



MCUUF NEWSLETTER—March 2016

The next meeting of the MCUUF Board will be 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 8, downstairs at the Grange. All are welcome to attend.

LEADERSHIP LETTER

Happy almost Spring! The board is gearing up for one of our most important annual activities: budgeting for the next fiscal year. We do this in preparation for the annual congregational meeting, where we present this budget to the fellowship for a vote. A key part of budgeting comes from all of you through your pledges. You will be hearing from our Stewardship Committee in the coming weeks asking you for your 2016-2017 pledge. From the collective pledges the board is able to set the budget for the next year.

We are no different than any other organization in that we have monthly bills to pay (rent, staffing, etc.). Although much of this fellowship is run by the hours and hours of volunteer efforts, we need a significant amount of money to keep the roof over our heads, the music playing, and the pulpit filled.

We are also a growing fellowship, and we have a growing number of needs. The funds we have must not only meet the needs of our current members, but we need to be able to plan for the needs of our future members. There are programs just bursting with potential and on the cusp of growth. Having money available in the budget to grow these programs is vital.

Each of us is asked one time a year to pledge a gift of our hard-earned dollars to the fellowship. We are asked to invest in the spiritual community we all value. The amount of that gift is different for everyone. You alone determine your ability to give and the depth of your gift. The appreciation for each pledge is equal.

I am not writing this to make anyone feel pressured or guilty. I am writing this so you simply understand how important each pledge is. I cannot overstate the value of the pledge drive to the health and future of our fellowship.

Before this pledge drive gets rolling, I want to say thank you for your pledge. Thank you for being a part of the Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

In faith,
Stacey C.
President, Board of Trustees

“We are cups, constantly
and quietly being filled.
The trick is, knowing how to
tip ourselves over and let
the beautiful stuff out.”

Ray Bradbury

American Author and
Unitarian Universalist



CELEBRATING FAMOUS
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Winter's grip is beginning to loosen. Small signs of spring's coming are beginning to show here and there. Snow has melted from our yards. A faint green is beginning to emerge on the hills. A few brave crocuses have blossomed. And the bare trees in the orchards are being pruned to make way for a bountiful harvest. What limbs and branches are really needed? Which ones can be cut away?

The waning days of winter coincide with Lent, a time of reflection and assessment of what we wish to embrace in our lives and what we must let go of in order to grow. What have we been clinging to? How has it been holding us back?

I know someone who recently decided to give up drinking coffee. They've spoken of how they are noticing that their day has been structured around coffee. They're noticing how much they've depended on coffee to keep their mood and alertness up. And they feel a sense of clarity and renewed strength beginning to arise as they find out they don't really need caffeine. They're in the driver's seat now—not caffeine. That's liberating!

Instead of thinking of Lent as a time of deprivation, self-negation and unrelenting sacrifice, Lent can be a gateway to liberation. Like an orchardist who sees a tree full of ripe fruit in their mind's eye as they prune away limbs, leaving only what needs to belong—our true nature is visible in all its fullness beneath the tangled branches. What needs to be removed so that we may grow?

Our annual pledge drive takes place this month. You'll have the opportunity to sustain this religious community by making a financial pledge. May our Unitarian Universalist values and this fellowship's mission be manifest in the world through your generosity.

With love, Rev. Judy

Being **GENEROUS**
is about being
spiritually liberated.

When you are
spiritually liberated
you do not feel
obligated but
THANKFUL.

- Rev. John T Crestwell Jr, Unitarian Universalist Minister



Questions to Live With—Liberation

Have you let yourself become imprisoned by the fear of missing out? By the imaginings of what might have been or what others have?

How is your balance between spiritual/personal liberation and social/political liberation? Are they feeding each other, or fighting? Or just not talking?

Is it time to forgive (and free) yourself?

Are you looking for liberation and freedom in faraway places and possibly not noticing it is waiting for you right back at home? Or right there where you are standing now?

Is kindness waiting for you to pick it up and liberate someone? Maybe even yourself?

SUNDAY SERVICES

Worship Theme: Liberation

March 6: “Liberating Love” Rev. Judy Zimmerman. Our Unitarian ancestor Ralph Waldo Emerson said that “men descend to meet.” His words started a thread of individualism that remains dominant in our denomination. Relationships and the work needed to maintain them seem burdensome. How might love and living in covenant with others be liberating, rather than restricting forces in our lives? These are the questions we’ll dialogue about this morning as we begin exploration of our month’s theme of *liberation*.

NEW MEMBER CEREMONY, MARCH 6

A NEW-MEMBER CEREMONY WILL BE HELD DURING THE SUNDAY SERVICE.

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE FELLOWSHIP, PLEASE CONTACT
REV. JUDY ZIMMERMAN.**

March 13: "The Courage of Queen Esther," by Rev. Amy Beltaine. Against impossible odds, one person can still make a difference. Such courage is rarely without cost. Amy is a graduate of Meadville Lombard School for the Ministry. She is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister and nearly life-long earth-relating Process-Pagan, currently serving as the President of the Covenant of UU Pagans. Amy offers spiritual accompaniment, presentations and retreats through her ministry at listentoheartsong.org

March 20: "Letting Love Fill the Void," Todd D. By letting go of the many unanswered questions and focusing on the love for a departed friend, one can find peace and let love fill the void left behind in the wake of suicide. Todd is a member of our fellowship and a long-time celebrant.

March 27: "Easter Sunday," Rev. Judy Zimmerman. In March there is a confluence of holidays telling us that the story of liberation and rebirth in Easter transcends any single religion. Let us celebrate Easter with inspiration from the six sources of Unitarian Universalism in a service for the whole family.

**The first annual MCUUF Dinner and Dance was a big success.
Over one hundred people attended!**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Looking for Leaders!

Your nominating committee has started our work to complete the slate for members of the congregation's Board of Trustees. The election will be at our congregational meeting later this Spring.

Congregational self-governance is a core element of our Unitarian-Universalist tradition. It's the way we take responsibility and ownership for the autonomy we have as a congregation. We also work to make service on the board a growth and learning opportunity for the trustees. Past board members cite the value of the experience in improving their skills for leading and working in organizations, church and otherwise.

We are also looking for people who would like to grow their skills and comfort in other roles in the congregation or would consider board service in a future year. Leaders are made, not born.

The board meets one a month in the early evening, and trustees commit to staying in contact and doing work in between board meetings with people in specific areas of congregational work, like communications or religious education.

If you are interested, please contact a member of the nominating committee by March 15: Pam Z-M, Annie M, or Kristen D.

New MCUUF Book Circle

"Charlestown was beautiful, this place, and it was savage. It swallowed you and made you a part of itself, or if you proved too inassimilable, it spit you out like the pit of a plum. . . . I was not sorry for loving Charlestown or leaving it. Geography had made me who I was."

The first book will be **"The Invention of Wings" by Sue Monk Kidd**. This historical novel of the Grimke sisters, the dynamics of slavery in the Grimke household and Charlestown, South Carolina, in the early 1800's brings together the issues of slavery and women's equity. It is a timely study for us to honor and deepen our awareness and action for Black Lives Matter and Women's Rights.

A readers' survey will decide when the circle will meet. We will converse about the book on either or both Sundays: before or after service March 20 and/or 27.

Buy the book in hardcover or paperback and have a great read. A few copies are available downstairs to "check out" after service. Contact Robbie L. for more information.

The Women's Awareness Circle will meet Friday, March 18, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the home of Jodie H. Our topic will be "Legacy." All UU women are welcome. Please RSVP to Debbie O.

Want to join a great group of UU's at the beach this spring?

The SOLVE Spring Beach Clean-up will be **Saturday, March 26**. The Mt. Hood Cluster of UU Congregations (8 UU congregations in NW Oregon and Vancouver, WA) for several years has participated in this clean-up as a group, cleaning a beach designated for us, then gathering for a potluck afterward. We are doing it again this year, at the same beautiful beach as the past few years—the Boy Scout Camp Meriwether beach several miles south of Tillamook. From **10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.** that Saturday, we will gather to act on our Seventh Principle and help take care of one little part of our earth. After the clean-up, those who wish can gather at a sheltered area at Cape Lookout State Park Beach, about five miles away, for a potluck lunch. For more information or to register, please contact Elaine C.

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: Shelley B, Aera A, or Tom P. The team will do its best to organize respectful and appropriate help for our members and friends who need it.



MCUUF

Curious about what's happening, when, and where? Go to www.mcuuf.org

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The deadline for inclusion in the weekly eNews is midnight Monday. The deadline for inclusion in the monthly newsletter (which comes out on the first Wednesday of the month) is midnight on the last Monday of the month. Please send your announcements to Brad at mcuuf1@gmail.com