

# MCUUF NEWSLETTER – JUNE, 2015

## LEADERSHIP LETTER

*We are born, we grow up, we live our lives as best we can. If we are thoughtful, we are good parents and good partners. If we are wise, we strive for integrity and intimacy. If we are fortunate, we discover love and joy. If we are able, we make the world a little better than we found it. That is all there is for any of us. – Robert Reich*

I've admired Robert Reich through the years for his thoughtful, persistent, polite advocacy for the things he thinks will make the world and our country better for everyone, not just the folks already doing well.

He's been an advocate for economic justice throughout his career. He's had impact through his presence in the media, as an academic, and as the secretary of labor under Bill Clinton. If you took leave last year under the Family Medical Leave Act, you have Robert Reich's implementation team to thank. He oversaw an increase in the minimum wage. He was the first Democratic candidate for major office to support same-sex marriage.

I've also got respect for the good humor of someone who stands 4'10", ran for the Democratic nomination for governor of Massachusetts, and titled his campaign book *I'll Be Short*.

Robert Reich posted the words quoted above at the start of a Facebook page about 10 days ago. At the time he was in Florida, with his 102-year-old father, who is dying.

In reading his words, I see chance to pause and consider, to remember that so much of what we do reflexively we actually do by choice. At the end we leave behind ripples travelling outward from the lives we lived in private and in public. Enlarging and fading over time, that's all.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your board president these past two years. Here's to many more years together, making the world a little better than we found it.

In faith,

Kristen Dillon  
President, Board of Trustees

## FROM OUR MINISTER

Now that there is a multitude of TV channels to watch, what was once a staple of late-night TV fare has proliferated into any-time TV. We can tune into channels like the Home Shopping Network, get a 24-hour infomercial infusion, and see the latest kitchen gadgets on display. There's the *Eggstractor*, which is supposed to peel eggs faster than any human. The *Vegetti* will shred any vegetable into strands that resemble spaghetti. Got a kitchen problem? Just buy the right gadget and it will be solved. These ads seem to imply that salvation is yours for \$19.95 plus postage and handling.

This idea has even caught on with religion. The *Belief-o-matic* quiz will tell you which religion you ought to practice. This quiz at the Beliefnet website apparently gets rid of the mess and difficulty around religious discernment and hands us a nicely wrapped, tidy package. Ah, satisfaction, at last! Now! The Belief-o-Matic does our shopping for us.

This consumerism is the polar opposite of religious experience. Consumerism is all around us, like the air we breathe. Its invisibility hides an insidious nature. In a capitalist economy, shopping becomes the core practice of the faithful.

These attitudes seep right into our religious communities. These sensibilities don't work well to promote spiritual growth. Can we, should we, consume religion? Can we purchase community? Is it possible to buy wisdom? Is the job of religion to dispense happiness like a vending machine? The Belief-o-Matic would have us think so.

As Unitarian Universalists, we hold dear the values of a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We cherish the right of conscience, even if that means disagreeing with authority. In Unitarian Universalism, we're all about choices. The kinds of choices we hold dear offer stark contrast to the choices of consumer culture. These encourage flitting from item to item. When an item no longer satisfies us, we don't buy that item anymore.

People who have undergone tremendous change for the good tell us that transformation often doesn't feel good, or cozy and warm. It's a funny thing, though, this religious life. When we stick with it—and engage more deeply, and ask for a little bit less—things get magical. Our lives change. Hungers we didn't even know we had emerge, yet we feel nourished. Life takes on new dimensions.

A consumer culture would never tell us that the journey of a lifetime begins at church. Unitarian Universalists have a long history of being counter-cultural. How might we engage with this dear fellowship in ways that defy the consumer culture that poisons the collective air we breathe? Let's slow down this summer and pause, reflect, pray and discern. Do we want transactions? Or transformation? Do we want the status quo? Or to change our lives, and change the world?

In love and service,

Rev. Judy

## SUNDAY SERVICES

**June 7: “A Local Hero”** Sarah Segal and Hood River Middle School students share their story of learning about local unsung hero Minoru Yasui and developing ways to share his life accomplishments with the Hood River community and beyond.

**June 14: Pride Series Part 1, “Drawing the Circle Wide”**, Rev. Judy Zimmerman. With June comes “pride season,” where communities across Oregon celebrate LGBTQ history and people. In the first of a two-part Sunday service series, we'll visit the story of Philip, an Ethiopian eunuch from antiquity, and the notion of radical hospitality.

**June 21: Pride Series, Part 2, “What’s a Father To Do ?”** Bruce B. and Rev. Judy Zimmerman will engage in jovial dialogue as they explore “Divine Masculinities.” What beliefs about what makes a man and a father have been forgotten? How might they guide us in shaping new ways of fathering, nurturing and expressing masculinity in our modern world?

#### **NEW MEMBER PROFILE: LORI G.**



**Lori G. and Dan B.**

Lori G. holds a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering from the University of Michigan. Prior to her retirement, she was a startup manager in the Asia paper industry, mostly in India, where she trained local staff to start new chemical production facilities. In 1998 she met her now-husband Dan B. on an Idaho kayaking trip with mutual friends. They married, lived in Pendleton for a while, and when it came time for them to retire a little a couple of years ago they started searching for a scenic, outdoorsy place to live. As she puts it, they had “played” in the Hood River area—biking, kayaking, and skiing, “and it has proven to be a most excellent choice for us.” They live off East Side Drive, near Odell. Lori was raised in Bloomfield Hills, near Detroit. Her dad was a Christian Scientist, her mom a Catholic. When Lori was in high school the family tried UU, and she joined its youth group. She says she gains much of her spiritual energy today from the outdoors, the open-mindedness of UU, and friends she has found at MCUUF.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### ***Your Committee on Ministry needs your input***

As a part of its mission to help enhance all of the ministries of our congregation, your Committee on Ministry (Elaine C., Don H., and Kimberly H.) is reviewing our Adult RE/small group ministry offerings. To do this, we need your help. On Sunday, May 24, we hosted small-group gatherings to solicit ideas about time-limited groups that might be of interest to you. A second session will be offered June 7. Please plan to attend this discussion to share your ideas about how we might further develop this crucial area of our ministry. It will also be a great opportunity to get better acquainted with your COM members.

### ***March for love: The 2015 Portland Pride Parade, June 14***

To quote First Unitarian Church's Rev. Bill Sinkford, "What's important is not whom you love but that you love." You can stand on the side of love AND have fun participating in Portland's largest LGBTQ event by joining MCUUFers and other Portland-area UUs in marching in the 2015 Portland Pride Parade Sunday, June 14. There's free parking across from the First Church in Portland. Some of us will attend the 9:30 a.m. service, then walk with other UUs to our assigned starting point. From there, we will march 1.5 miles to the parade's end at Waterfront Park, then walk back to First Church. Car-pooling to Portland is available. If you can help represent MCUUF in this year's parade, please let Tom K. know.

***Volunteers Wanted – GA outdoor activities.*** Our congregation is hosting an organized pre-GA hike on June 24. We're expecting about 25 UUs from all over the country to attend. The event is a fund-raiser for the congregation and a great friend-raiser for everyone who participates. You get to go back to the huge GA scene with a couple of dozen new friends!

The arrangements are all made, and we're looking for 2-3 additional adults or teens to help lead the hike. You would need to ride into Portland at around 6:45 a.m. June 24 and travel back out for the Bonneville Dam tour and hike—or meet us at Multnomah Falls at 11 a.m. Our schedule gets us back to Portland in time for opening GA festivities at the convention center, including our Regional Ingathering.

We're also looking for a guide who would be willing to pick up two people in Portland on Monday, June 29, and bring them to the gorge to go hiking. Interested? Contact Bonnie N.

### ***Women's Awareness Circle***

The next Women's Awareness Circle will meet on Friday, June 19, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the home of Jodie H. We will continue our discussion series covering each decade of our lives. The second in the series will cover from age 30 to 39. We'll choose 2-3 turning points that shaped our lives during that decade and discuss which ones taught us something about ourselves. All UU women are welcome. Please RSVP to Debbie O.

### ***Church Coed Softball League***

The Church Coed Softball League is starting again in June and July. Everyone over 18 is welcome. All games will be played at Westside School starting at 6:30 p.m. The main rule: have fun. For more information, email Tom H.

### ***Care Team***

MCUUF strives to be a community that supports each other. If you or someone you know in the fellowship has a need because of a loss, illness, or other difficulty, please notify Rev. Judy or any other member of our Care Team: Jane F., Ray K., Shelley B., Tom P., or Anita J. The team will do its best to organize respectful and appropriate help for the situation.

## **MCUUF COMMUNITY ACTION**

***Interested in walking for fitness and camaraderie?*** Bonnie N. will lead a walking group four days a week (maybe two mornings and two afternoons). Come as

many times a week as you'd like. We'll aim to walk "briskly"—heart rate up but still able to talk, like about 4 mph. If you need to work up to that, or if you prefer a shorter route, no problem. We'll walk a three-mile, out-and-back route down Post Canyon Road starting at Frankton; if you need to go at a slower pace or walk a shorter route, we'll all still be "together." Contact Bonnie N.

***FISH food bank:*** Next volunteer days are coming in July.

***Join:*** Want to help on the Community Action committee? Have a CA project you want to lead? Contact Bonnie N.

## MCUUF

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