



Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

We are a welcoming community

MCUUF NEWSLETTER—January 2019

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

“Somewhere, a signal has arrived. Now. Now. Now, it says. Stop waiting. Begin. Move despite the trembling. Don’t wait for any of it to be perfect. Just move,” says poet Julia Fehrenbacher.

How many times have we counted up the ways things might go wrong and the ways we might fail? What might happen were we to focus on opportunities of which we might take advantage? Feeling anxious and ruminating might make us overlook opportunities or even stay alert to the possibility they are there. We can easily miss the signal that’s prompting us to begin in spite of our trembling.

Perhaps grace comes in the earthly form of being open to opportunity. Honing receptivity can further sensitize awareness that would allow us to perceive opportunities, which often appear as glimpses or on the periphery. Our heads must be held high, with eyes focused on the distance to see opportunities that appear dimly on the horizon. If we are letting fear control us, being receptive is difficult. “If I were to wish for anything,” says philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, “I should not wish for wealth and power, but for the passionate sense of the potential, for the eye which, young and ardent, sees the possible.”

As we look ahead to the New Year, where do you see opportunities and possibility in your life? Tell yourself that you will not wait anymore – now is the time. Each day, each tomorrow is grace. Grace comes when it comes. We cannot order or plan for its presence. Instead of taking inventory of what is lacking or has gone wrong and forming New Year’s resolutions, resolve to give yourself permission to begin, without waiting for things to be perfect.

As of December 22, 600 consecutive days of vigil have been held at NORCOR in The Dalles. NORCOR is now the *only* jail in Oregon that has a contract to hold Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees. Community activists and faith leaders have been holding vigil and organizing since May 2017 so that NORCOR’s contract with ICE will be terminated. In so many ways this facility is not suitable for holding immigrant detainees. Inhumane conditions exist in our community.

As I reflect upon grace in my life, its presence is felt with the detainees I have come to know at NORCOR. Several times a month since May 2017, I have been visiting immigrant detainees to provide spiritual care. Given the trauma and injustice that detainees have experienced while in our immigration system—and their separation from their loved ones (NORCOR does not routinely allow face-to-face visitation of any kind with family)—I would expect them to be angry and embittered. Instead they have shown kindness, consideration and compassion towards facility staff and administration. They pour out thanks for those holding vigil and for community activism to end the ICE contract. Detainees are a potent reminder that we live in a universe that ultimately moves towards the good.

As the anniversary of passage of our Immigrant Welcoming and Supporting Resolution approaches on February 4, we must renew our commitment. We must add to the good work we are already doing to build immigrant justice: standing in vigil, serving as pen pals, writing to elected officials, donating books, giving to the Detainee Phone Fund or to college scholarships for

undocumented students. You are love in action. In 2019 may we resolve to be an even larger source of grace for detainees and their families, and all whose lives are impacted by a broken and unjust immigration system.

With love,

Rev. Judy

Want to meet? Please call (503-970-0564) or email jzimmerman@uuma.org and let's find a time that works.



**“Grace happens when
we act with others on
behalf of our world.”**

Joanna Macy

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

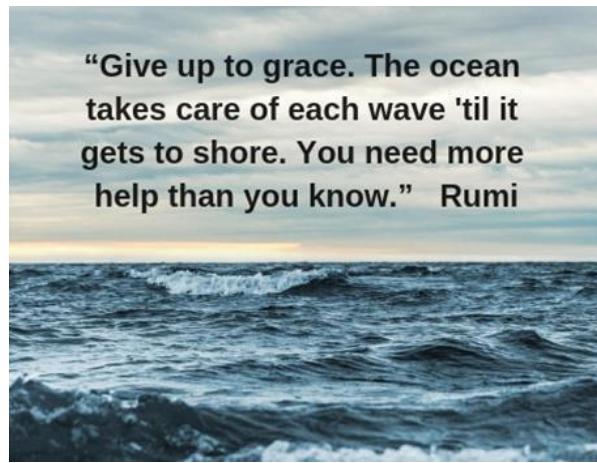
The Dream Team speaks!

Last spring, the Dream Team interviewed a significant portion of the fellowship, asking general questions about your relationship with MCUUF, current likes, and future wishes. Perhaps not surprisingly, your responses covered a large spectrum of ideas without an overriding singular focus. The comments and suggestions generally fell into the following categories: improving the Sunday service; additional social activities; increasing opportunities for community service; growing the congregation/children/young families; pledging and finances; spiritual growth; new building or improving existing facility.

Details of the Dream Team's report are available for all to peruse. Follow this link:
<http://www.mcuuf.org/dream-team.html>

Many thanks to the Dream Team's members for their efforts in getting a feel for the current and future wants of the fellowship. Note that the dream does not stop here. With these results as a basis, we will continue to flesh out the future wants and needs of the fellowship with your help. Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities to move this project forward. Please feel free to provide additional feedback to the board as we explore this together.

Lori Golze
President, MCUUF Board of Trustees



SUNDAY SERVICES

10 a.m. at the Rockford Grange
This Month's Theme: "Grace"

January 6: "Love thy Self" Todd D. Love of self is a powerful force in our lives. When we love the many facets and complexities of our being, we open up doors to new possibilities and tap into an inner strength. It is a complex journey that can challenge many of our firmly held beliefs, but it is never too late to start. We will explore the barriers and the insights we may find along the way to self-love.

January 13: "Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Unitarian Universalism," Rev. Judy Zimmerman with Sullivan M, celebrant. Dr. King visited Unitarian churches. His wife Coretta Scott King attended UU churches for years before marrying Rev. Dr. King. King's doctoral dissertation focused on a UU theologian. Despite these ties, they remained in another religious faith. How might our movement—and work towards civil rights – have been different if the Kings became UU? We'll explore these questions as we prepare for MLK Day observances on January 21.

January 20: "It Happens to a Lot of Us" Rev. Sarah Schurr, with Dick W, celebrant. What do we do when deep bits of wisdom and insight come flooding into us, unbidden? Some people call these moments of grace "Mystical Experiences"; others try to ignore them. How can we embrace this kind grace as Unitarian Universalists?

January 27: "Grace for Unitarian Universalists," Rev. Judy Zimmerman, with Steve H, celebrant. Grace is one of those words that are difficult to clearly define. What might grace mean for Unitarian Universalism, where science and reason often hold sway over the supernatural in shaping understandings of what might be called the holy?

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our RE year has crossed over into 2019! January will carry us into our last half of our Coming of Age curriculum for our teens and our Earth Bound lessons for our elementary aged students.

To parents of MCUFF, we are seeking to gather in shared space on an evening in January. We would like to take time aside from the traditional Sunday service model to connect to our UU roots through guided conversations with a host while we relax and connect within our church community. we will provide childcare and snacks. if you are interested in joining us, please let us know. Date and Time based on interest. Contact Alicia B. for more information.



MOMENTS IN UU HISTORY

By Bonnie W.

Are you old enough to remember radio soap operas? Each day, after I got home from school, my mom and I would settle in for an hour of fifteen-minute dramas like *Road to Happiness*, *Backstage Wife*, and, of course, *Stella Dallas*. Now, many decades later, I learn that *Stella Dallas* was the creation of a Unitarian writer, Olive Higgins Prouty, who was born on January 10, 1882. Born to privilege, she knew even before she graduated from Smith College that she wanted to be a writer. Writing between the years of women's suffrage and women's liberation, Olive questioned notions of the subservience of the woman's role and sought to balance family obligations with an independent life of integrity and responsibility.

Of her novels, Prouty is best known for *Stella Dallas* (1922), although her greatest achievement was the depiction of mental breakdown and recovery, drawn from her own experience, in *Now, Voyager* (1941). Prouty endowed a scholarship for young writers at Smith, leading to a complicated relationship with Sylvia Plath, which included picking up the tab for Plath's medical expenses after her suicide attempt in 1953. Plath (unkindly) later caricatured her in *Bell Jar*. As for *Stella Dallas*, Prouty did not approve the sale of its rights but was unable to stop the transaction. She openly disliked the radio series which, nevertheless, aired for 18 years.

Olive Prouty was bored by her early religious experience with Congregationalism. The family conversion to Unitarianism appealed to her personal quest, "searching with fumbling, finite mind, . . . leaping from doubt to bright surmise." She was a member of First Parish in Brookline, Massachusetts, for 50 years and left the church \$50,000 when she died in 1974.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTORAL CARE AND CONNECTION

It is a BREEZE to access the MCUUU directory! Breeze is the online church-management system MCUUU is now using. Members and friends can easily access the website and the mobile app to see contact information for others, make changes to their contact information, check their annual pledge and giving history (only theirs, not others'), and email or text others in the system. It's easy to sign up and VERY user friendly. If you've not already signed up, please contact Brad at mcuuuf1@gmail.com and he will email you an invitation to join and instructions.

When to Contact the Care Team: Our Care Team stands ready to contact anyone in our UU community who may need help. They may be in a tight squeeze and wondering if they can make rent this month. Their moving help may have fallen through. They may need a ride to MCUUU events or Sunday Service. They may be laid up for a while from surgery or illness. They may be having difficulty caring for a loved one.

These are but a few of the circumstances where our Care Team coordinates assistance with fellowship members, a private conversation with our minister or a care team member, or a referral to community or social services. We walk through the challenges of life together. You are not alone.

VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED

Washing Dishes—Your help with dishes downstairs after coffee hour is always appreciated!

Host for Movie Night—we are looking for a fun space for a movie night. If you are willing to host or have a venue idea, please contact Peggy N.

Generosity Committee—The board is looking for members and leaders for a new committee focused on generosity, giving, and fundraising. For more information, please contact Cindy A.

Volunteer to lead the creation of a safety policy for our fellowship. Ideally, this volunteer will have an interest in safety. We expect this volunteer commitment to take approx. four to eight hours. If you are willing to help with this, please contact Rev. Judy at jzimmerman@uuma.org.

MCUUU Homestay Program—our fellowship hopes to start a homestay program for short term UU visitors to our area. The program will be modeled on similar successful programs around the country. The program will be organized through the fellowship, with guests contributing to the fellowship in exchange for a homestay. If you are interested in helping organize the program, or if you might consider occasionally hosting guests, please contact Peggy N.

SOCIAL ACTION

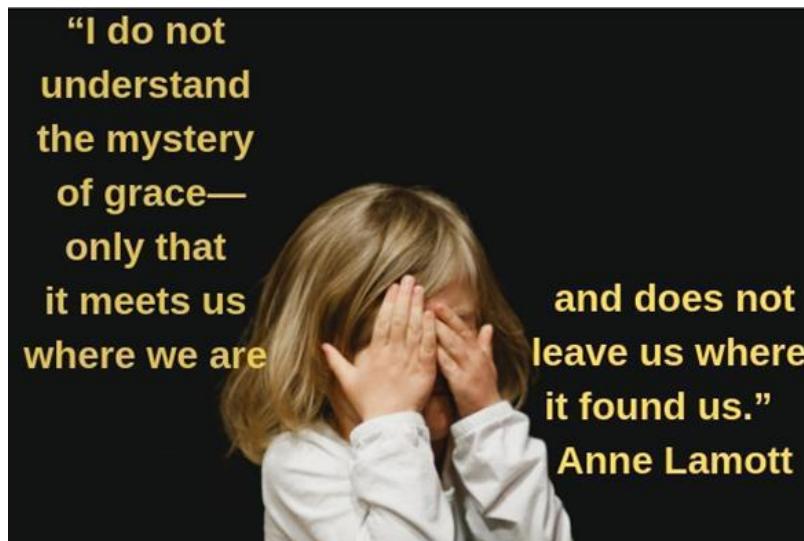
FISH Food Bank service opportunity for newcomers and families. Members and friends of MCUUU are responsible for serving the public at the Hood River FISH Food Bank on Monday, Wednesday and Friday every eighth week. This team effort is an excellent activity for newcomers who wish to be involved in a social action activity with other members of the fellowship. It is also an activity that has been enjoyed by members and friends of all ages, including school-aged children. The Hood River FISH Food Bank is located at 1130 Tucker Road, to the right of Spirit Of Grace Church. (We use the church parking lot.) We are asked to arrive at 3:15 p.m. to check in and get oriented. We serve the public from 3:30-5:00 (5:30 on Wednesday).

The food bank is set up like a grocery store. Each volunteer will accompany a “shopper” who will be given a grocery cart to collect food as he or she progresses through the aisles. Each shopper can choose food within restrictions posted on the shelves. This procedure is straightforward, and newcomers will be walked through the process with an experienced person upon arrival.

Our next Unitarian Universalist days to serve at FISH are Feb. 18-20-22. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about this activity, please contact Susan T.

New Hood River Warming Shelter Training Dates. Join the MCUUF team and invite your friends to one of the two **additional new-volunteer training sessions** for the Warming Shelter. Both will be held in the Riverview Room (formerly the Pioneer Room) at Riverside Church: January 26, 9-11 a.m., and January 27, 2-4 p.m. For more information, contact Fran F.

Save the Date: This year's Martin Luther King Day Celebration—themed “**A Great Nation, A Compassionate Nation**”—will be Monday, January 21, at Riverside Church, Hood River. Our own Rev. Judy and Tom Kaser, members of the Gorge Ecumenical Ministries committee that organizes the event every year, have been involved in the planning. There will be workshops 4:30-5:30 p.m. (more details later), followed by a one-hour celebration at 5:30 and a dinner at 6:30.



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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 (11:59 p.m.) Monday. The MCUUF Newsletter comes out on the first Wednesday of each month (unless otherwise announced).

The deadline for inclusion is midnight of the prior Monday.

Please send your submissions to Brad at mchuuf1@gmail.com