

# MCUUF NEWSLETTER—SEPTEMBER, 2015

## LEADERSHIP LETTER

As a parent of school aged children September means Back-To-School. Going into a new school year is exciting for the kids (with a pinch of trepidation). It is exciting for the parents as well, not only because there is once again structure in our daily lives, but because education is so important.

In UU our youth are also learning and that UU education is equally important. We, as a fellowship, have made a commitment to have a Religious Education program for our youth. Several years back we made the decision to hire a (very part-time) director of Religious Education, Alicia, and support staff for her. The youth of our fellowship have benefited from a couple successful curricula, namely the Coming of Age (COA) and the Our Whole Lives (OWL) that our tweens and teens have participated in. There have been youth retreats and other activities in addition to the formal curricula programs. A few of our teens have participated in UU programs outside our fellowship as well. We have thankfully had some really key strong adult leaders and mentors that have facilitated these programs for the youth. It's been amazing to watch these kids grow up in UU and head off into the world with a spiritual sense of self that I envy.

And as great as that has all been I think this is just the tip of the iceberg as I believe our RE program has so much potential. There are several exciting changes currently happening in our MCUUF RE program thanks to the enthusiasm and motivation of both our minister and our RE director Alicia. It is the 'if we build it, they will come' philosophy. Having a stronger RE program is integral to the health and growth of our fellowship. Families won't stick around if we don't offer spiritual growth and learning in our youth. That potential is realized only with fellowship involvement. In order to serve our youth we need mentors, volunteer support, and a willingness to do a little here and there. Even if it doesn't seem like much a little goes a long way, especially if there are lots of folks giving just a little. I am asking everyone to take a moment and ask yourself if there is something you have to offer to our youth. I believe you will find that participating with the kids is a win win and you will be enriched by the experience. We *can* build it and they *will* come.

Happy back to school all!

In faith,  
Stacey Campbell, Board President



### FROM OUR MINISTER

When I drove into Portland last week, I stopped at Burgerville to get a bite to eat on my drive home. It was late in the afternoon, and I was way overdue to have lunch. Given my state of hunger, I was glad that mine was the only car in the drive-thru. When I pulled up to the window, the clerk was more than just polite. She really seemed interested in how my day was going and why I was eating lunch so late in the day. I hadn't expected someone to be so friendly and genuinely caring. We had the longest conversation I've ever had at a drive-thru window. And my day was made better for it.

I had expected to encounter a curt and surly fast food worker. Instead I met someone who saw her job as being more than filling a customer's food order. I hope that she's someone who has found meaning in her work beyond that of earning a paycheck. That would be surprising given that the overwhelming majority of people – over 90% -- are “not engaged” or “actively disengaged” from their work, says a Gallup poll conducted last year. Workers are spending most of their waking hours doing things they would rather not do. Does this sound familiar?

Many of us have found ourselves stuck in jobs that grant little room, if any, to meet our very real human needs for friendship, some control over the pace of our work, or conditions that would actually permit us to do our jobs to the best of our ability. Let alone a job that is meaningful, or one that provides adequate pay and benefits. Or a work-life balance that would allow for a less harried family life and participation in community affairs. Or our common life in this religious fellowship.

Escalating economic inequality was ratified as the new Congregational Study Action Issue at this year's UUA General Assembly, held in Portland earlier this summer. A key part of addressing this issue is putting a stop to worker exploitation. Here in the Gorge, workers are carrying heavy loads of fruit on their bodies while climbing tall ladders in the trees in the heat, so that we can have fresh fruit to eat. Many of these workers are undocumented and afraid to speak up about unsafe work conditions or their living conditions. Andrea Miller of CAUSA, Oregon's statewide immigrant rights organization and Martha Sonato, the daughter of Hood River farmworkers, will join us on Labor Day Weekend

Sunday to speak about issues affecting immigrant workers, and how we at MCUUF might partner to build a community that visibly demonstrates its care for all workers. Engaging in efforts to build the common good and making our UU values of compassion and human dignity alive in daily life brings its own rewards.

The Sunday after Labor Day marks the start of a new church year! We'll have a Water Communion ceremony at Sunday Service on September 13. Water Communion is a signature Unitarian Universalist ritual. Please bring a sample of water from some place that's special to you for use in the ceremony. All ages will worship together for the whole service.

Yours in a labor of love,  
Rev. Judy

### ***Lummi Nation Totem Comes to Hood River***

On August 25 several members of MCUUF attended a ceremony to welcome Lummi Nation leaders as they journeyed with a totem pole carved under the leadership of Jewell James, master carver. The totem is making a journey from Lummi Nation tribal lands near Bellingham, Washington to the Northern Cheyenne Nation, Montana, to draw attention to proposed coal export terminals in Lummi ancestral lands and along the Columbia River. MCUUF Member and Hood River Mayor Paul Blackburn and Rev. Judy Zimmerman participated in the ceremony held at Riverside Community Church.



**Paul, Dan, Leanne (at left) and Robbie (right, foreground) join in laying on hands to bless the totem.**

## SUNDAY SERVICES

**September 6: Andrea Miller, Executive Director of CAUSA**, Oregon's leading immigrants' rights organization, and Martha Sonato will speak about this great issue of our day.

**September 13: "River of Life," Rev. Judy Zimmerman.** We begin the church year with our annual ingathering service. Please bring some water from a place that is special to you for our Water Communion ceremony. This is a multigenerational service, where all ages worship together for the entire service.

**September 20: "Spiritual Photography"** Local photographer Peter Marbach will show and speaks about some of his gorgeous work.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ***Youth and Children's Religious Education***

We are currently registering students for our 2015-16 curriculum year and are looking to add new attendees; this is time to make those calls and sing the praises of our fellowship. We will be starting our RE year on Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. Please be sure to grab a registration form from the welcome table. Fill it out and return it to any of the RE staff. Also our RE program is now offering welcome packets for perspective RE students and parents. They can be found at the welcome table during service. If you have someone you know that may be interested in having their children attend and may need more information, please pick one up and pass them along. If you have any questions please contact Alicia.

### ***Parent Night Out:***

Here at the MCUUF we are taking a look at how we honor families and how best we can serve them. We know sometimes having time for yourself and /or your partner is few and far between and we want to make sure you are taking that time for self-care. Our RE program will be offering childcare on three Saturdays this fellowship year. This care is offered for children 0-14yrs and will be staffed by our current RE staff and volunteers. We will have a sign in sheet for when you arrive and staff will be there to check in with you for any special instructions in regard to your children (bottle feeding, homework help, potty training instructions, etc.). Dinner will be provided.

### **Schedule:**

Children's class: Sunday

Youth class: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays

Children's Chapel or multigenerational services: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday

### **Parent night out:**

October 24<sup>th</sup> 5pm-8pm      Games and Dinner

December 19<sup>th</sup> 5pm-8pm      Movie and Dinner

February 13<sup>th</sup> TBA              Dance and Dinner

## ***Building Bridges: A World Religions Program***

Youth 2015-16

Building Bridges is a world religions program to deepen youth's understanding of the dynamic, fascinating, and varied world in which they live. It seeks to broaden their knowledge of humanity and embolden their spiritual search.

Children's 2015-16

This yearlong curriculum offers children the grounding of a religious community and tradition, along with the freedom to discover and express their uniqueness. The underlying theme throughout is anti-bias and multicultural education, which celebrates diversity and interdependency.

For more information, go to [www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/bridges](http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/bridges) or contact Alicia.



**Peggy and Bonnie are all smiles  
after the totem blessing ceremony**

***Alive Inside: A Story of Music and Memory*** is the documentary film that Hons highly recommended at our "Joy of Singing" service last Sunday. Winner of the Audience Award for a U.S. Documentary at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival, it is about music, memory loss, Alzheimer's, "and opening up after being shut down" through the use of music delivered on ipods at care facilities. Tom K, who plays piano "oldies" at Hawks Ridge and the Hood River Care Center (including its Alzheimer's unit), loves this film and has a copy, if anyone wants to borrow (it's also available from Netflix). HR Care Center is moving toward using the ideas in the film. This is something every care center, and each of us, needs to consider for when/if memory loss/dementia approaches.

***The next Women's Awareness Circle*** will meet on Friday, September 25, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. It is graciously hosted by Jodie H. We will continue our discussion series covering each decade of our lives. The third in the series will cover from age 40 to 49. 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.

### **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 our members and friends who need it.



**FISH gardeners**

### **MCUUF COMMUNITY ACTION**

**Join MCUUF's Warming Shelter team!** UUs will again help staff the Hood River Warming Shelter, located this year at the old Fruit Tree/Mongolian BBQ building (next to Charburger). Volunteers are needed on the UU team so we can staff the center one weekday night every other week through the season (mid-November to mid-March). Training is required (see below). For more info, and to sign up, contact coordinator Fran F.

**Warming Shelter volunteer training/orientation** take place at the shelter (4140 Frontage Road, next to Charburger) on these dates:

- **Thurs, Sept. 17**, 6:30-9pm
- **Tues, Sept. 22**, 6:30-9pm
- **Sat, Oct. 17**, 9-11:30am
- **Wed, Oct. 28**, 6:30-9pm

Each volunteer must attend a training (including previous volunteers, due to new insurance requirements).

**Seeking donations for a new freezer for WGAP food bank in White Salmon:** WGAP (Washington Gorge Action Programs) serves hungry neighbors in Klickitat and Skamania counties. Their food bank is moving into a new location and needs a large freezer that will cost \$35,000! If you are willing to help

with a donation, please go to their crowdfunding website: <http://igg.me/at/wgap/x/10520018> . We will also be having a special collection at next Sunday's service to support this important mission.

**Need a UU organizer for the annual CROP walk:** Gorge area churches are again participating in Church World Services' annual CROP walk to raise fund for farming and water projects in developing countries. The walk is on Sat., Sept. 26. The organizer would enlist UUs to walk and/or to sponsor walkers by making donations. 25% of the money raised will go to FISH and WGAP food banks, the other 75% to CWS' projects overseas. If you would like to organize the UUs for this, please contact Bonnie N. ASAP.

**Produce exchange:** We'll have an informal exchange of "extra" produce from our personal gardens downstairs after the service each Sunday through the end of September. Bring what you can spare, take what you can use!

**Join MCUUF's FISH produce gardening team!** The new FISH food bank facility on Tucker Road now has large gardens to provide fresh produce for FISH clients. All of the gardening is by volunteer effort, so help is always needed. You could come regularly or for one-time work days scattered throughout the season. Contact Bonnie N.

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

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

## MCUUF

Curious about what's happening, when, and where? Go to [www.mcuuf.org](http://www.mcuuf.org)

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