



Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

We are a welcoming community

MCUUF NEWSLETTER—September 2017

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

I woke up this morning (Tuesday) before dawn and couldn't get back to sleep. My heart was churning. I checked the news and read that the Eagle Creek fire had grown to over 5,000 acres overnight.

Of course we feel ill-at-ease. These emotions and our bodies' reactions are potent reminders that we are all part of the web of life. What affects our human and animal neighbors and their habitat affects us all, regardless of where we live in the Gorge.

Clergy in Gorge Ecumenical Ministries are working to coordinate ways that our faith communities can offer support. The situation is dynamic and rapidly changing. Right now the strongest need is for financial contributions to Hood River County Search and Rescue. You'll find information about how to give near the bottom of this newsletter. The Red Cross tells us that they don't need anything at this point time. As needs become more clearly identified, notice will be sent out to members and friends.

May we hold all those affected by the fire in our minds, hearts, and spiritual practices. Let us offer prayers for the safety and well-being of first responders. And may we give generously now and in the days to come.

As I drove past a yard sale the other day, a child's indoor play tent caught my eye. Maybe it was the happy shade of pink or the purple flags that rose from the corners that commanded my attention. Perhaps it was nostalgia for the times when my eldest child—now an adult—would play in a tent perched on top of her bed. With a play tent in the house, we didn't have to wait to build a fort with blankets, sheets, or chairs as we used to do. We just popped poles into the tent's sleeves and the tent was ready, offering a place separate from the rest of the world, a place where no adults were allowed. That quickness of assembly forestalled many meltdowns.

We can do a pretty good job of erecting a "Keep Out!" sign without putting up a physical barrier to keep what's challenging outside of our lives. There are myriad ways we nonverbally try to tell someone we're not interested in getting to know them or continuing a conversation. Have you ever been a guest at someone's home—someone who was warm and friendly—yet your host didn't tell you where to put your coat or handbag, or where the food or bathroom was? A lax host does not tell us. What message does that convey? We're usually more comfortable when our presence is acknowledged and welcomed because we've been told where to find things.

Offering welcome and genuine hospitality to those who visit our congregation or those we don't know well is like inviting guests to our home. Usually we make the space inviting by cleaning and removing clutter. We can do something similar with our minds and hearts. We can let go of our preconceptions about what a _____ person is like. We can become aware of expectations we might have about how they should be "of like mind" and whether they measure up. Tracking these things is a sort of spiritual housecleaning, making open space in our hearts for welcome.

Interfaith Youth Core founder and 2013 UUA General Assembly speaker Eboo Patel says, "I believe every inch of America is sacred, from sea to shining sea. I believe we make it holy by who we

welcome and by how we relate to each other. Call it my Muslim eyes on the American project. ‘We made you different nations and tribes that you may come to know one another,’ says the Qur'an.”

During September, our Sunday worships focus on Welcome. We'll begin by creating the sacred space out of which hospitality grows in our Water Communion ceremony on Homecoming Sunday, September 10. Please bring a small amount of water that's special to you in some way. If there are children in your care, they're welcome bring water, too.

With love,

Rev. Judy



**SUNDAY SERVICES
10 a.m. at the Rockford Grange
*This month's theme is "Welcome"***

September 11: Water Communion and Homecoming, Rev. Judy Zimmerman. We welcome the beginning of our program year in this service that represents what it is to be a Unitarian Universalist congregation. Please bring a small amount of water that is special to you for our Water Communion ceremony. All ages will worship together. Nursery care and the “wiggle room” are available.

September 17: "The Power of Laughter" Todd D. Are we laughing enough? Laughter supports health and well being. It lifts our spirits and puts a bounce in our step. During dark times, it is even more important that we get good doses of humor. Even better if we can share it together! Come, let us laugh together.

RE: Pre-K: 3rd Nature's Partnership

4th-6th: Me In Faith Community, Faith Community In Me.

UUth: Self directed.

September 24: "A Caring Congregation", Rev. Judy Zimmerman with Susan Gabay.

We create welcome and healing when we build a community that has space for life's deepest challenges. Preventing suicide is part of this holy work. Suicide survivor and mental health advocate Susan Gabay joins us this morning. September is Suicide Awareness Month.

RE: Pre-K: An artist's perspective
Middle school Unitarian Universalism: The Journey Starts at Home.
UUth: Self directed.

This month in UU History

September 8, 1647: The book *Twelve Arguments Against the Deity of the Holy Spirit*, by John Biddle, was burned at Westminster Square in London. Biddle is considered the father of English Unitarianism.

Throughout his life, John Biddle immersed himself in the study of the Bible. He concluded from his studies that the doctrine of the Trinity was not supported by the Bible, and he set about publishing his own views on the nature of God. He was prosecuted for blasphemy and imprisoned several times for his views. He became ill and died in prison. (Source: Schulman, This Day in Unitarian Universalist History, 2004.)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our fall Religious Education curriculum is ready, and we are gearing up for another fantastic year of Religious Education! All of our UUA-approved courses should provide our children and youth with a broad range of learning opportunities and great hands-on, “boots on the ground” activities. This year we hope to separate our youngest and our late elementary and to offer curriculum aimed specifically at our students and their interests. To make this extra class work, we are calling for volunteers to help teach. It could be every other month or once a month; the MCUFF RE team is looking for volunteers to help teach each age group. We will not be offering a third class on days volunteers are unavailable.

Parents who register their students this year will also be asked to share ownership of our program. It doesn't necessarily have to be teaching; it could involve signing up for a snack, assisting in family events, or helping gather supplies. We can't wait to get the year started!

Alicia B.

World of Wonder

Pre-K/Early Elementary
Alice Anacheka-Nasemann, Pat Kahn, and Julie Simon

Founded on the premise that direct experience in nature is essential to children's physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development, this program delves deep into our Unitarian Universalist Seventh Principle. It instills respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part, and appreciation of its beauty, excitement, and mystery.

Windows and Mirrors

Late elementary/Early Middle school
By Gabrielle Farrell, Natalie Fenimore and Dr. Jenice View
The metaphor of windows and mirrors represents the dynamic relationship among our awareness of self, our perceptions of others, and others' perceptions of us.

Building Bridges: A World Religions Program

Youth
Mary K. Isaacs
This 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.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Breeze is everything we need in a church management system. It's easy to use, intuitive, and user-friendly. The fact that it's cloud-based makes Breeze even more appealing--we can access it from anywhere, at anytime, without the hassle of downloading or updating software. In every way, Breeze lives up to its name."

MCUUF members and friends,

We are now using BREEZE church management software. Next week you will receive an invitation to set up an account with BREEZE via email. **This will involve simply typing in a username and a password.** (I know, we all have too many passwords!)

Once you have an account, you can log onto BREEZE to access your personal information and contact information for other MCUUF members and friends. This will be our new directory and you will find that has many new features and benefits. I have imported the information that I have, but you can add to it (including a photo), correct it, or delete any information that you do not want to share. What you have in this personal file will be accessible to other members and friends.

You will also be able to review your annual pledge and the payments you have made. **This information WILL NOT be visible to other users.**

In addition, there will be a MCUUF calendar which will show Sunday Services and other events.

I hope that you will take advantage of this new program. It will give you easy access to the people and events that form our wonderful fellowship. It will also make it easier for me, Rev. Judy, the Board and the staff to communicate with all of you. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like help setting up your account.

Thank you.

Brad A.
MCUUF Administrator

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Fourth Family Friday, September 22nd: This month's FFF will be hosted by Azmat and Alicia B. Those looking to join us will meet at Starvation Creek at 5 p.m. for a family-friendly hike for all abilities. Upon returning to the trail head we will enjoy some kabobs over rice at the waterfall area near the parking lot. This is the last day of summer, so plan on any type of weather. (There should be no parking fees.)



In-gathering Picnic: Saturday, September 9

**Our fabulous, fun, family picnic! Games for all ages! Don't miss it—
put the date on your calendar: Sept. 9, 4 to 7 p.m.**

Wearing of sturdy shoes is recommended.

Directions: The address is 8700 Clear Creek Road in Parkdale.

From Hood River, head south on Hwy. 35. At the Mt. Hood Country Store, bear right onto Cooper Spur Rd toward Parkdale (1.8 miles). Then turn right onto Baseline Drive (0.5 miles). Turn immediately left at McIssac's Store onto Clear Creek Road. Follow for 2.7 miles. Driveway is on the right, before Laurance Lake Road. Of course, one could also take the Dee Highway and follow the instructions from McIssac's store.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Bystander Intervention Training To better prepare us to respond to acts of intimidation, discrimination and violence in our communities, GEM is co-sponsoring a "Bystander Intervention Training" on September 30th from 1 to 1 to 4 p.m. at Riverside Church. Cost: \$35 per person includes light refreshments. Registration information is available here: <http://bit.ly/2vIHFj4>

Facilitated by the Oregon Peace Institute. Sponsored by the Columbia Gorge Women's Action Network, the Columbia River Fellowship for Peace, Gorge Ecumenical Ministries, and Indivisible Columbia Gorge-Oregon

Found: two enthusiastic MCUUFers that will co-lead our participation in the Hood River County Christmas Project! Thank you to Cindy A. and Trish L. for leading this effort.

PASTORAL CARE & CONNECTION

The Women's Awareness Circle will meet at 4 p.m. Friday, September 8, in the home of Irene K. Please write a short autobiographical sketch to share. All UU women are welcome. Please RSVP to Debbie O.

Newcomer's Circle. This Sunday September 10 after the morning's worship service, we will offer a 45 minute orientation, and question and answer session about Unitarian Universalism , the congregation, and the path to membership. Grab a hot drink and snacks and join us upstairs in the "wiggle room". The Membership Engagement Team and Rev. Judy will be on hand to chat. Newcomer's Circle will be held the second Sunday of each month.

MCUUF Care Team: Our MCUUF Care Team responds to members and friends in case of a significant loss, illness, or other personal difficulty. None in our community should feel isolated or abandoned. The team offers opportunities for our fellowship members and friends to help each other in time of need. For example, the team coordinates rides to fellowship and doctor appointments, hospital and home visits, calls and cards. If necessary, the team helps to coordinate care with friends from the fellowship.

The Care Team relies on members to let us know if someone may need assistance. The team then ascertains if the person in need would like help, and if so what kind. Confidentiality is paramount. If you or someone you know needs help, contact any of the team's members.

GENEROSITY AND GIVING

Eagle Creek – Indian Creek fire relief. If you would like to help Hood River Search and Rescue, the Sheriff's Office is now asking that donations go to the Red Cross at redcross.org/cascades

Hurricane Harvey recovery fund. The UUA and the UU Service Committee have formed a joint recovery and relief fund for those impacted by Hurricane Harvey. To donate, go to <https://giving.uua.org/harvey-floods>

Giving Envelopes For the convenience of our members and visitors, we have giving envelopes located on the visitor's table and in the offering baskets. You're welcome to take them home and mail in your contribution.