



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

## **GORGE UU NEWS – April, 2010**

### **WRITTEN OFFERINGS from Rev. Craig Moro**

I visited several different churches and checked out the ministers before deciding where I wanted to serve as intern. Paul stood out as a powerful and charismatic pulpit presence. He spoke with just a few notes. Sometimes he wandered from his topic, but his listeners' interest never wandered at all. I wanted to learn to do something like what he did on a Sunday morning, and he was good at teaching it.

On other days, however, he was just as effective at teaching an intern what not to do. He seemed to live on the fly. We would have our weekly meeting scheduled, but he would forget and schedule something else—perhaps a couple's premarital counseling—at the very same time. Sometimes he would even triple schedule, and then suggest that we turn this free-for-all into a “rap session.” His was a model of energy and enthusiasm, but it had its limitations

Later, I had the opportunity to take a tutorial in theology with the president of Starr King School. These tutorials were hard to get and much coveted by the students: private sessions, one-on-one. Bob would allow no distractions—no phone calls, no knocks on the door, no beeps or rings or buzzes. It was just Bob, the student, perhaps a book that he'd assigned, some paper, and some colored pens. His was a model of dedication and commitment, low-key but powerful—a structure that carried as much meaning as the content did.

These days, we seem to live more and more on the fly. The cell phone rings, and the person you were with is suddenly not “there.” We multi-task, divide our attention, and try to do so many things at once. Many of us are excellent jugglers, and manage to avoid disasters, like Paul usually did. Our energy and enthusiasm carries us through. But I think that there is much to recommend Bob's model. Dedicating one's attention to a specific person, a specific task, at a certain time with no distractions allows us to work (or to play!) more deeply and more thoroughly. It's the model that I try to use. I hope it works for you!

In fellowship,

Craig

### **LEADERSHIP LETTER**

*"Wonderful how completely everything in wild nature fits into us, as if truly part and parent of us. The sun shines not on us, but in us. The rivers flow not past, but through us, thrilling, tingling, vibrating every fiber and cell of the substance of our bodies, making them glide and sing." - John Muir*

Greetings, fellow sojourners on this planet and Members/Friends of MCUUF,

It is April already and it is joyous to be past the gloom of another winter, though I enjoyed her time for reflection and rejuvenation. This is also the time of year of our Annual Meeting, and it will be 4/25th this year, after the service. And this year, besides the usual election of officers, and budget evaluation/approval, we will be learning of the recommendations of a Bylaw Committee which has been working diligently for many months considering where we want to go now that we are a bigger congregation. We seem to have outgrown our old Bylaws, which did serve us well for many years, but the one constant in life is change.

It is good to consider who we are and how we want to be amongst ourselves, and consider how these help us go into the future. Their recommendation is to totally revamp them, and so there are many changes that may take a while to digest. To this end, the board has elected that the bylaw committee inform the congregation of the major changes in their recommendations at the Annual Meeting, then in May we will have an after-church workshop to discuss the implications of the changes, and then take some time to consider them, and vote on these changes in the fall as we see fit. It is wonderful that one of our principles is the use of the democratic process in our congregations, and we do value every member's opinion. There is just a lot to think about, so we will also be putting in the newsletter a Bylaw Change of the Month and discussing what that means. I do hope all of you join us for the Annual Meeting this year!

Now in the springtime of the year with the turning of the wheel, almost to the full "Worm Moon", and looking forward to an upcoming Youth-directed service on Earth Day, may our thoughts tend toward our relationship with our mother, Gaia.

Peace, Your President, Cynthia Horton

## SUNDAY SERVICES

**April 4 - Easter and Resurrection, Don Hardin.** A contemporary honoring of our Christian heritage. Plan to stay after, because this is **sUUp Sunday**.

**April 11 – This I Believe, Elizabeth Suh.** If God has always been a fact of your life, can you one day decide he doesn't matter? Elizabeth Suh was raised as a Jehovah's Witness until high school, when her family left the religion disillusioned. Now as a Unitarian Universalist, she finds the religious principles she learned growing up are still with her, and so is the God who gives peace, strength and joy. **Youth please come to rehearse for next week's worship.**

**April 18 – Earth Day, MCUUF Teens.** A worship service of music, video, and theater created and put on by our youth.

**April 25 – Out of the Floody, Floody, Rev. Craig Moro.** We read in the Book of Genesis that all of a sudden God got mad at his whole creation—not only people, but plants and animals too! What was going on? Did God need a “time out” or just some time with a friend?

## CALENDAR

**Newsletter Deadline for May edition – Sunday April 25**

**FISH**—It is coming up on our church's turn to serve at our local food bank - FISH. Please let Tamara Thiel know if you can fill in to help. Our days are Monday - April 19, Wednesday - April 21, and Friday - April 23. The times are from 3:15 to approximately 5:00 PM

**New UU Class, April 24 at 4pm** - Considering becoming a member of our fellowship? One of the suggested steps on your path is attending a “New UU” class to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and our congregation. Next class led by Rev. Craig Moro, Steve Castles (volunteer coordinator), and Kristen Dillon – April 24 at 4 pm, followed by a Circle Supper if you choose to stay!

**CIRCLE SUPPERS ARE COMING AGAIN ON APRIL 24 !!!**

Circle suppers are small potluck dinners, held in members' homes, that give MCUUF'ers a chance to socialize and converse in a relaxed setting. If you would like to attend this round of dinners, please e-mail Elaine Castles. Elaine will also have sign-up sheets available in church on April 11 and April 18.

**Annual Congregational Meeting** – Sunday April 25 after worship. Please plan on attending. Agenda and supplementary information will be distributed by email and at Sunday services starting April 11.

## FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Our study group used Andrew Newberg's [Born to Believe](#) as the focus of our last five months of intense study and discussion of religious topics.

Beliefs are a human given, formed from "an assemblage of perceptual experiences, emotional evaluations, and cognitive abstractions." Emotional experiences have a far stronger fixing effect on these beliefs than do our rational cognitions.

Healthy beliefs have positive benefits to our bodies, our psychological health, and to general society. Newberg defines the somewhat paradoxical path to healthy beliefs as "a skeptical open-minded attitude."

- Negative emotions do have a strong fixing effect on associated beliefs in our brains.
- False memories are harder to dismiss than the ones that are really true.
- Miss-information is often easily believed.
- Beliefs do tend to become more fixed as we get older, but are still subject to change.
- We all have biases. Newberg lists 27 different kinds of biases we engage in.

Being aware of how we form our beliefs can help us to (1) a better understanding of our biases, (2) realizing limitations of our beliefs, and (3) tuning into our "healthy beliefs" to become more informed, more educated, more enlightened, and better believers. This task does require time and patience and hard work.

Our next series of the Adult RE Forum will use the book [Rational Mysticism](#) by John Horgan as its focus. The 5 sessions of this series start March 17th and will continue every other Wednesday morning until May 12th from 10 AM to 12 noon in White Salmon. The group is open to both members and non-members and there is no charge. Interested individuals should contact Don Hardin at 509 493 4819.

**In honor of Final Four week at the NCAA Basketball Tournament**, our friend Mike Hendricks and his 17-year-old great-nephew each wrote a poem in honor of the event. Mike shared his with us...

## The Ball Don't Care

The ball don't care  
As it bounces off your toe  
If you hail from Kansas State  
Or from O-HI-O.

Doesn't matter to it  
If you dribble left or right  
Stand real low down to the ground  
Or soar way up in height.

The ball don't care  
When your pass is on the mark  
If your hair is light and floppy  
Or the darkest shade of dark.

Couldn't care any less  
If your eyes are weak or strong  
If you're just now starting school  
Or for graduation long.

The ball don't care  
If your hand is black or white  
When you time your jump exactly  
And block that shot just right.

Has no way to know  
As you push it down the floor  
If your family's rich and fancy  
Or your mom's alone and poor.

No, the ball don't care  
Who you are or where you're from  
Whether you've had breaks and privilege  
Or been broken from the gun.

All the ball cares about  
And keep this well in mind  
Is what you can do to move it  
When the game is on the line.

Wouldn't it be nice  
If Life were just the same?  
Giving no one breaks or passes  
For his money or his name.

Giving every man and woman  
An equal chance to show  
How we each can be effective  
And what each of us can know?

So here's my fondest wishes  
A hope for my dear Mike  
One more way that he and I  
Can strive to be alike.

Let's be like that ball of wisdom  
I think that'll be enough  
Let's be open to all people  
Let's let people show their stuff

## ONGOING PROGRAMS

**UU Meetups** is a grassroots casual social group meant to nurture friendships and a sense of belonging within the fellowship.

**Grassroots** means that whoever has an idea for an activity "announces" it by sending an email to the list. Interested participants reply to let the organizer know how many to expect. (Drop-ins are also welcome).

**Planning** is either in advance or last-minute spur of the moment.

**Ideas:** A movie, a play, lunch, a cup of coffee, skiing, a visit to a museum, a concert, or charitable and civic activities... If you're interested in being on the email announcement list, please send an email to Anita.

**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.

**Spiritual Practice Group**—Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The Teachings of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky form the basis for study and discussion.

**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.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

What: Conference on Drone/Robotic Warfare

When: April 16-19, 2010

Where: Riverside Church, Hood River

The first citizens' conference addressing resistance to drone warfare and robotic social control will be held in Hood River, Oregon, April 16-19. It will feature a diverse list of speakers that includes nationally-known war protest leader Cindy Sheehan as well as Dr. Tad McGeer, original founder of Insitu, Inc., which is now a developer of military drones in the Columbia River Gorge. Other featured speakers will include Dr. Marcy Darnovsky of the Center for Genetics and Society, a California organization which works to encourage responsible uses and governance of emerging technologies, Peter Lumsdaine, founder of the Alliance to Resist Robotic Warfare & Society (ARROWS), and Joe Roos, co-founder and former Managing Editor/Publisher of Sojourners magazine.

Conference organizers are the Columbia River Fellowship for Peace and ARROWS. More information about the conference can be found at [www.ColumbiaRiverPeace.org](http://www.ColumbiaRiverPeace.org)

## DISTRICT AND UUA NEWS

### **Breaking News from the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office:**

**The UU-UNO speaks Truth to Power; and the Powerful Listen.** This story just came out today and it is too good not to share. If you responded to our appeal, please read this story and enjoy. If you did not respond to our appeal, take this opportunity to become part of this exciting work where you can have an impact in this world. Your support and activism make a difference. Here is an example of what we can do together:

Rev. Patricia Ackerman, UU-UNO LGBT/SOGI Human Rights Program Officer, is an Episcopal priest who has been in contact with South Africa's Nobel Peace Laureate, Desmond Tutu. She asked him to speak out against the proposed kill-the-gays bill in Uganda. Tutu told Patricia that he'd already written a piece that would be published today. Please read Desmond Tutu's appeal for love in Africa and the world.

Desmond Tutu Op Ed / Washington Post / Africa and Gay and Lesbian Rights / March 12, 2010

### **In Africa, a step backward on human rights**

Hate has no place in the house of God.

No one should be excluded from our love, our compassion or our concern because of race or gender, faith or ethnicity — or because of their sexual orientation. Nor should anyone be excluded from health care on any of these grounds. In my country of South Africa, we struggled for years against the evil system of apartheid that divided human beings, children of the same God, by racial classification and then denied them fundamental human rights. We knew this was wrong. Thankfully, the world supported us in our struggle for freedom and dignity.

It is time to stand up against another wrong.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people are part of so many families. They are part of the human family. They are part of God's family. And of course they are part of the African family. But a wave of hate is spreading across my beloved continent. People are again being denied their fundamental rights and freedoms. Men have been falsely charged and imprisoned in Senegal, and health services for these men and their community have suffered. In Malawi, men have been jailed and humiliated for expressing their partnerships. Just this month, mobs in Mtwapa Township, Kenya, attacked men they suspected of being gay. Kenyan religious leaders, I am ashamed to say, threatened an HIV clinic there for providing counseling services to all members of that community, because the clerics wanted gay men excluded. Uganda's Parliament is debating legislation that would make homosexuality punishable by life imprisonment, and more discriminatory legislation has been debated in Rwanda and Burundi. These are terrible backward steps for human rights in Africa.

Our lesbian and gay brothers and sisters across Africa are living in fear.

And they are living in hiding — away from care, away from the protection the state should offer to every citizen, and away from health care in the AIDS era, when all of us, especially Africans, need access to essential HIV services. That this pandering to intolerance is being done by politicians looking for scapegoats for their failures is not surprising. But it is a great wrong. An even larger offense is that it is being done in the name of God. Show me where Christ said "Love thy fellow man, except for the gay ones." Gay people, too, are made in my God's image. I would never worship a homophobic God.

“But they are sinners,” I can hear the preachers and politicians say. “They are choosing a life of sin for which they must be punished.” My scientist and medical friends have shared with me a reality that so many gay people have confirmed, I now know it in my heart to be true. No one chooses to be gay. Sexual orientation, like skin color, is another feature of our diversity as a human family. Isn’t it amazing that we are all made in God’s image, and yet there is so much diversity among his people? Does God love his dark- or his light-skinned children less? The brave more than the timid? And do any of us know the mind of God so well that we can decide for him who is included, and who is excluded, from the circle of his love?

The wave of hate that is underway must stop. Politicians who profit from exploiting this hate, from fanning it, must not be tempted by this easy way to profit from fear and misunderstanding. And my fellow clerics, of all faiths, must stand up for the principles of universal dignity and fellowship. Exclusion is never the way forward on our shared paths to freedom and justice.

*The writer is archbishop emeritus of Cape Town, South Africa. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984.*

### **Come to UU Celebration of Interdependence Camp!**

MISSION: To provide UU’s from the Pacific Northwest District an affordable and sustainable retreat, in honor of our 7<sup>th</sup> Principle: loving and caring for our blue green earth. This camp is an opportunity to share multi-generational fellowship, while rekindling our spirits and celebrating interdependence. Rich offerings of music, play, spiritual practices and learning abound in an alcohol-free and electronics-free setting.

WHAT: 3rd Annual UU Celebration of Interdependence Family Camp □

WHEN: Fourth of July Weekend, Thursday, July 1 to Sunday, July 4 □

WHERE: Camp Cedar Ridge in Vernonia, 40 miles west of Portland in Tillamook Forest

WHO: Sponsored by UUCCWC/Hillsboro. Come Join Us! Rev. Sue Ayer, chaplain.

Early Bird Special (April 15-May17 postmarked): □\$140 adults/\$145 for elder/accessibility issues housing; \$95, 5-9 yr olds, 4 & under free. □

Regular prices (postmarked May 18 on): All adults/Children 10 and older: \$150 □Include THREE nights lodging and NINE meals, along with all camp amenities: pool, slip-n-slide, athletic courts, 28 acres on a forested river under magical starry nights.

Registration: For information and registration form: [www.uuccwc.org/familycamp](http://www.uuccwc.org/familycamp) or contact Sara Cloe, DRE, at UUCCWC, 503-648-1720.

### **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of North Bay – Wine Country Holiday**

*“Napa was as delightful as I had expected. What was equally important and somewhat unexpected was the profound connections I felt with my hosts and hostesses.” Carol Lim, Los Angeles*

The UU’s of Napa, California proudly announce a new season of our **Wine Country Excursions**. Again, we offer a variety of options for an inside look at one of America’s most beautiful areas, internationally known for fine wines, gourmet dining and spectacular vistas.

There much to see and do in the Napa and Sonoma Valleys: e.g. wine tasting at renowned and boutique wineries; visits to art galleries and museums; exploring the natural beauty of our hills and valleys on miles of hiking and bike trails or by car on our highways and back country roads.

**We offer two choices:** Both start with comfortable lodging in members’ homes with full breakfast (up to 3 nights). You can choose a 2-day “Wine Country Excursion,” a guided, personalized tour conducted by one of our members--some with wine industry experience--or lodging and self-guided touring. If desired, we provide guidance, maps, etc.

The program runs from April through October. Our fees are below market rate for similar services and **all proceeds go to our small fellowship**. For complete details contact: Tom Wilson (707-254-7443) or [2wilsons1dog@comcast.net](mailto:2wilsons1dog@comcast.net)

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