



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

## GORGE UU NEWS – December, 2009

### LEADERSHIP LETTER

"Religion is action" - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Hello, dear friends,

December, Wow. It is hard to believe that another year is about to be over. The board is working hard to make 2010 a great new time for our fellowship with the new 1/4 time minister that we hope to be able to announce by the next newsletter. I am extremely pleased that we have too many good candidates to make this an easy choice!

I guess I shouldn't have been amazed that for a small job we have lots of candidates, but I was. And one of the very cool things to hear from the candidates' references from across the district, is that our congregation has a very good reputation on the district! Ministers really want to come here to serve, how wonderful!

And some interesting feedback for the 'Packet Posse' who did the congregational survey from one of the applicants was that we have "clarity, depth and honesty permeating the documentation", so another big Thank You to the people who worked on this! We really have a wonderful group of people who are working together in a cohesive way on this project, so that it makes it a pleasure to do this work. And I am sure that our new minister will help us to make our religion into more action with social justice issues, etc. There is much to look forward to with the new year. May we be blessed as we let go of the old and embrace the new at the end of the year, remembering that the only constant is change.

Peace, Cindy

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Dear Congregational Leaders,

200 youth and adults from 25 congregations road-tripped to Camp Cispus in Randle, WA to attend a most excellent conference with the theme *TheologiCON*. The conference was brilliantly coordinated by the youth and adults from Cedars UUC on Bainbridge Island, WA and Kitsap UUC in Bremerton, WA. To read more about it in the newsletter *CONtext* click here:

[http://www.pnwd.org/pubs/Context\\_fallo9.pdf](http://www.pnwd.org/pubs/Context_fallo9.pdf)

If you would like to peruse the youth con manual called *CONtemplate*, click here:

[http://www.pnwd.org/pubs/Yth\\_ConTemplate.pdf](http://www.pnwd.org/pubs/Yth_ConTemplate.pdf) - Tandi Rogers-Koerger, PNWD Program Specialist [Danielle Horton-Schleicher and I attended, a great event! – Kristen Dillon]

### SUNDAY SERVICES

**December 6 - Home: Music and Words, Rod Krehbiel.** This is a Youth Sunday. And remember to stick around afterwards for sUp Sunday!

**December 13 – The Evolution of Faith, Anders Liljeholm.** Our pulpit swap continues with this talk from an OMSI scientist and member of the Wy'East congregation in Portland.

**December 20<sup>th</sup> – Winter Solstice, Theresa North and Bruce Bolme.** Celebrate the turning of the seasons. PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE: This service is at 9:00 am, with potluck brunch to follow. There will also be a 7:30 sunrise greeting beforehand for the hardcore. NO SERVICE AT 10 AM. **Youth Sunday.**

**December 27<sup>th</sup> – What the fuss is all about, Paul Blackburn.** Some thoughts on Jesus of Nazareth from a non-Christian agnostic.

## CALENDAR

**December 2**, 6:30 pm, Riverside Church. First parent meeting for **Our Whole Lives** sexuality education program for grades 7-9. This meeting is for parents only. Please contact Peggy Neuman for more information.

Classes for 7-9<sup>th</sup> grades begin Wednesday evenings in January /\$15 registration fee

**Nov 27 – Dec 23, Alternative Gift Fair.** Now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year, our congregation is a sponsor of this fair, an opportunity to make contributions to nonprofit organizations in honor of those you love. You receive a card insert to let your friend or loved one know about the gift in his/her name and the joy that comes from helping those in need. The fair will run through Christmas at Small Planet Trading in Mall 202, at the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Cascade in Hood River.

**Game Night** continues with poker on **Saturday night, December 19, 7:00 PM**, at Paul and Kristen's house. No money, just a good time. Coffee, tea, and water are on the house and we'll see if we can even come up with some popcorn and cider. You are welcome to bring other snacks or drinks if you wish, but we would prefer no alcohol. Please call if you're coming.

**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](http://www.eliotinstitute.org) for more information.

**Newsletter Deadline for January Issue—Sunday morning, December 27.**

## NEWS

From Fellowship President **Cindy Horton** - There are some rumors going around the Mid-Columbia UU Fellowship about our recent **congregational survey**, and it has been confirmed they are indeed TRUE!

First--A big thank you to all of us. There was a two-thirds return rate. That is pretty phenomenal for a survey form of that length. The results are available to all for review at the greeting table on Sundays or by contacting [mcuuf1@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf1@gmail.com).

Second--The Survey Team did a lot of hard work. Our profound thanks to Kristen Dillon, Steve Castles, Bonnie New, and others who put in the muscle to make it happen.

Third--A BIG "Hats Off" round of applause to Kristen Dillon. Other survey members confirm she was the real heavy hitter that carried it all off so grandly. Thank you so much, Kristen.

## MINISTERIAL SEARCH

Our board is continuing the process of finding our first minister! They will be finishing evaluations of the leading candidates in the coming few weeks. The process includes review of the materials that the minister submits, obtaining letters of recommendation, interviewing references, an interview with the candidate, and watching the minister present a sermon. The interview includes:

- \* Introductions;
- \* Discussion of minister's professional history — including any statement or questions from the search committee as well as those from the candidate;
- \* Discussion of important areas of church life. Time is allowed in each area for questions from the candidate as well as the committee. Areas covered include: Religious philosophy and worship; pastoral care and working with people; church programming; leadership roles; religious education and youth; and financial and contract matters.

The time commitment that our elected leaders are putting into this process is huge. While the process has to be confidential, you're welcome to say "thanks" to the next member of the board you come across! – Kristen Dillon, Administrator

## ONGOING PROGRAMS

**Religious Education** – 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 (nbrandon@gorge.net), 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.

**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, and we'll add you to the email list.

**sUUps 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

## OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF

**PNWD District Assembly, February 19-21, 2010, Bellevue, WA**

***Come to the annual gathering of UUs from throughout the Northwest. Register at [www.pnwd.org](http://www.pnwd.org) -> news and events-> District Assembly***

- § See and hear Grammy award-winning entertainer Bill Harley
- § Meet Rev. Peter Morales, the new UUA President
- § Meet with hundreds of other Northwest UUs
- § Share knowledge, experience, and resources
- § Learn new skills and expand your understanding of UUism at stimulating workshops
- § Be a delegate and participate in making district decisions at PNWD Annual Meeting
- § Above all have fun learning, laughing, and worshipping with new UU friends

**CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHEN, AND WHERE? Go to [www.mcuuf.org](http://www.mcuuf.org)**

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