



MCUUF NEWSLETTER—May 2016

The next meeting of the MCUUF Board will be 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 10, at the Rockford Grange. All are welcome to attend.

THE MINISTER’S MESSAGE

My parents often spoke German at the dinner table. The choppy rhythm and throaty sounds were the markers of a secret code I could not decipher. Only one word allowed a peek inside the doorway of the world to which my parents would often retreat: *gesundheit*. I’d hear this after someone sneezed. To my young ears, it sounded more like “kazoon-tite.” I wondered what that word had to do with kazoos? I chalked it up to my Dad’s offbeat sense of humor. My Auntie Sophie was kind enough to spell the word out for me and tell me what it really meant in English: it was a blessing for health.

Unitarian Universalism is not known for having a rich tradition of blessings. Many among us don’t believe in the supernatural or some sort of force that might bestow a blessing. Nor do we believe that our clergy have special authority that would enable granting a blessing. The Universalist part of our heritage tells us that all souls will know everlasting peace, so there is no need to bless a soul or person to ensure eternal salvation. So why bother with blessing?

Blessing reminds us that we do not live in this world alone. Others wish us health, happiness, and goodwill. The act of blessing makes us more conscious of our limits—and the necessary interdependence of all life. Many things are responsible for sustaining our very existence: air, water, soil, plants, animals, and the labor of many humans. Blessing brings that all to the forefront, to the here-and-now.

When we bless, it has less to do with divine intervention and much more to do with focusing our intentions of how we want to be in this world. We bless to make a commitment—to live with integrity. We align ourselves with a purpose greater than our selfishness. We do our part to knit a strong, interdependent web of existence. Our gifts to the community take on greater meaning. Blessing becomes an act of love.

The Talmud asks that we say 100 blessings a day. During this month of May, where we’ll focus on the theme of Blessing, may we aspire to that teaching. May the month of May be the one where we begin each day by offering our blessing to the world.

In love and service,

Rev. Judy

BOARD PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I am using this month’s leadership letter to make an announcement. Many of you know this already, but for those who have not heard, my family and I will be leaving in a month on a family sabbatical to South America for six months. We have been planning this for a long time and are super-excited to see it become a reality.

We will be traveling to Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Columbia. Our trip will be a mix of travel and volunteering, with the hope that our family will gain a perspective on a piece of the world and an appreciation of its beauty and diversity. We also hope to learn a bit of language and culture, eat new foods and make new friends.

As for MCUUF, it means I will be gone from my board position for six months. Lori Golze, who is currently our vice president, will take over the duties of president. We are all thankful for her willingness to step up. I don't anticipate this transition will have any effect on the fellowships; this announcement is just to let you know what is taking place on your board. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

In the meantime, I will see you all at our May 15 Annual Congregational Meeting, where we will vote on the proposed budget and nominated candidates for both the 2016-17 board and the Nominating Committee.

In faith,
Stacey Campbell
President, Board of Trustees



Questions to Live With—Blessing

Do you believe you are a blessing? Does this task of accepting yourself as a blessing come easily for you? Or are you still a bit too hard on yourself and imagine it as something you still have to earn?

Are you ok with asking for a blessing? Sometimes it is easier to offer a blessing rather than admit you need one yourself. What's getting in your way? Why not let others know your need?

Do your words bless others? *Blessing* is rooted in the Latin verb *benedicere*, meaning to speak well of (*bene* well, *dicere* to speak). Therefore to bless someone is to speak well of them. But this implies a special form of "speaking well."

What blessing do our soldiers need most? This is the month of "honoring heroes." Yet sometimes the celebration of heroics can mask the need for healing. How might Memorial Day be inviting you to honor their sacrifice in a new way?

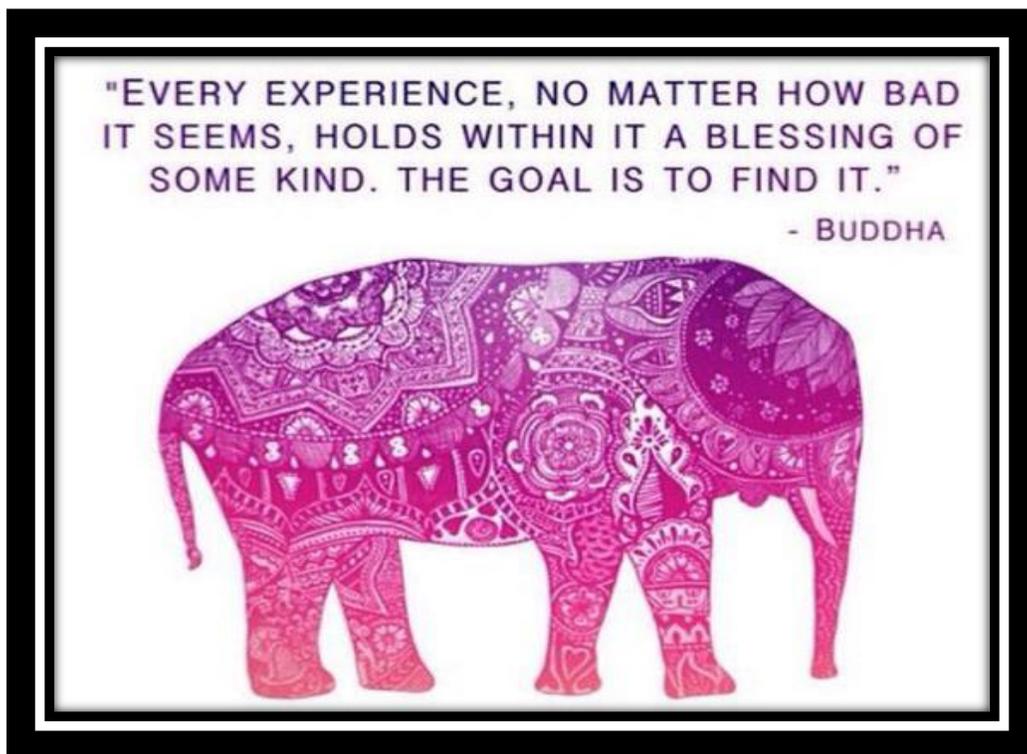
SUNDAY SERVICES
Worship Theme: Blessing

May 8: Rev. Andrea Cano— “She Flies On” On this Mother's Day we honor the procreative and nurturing spirit of the Holy One for creating and sustaining family and community, women who serve, receive, give, and more, and the women who brought us into being.

May 15: Elaine Castles— “An Appreciation of my Christian Heritage” We don't often find much positive to say about the Christian churches that so many of us have rejected. But if we can step back from the rather difficult-to-accept theology, we may discover some valuable lessons about the nature of a religious community.

May 22: Rev. Judy Zimmerman: “Blessing of Boots, Bikes, Backpacks and Boats”
As the summer season beckons us, we gather to sing the praises of outdoor recreation and the adventures that await. Whether we aim to head to the mountains, a lake, or our own backyard we'll gather in thanks for the bounty of the outdoors. So bring your equipment, a facsimile or photo for a ceremonial blessing to inaugurate the outdoor season.

May 29: Thich Minh Tinh (Rev. Kozen Sampson): “May we all be well” Our friend from the Zen Buddhist Temple at the Trout Lake Abbey will return to the fellowship to share his thoughts and words with us.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Family Fourth Friday.

Come join us Friday, May 27, at 5:30 p.m. at the Grange for a new MCUU tradition: **Family Fourth Friday**. Let your kids run free range at the Grange! We will meet every fourth Friday of the month for a family-centered evening full of community and support. Dinner will be provided; you bring the kiddos and anything you have to offer to a fellowship devoted to strengthening families as we walk through parenthood together. All members of the UU family are welcome, so come play with our adorable kids and join the fun! Contact Mandi Rae with any questions or ideas.

MCUUF Annual Congregational Meeting. The annual meeting of the members of the Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will be on **Sunday, May 15, at 11:15 a.m.**, immediately after worship. Our agenda will include election of officers, election of the nominating committee, and adoption of the 2016-17 budget. As required by our bylaws, an official announcement and full agenda has been circulated. If you need a copy please contact our administrator Brad at mcuufi@gmail.com.

Additionally, we are planning on holding one more town-hall-style informational meeting following the service on **Sunday, May 8**. This time is intended to answer any questions members may have regarding upcoming meeting agenda items.

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.



NEW MEMBER PROFILE – Frank S.

Frank S:

- Mountain climber (in his younger years), summitting Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams, and Mt. Jefferson.
- Former computer programmer and entrepreneur.
- Former junior-college English teacher.
- Lifelong atheist.
- Now a member of the Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

By his own admission, Frank's path in life has been a wandering one, but he's happy to be where he is now, living on the outskirts of White Salmon with his wife Gail A.

His story begins in Long Beach, CA, where he was born in 1935, the son of a labor-union leader whose doctor advised finding a less-stressful job. When Frank was in the 3rd grade, his parents brought the family on a vacation to Oregon and ended up buying a small restaurant near Parkdale.

Living deep in Hood River Valley developed in Frank an inveterate love of the outdoors. When he was about 15, he and a neighbor boy backpacked around Mt. Hood, and later Frank climbed to the summits of Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams, and Mt. Jefferson.

As an adult, Frank pursued several careers. Initially he was a computer programmer, first in Eugene, OR, then at the University of Washington, where he later earned bachelor's and master's degrees and became an academic adviser. After that, he taught English for 13 years at two-year Wenatchee Valley College in Wenatchee, WA.

For many years he was married to Molly C, and they moved to White Salmon to be near their daughter. Frank started a business of selling scientific supplies, including live specimens, and when he retired from the business his son took over. Molly died of Alzheimer's about 10 years ago.

In 2009 the Internet dating website match dot com brought Frank together with Gail, then a widow living on Whidbey Island, WA. They married and bought a new house outside of White Salmon next to that of longtime MCUUF member Dr. Cindy H. Gail had been a UU on Whidbey Island, and in a neighborly way Cindy suggested she give MCUUF a try.

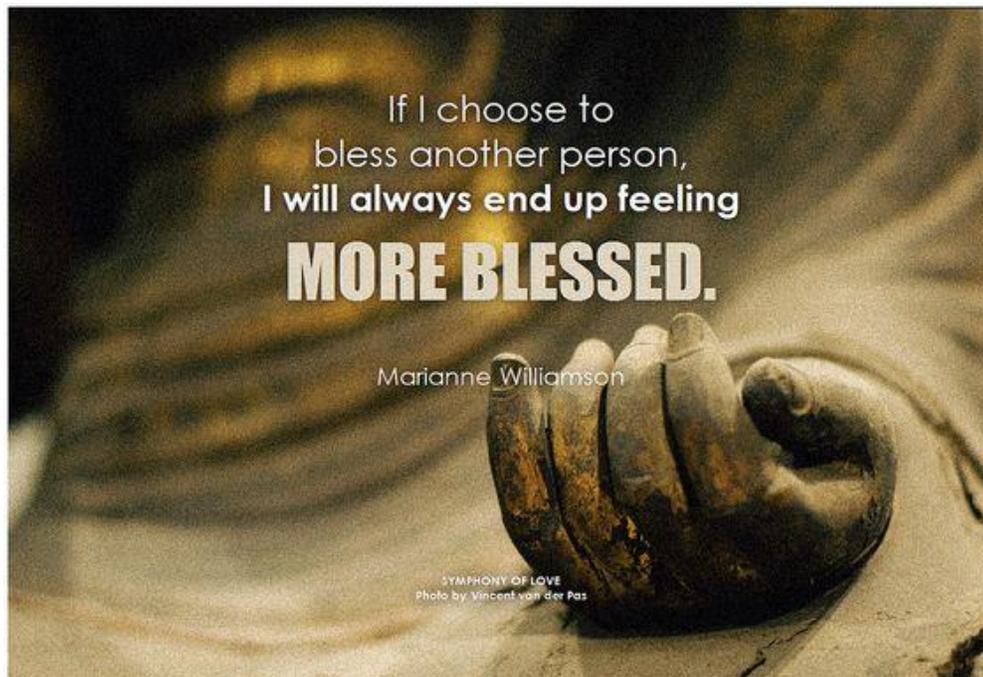
But what to do about Frank, the lifelong atheist, whose only brushes with churches had been turn-offs?

Cindy noted that many of MCUUF's members are atheists or agnostics.

"I guess the problem has been that I've always been a doubter," Frank says. "But I also think of myself as having a strong sense of right and wrong and willing to act accordingly."

After attending a few MCUUF services with Gail, Frank liked what he heard and saw, especially the informal atmosphere and the Seven UU Principles.

"There is no pressure to accept dogma or doctrine," he says, "and I like that."



COMMUNITY SERVICE

Monday, June 13 – Volunteers needed for UU-sponsored dinner at FISH Food Bank. Oregon State University Extension is coordinating this monthly dinner + cooking class event, especially targeting low-income folks in the community who are food-insecure. If you can help 3-7 p.m. that day with the food preparation, serving, and cleanup, please contact Bonnie N.

Update on Haven donation: Thank you so much for your much-needed donations of kitchen items, linens, appliances, cooking needs and toiletries. I can't express how wonderful it was to support someone who smiled for the first time in days, or longer, while choosing among your generous gifts. Please know that the survivors who received your gifts are incredibly grateful as are the advocates lucky enough to pass them to those in need. I am honored to be part of a fellowship who recognized a need and stepped in to fill in. Thank you all. -- Rheva W.

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

Would you like to subscribe to this newsletter and the weekly eNews?
Just send an email to mcuuf1@gmail.com with the word "subscribe" in the subject line.

To unsubscribe from MCUUF emails, please send an email to mcuuf1@gmail.com with "unsubscribe" in the subject line. Thank you.

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 Amer at mcuuf1@gmail.com