so I challenge you to spend some time in reflection during this month of Thanksgiving.

In Thanks for this wonderful gift of life which we have been given, Cynthia H.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our Whole Lives Program for grades 4-6 and grades 7-9

OWL returns to the Gorge!! Now famous after a feature article in Oprah magazine, *Our Whole Lives* is an award-winning sexual health program, developed jointly by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association. With the help of a county grant through the Faith Connection board (thanks representatives Laurie VanCott and Pat Pauly), eight adults from the area will be trained as facilitators. When you see UUs Tamara Thiel, Bonnie New, Robbie Lapp, and Nikki Brandon, or Riverside Church members Keith and Karen Harding, or Elaine Thompson, tell them "thank you!" Thanks also to experienced OWL leader Joe Usatine for signing up to teach again!

OWL helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, *Our Whole Lives* provides not only facts about anatomy and human development, but helps participants to clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality.

Classes for Grades 7-9 start Weds. January 6th

Parent Orientation Nights: Weds, Dec. 2nd and 9th - Plan to attend both

Location: Riverside church, 4th and State Streets, Hood River

Time: Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30 PM. January to June with vacation breaks

Classes for Grades 4-6 start Fall, 2010

At the Rockford Grange, Sunday mornings.

For information or to register contact Peggy Neuman.

Religious Education Volunteers – Our religious education program now spans from children in preschool to youth in high school! We could use an additional adult volunteer willing to spend one Sunday a month with the younger crowd. Nikki Brandon, our Coordinator for the program, will provide you with a lesson plan and materials for the day. You just need to get a good night's sleep and show up! Peggy Neuman is also seeking 1-3 adults interested in working with our youth (age 13-18), either on periodic Sunday mornings or for other activities during the week. Thanks for considering getting involved.

SUNDAY SERVICES

November 1 – Being the Change, Cindy Horton. Plan to share details of how you consciously do mundane things (like the 4 R's) and also be prepared to bring with you practical information of things/organizations you support. We will be compiling this data for sharing. Think of what you are doing in the following areas both financially and with your time: Transportation, Housing, Food, Trash, Traveling, Investments, Recreation/Leisure, Volunteering, Spiritual Practices, Work/Education, Taxes... **Nov 1** is also the DAY OF THE DEAD, so as a part of the abbreviated service, we will have a commemoration to honor our beloved departed family, friends and pets. You may bring a photo or other remembrance of them to share. Kids-come dressed up w/ your halloween finery on if you are so inclined! **This is a youth Sunday.**

Pam's cooking a light lunch for afterwards, so stick around for soUUp Sunday.

November 8 – God? Knows? – Rev. Gary Young. A favorite guest preacher of ours for many years, Gary is an unabashed theist and Christian.

Nov. 15 – UU's and the Language of Reverence, Elaine Castles. We UU's can generally agree about what it means to *act* our faith, but we get tangled up in knots when we try to *talk* about it. In this interactive service, we'll share our thoughts and ideas about a possible UU language of reverence. **This is youth Sunday. We'll be gathering downstairs during the sermon to plan the events for youth this year.**

Nov. 22 – Bringing Hope Where Hope is Hard to Find, Paul Blackburn. This Sunday's message focuses on the justice-building work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee as we end this year's Guest at Your Table program. This is the first of two Sundays to return your Guest boxes.

November 29 - Sharing Service on Gratitude, Elaine Castles.- This Sunday, please come prepared to share your experiences of gratitude. Bring a poem, a reading, a piece of music, an object, or just a thought that expresses what makes you grateful this Thanksgiving season. Bring your out-of-town guests! Bring your Guest at Your Table boxes!

CALENDAR

Newsletter Deadline for December Issue—Sunday morning, November 29.

Book Group - Sunday, November 1st, noon to 1pm. The book for discussion will be "Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey" by Jill Taylor.

A Full Moon Circle and Ceremony, a time to connect with the ancestors and all those on the other side, honoring the Celtic and many traditions, will be held November 1, 6:30 to 8:30 Sunday night. Robbie Lapp will host at The Coyote House, 5815 Billings Road, off Dee Hwy .2 mile south of Jim's Market south of Parkdale. Hot Cider and Tea will be served.

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'd like to help in November.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH

We have received correspondence from many ministers interested in serving our congregation. The board, working as the Search Committee, will be meeting in private session November 1 and 15 to review resumes and continue moving forward with the search. Thanks to the Packet Posse, Don Hardin, Scott Clements, Debbie Olson, Steve Castles, Bonnie New, Nick Webster and Kristen Dillon, a document describing our congregation is ready to go. You may look at a copy for review this Sunday or email your request to mcuufi@gmail.com. Please pick up a member survey at church, or watch your mail for its arrival this week. All surveys need to be returned by Nov 8.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

Volunteer opportunity – More of the “behind the scenes” type? Want to make a big difference in a short time? David Kao is looking for 2 people to be trained as **Sunday setup volunteers**. The job involves arriving at 9am to open the building, turn on the heat, and set up the chairs and front area upstairs at the Grange. Please contact David at 541-490-4697 or waterk9@charter.net

Hiking Group - The newly formed UU Hiking Group is always looking for participants. If you'd like to receive announcements of hikes, please send an email to Anita Johnston, anitajj@yahoo.com, and we'll add you to the email list.

Missing Rod Krehbiel, Theresa North, Jasper and Rory? Check out their blog, <http://krehbielsineurope.blogspot.com/>

Refreshments after service provide a welcome to visitors and give us all a reason to stay around and visit. Call Pam Morneau 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. 509-493-4483 (day) mmorneault@gorge.net

ELIOT INSTITUTE WINTER CAMP

Busy for New Year's? Many UU's in our district gather for 5 days of play and discussion and art and music and community. Eliot Institute is a vacation and a conference all in one. See Paul Blackburn for a brochure or visit www.eliotinstitute.org for more information.

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

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