



Mid-Columbia Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship

MCUUF NEWSLETTER — APRIL 2014

LEADERSHIP LETTER

So our family just returned from a Spring Break trip to Las Vegas. None of us had been before, and we were mostly looking for sun.

Well, it was sunny. And the water and aerial Cirque du Soleil performance in the purpose-built theatre was an amazing celebration of art and the potential of our human bodies. It was relaxing to lie by the pool together with nothing else to do. Some of the food was tasty and not too overpriced. And Pinkberry does have better frozen yogurt than the other chains—and is way more stylish.

When it gets to the ecological and social setting, though, life in Vegas was just plain strange. On our last day, we drove to Hoover Dam and the Grand Canyon, then fell asleep in our beds in rainy Oregon.

I have no desire to time travel. That vacation was all in the same time zone and unsettling enough. It's tempting to stay where it's familiar and comfortable.

Then again, as a mother whose oldest just turned 18, nothing compares with getting to hear one's own child say, "When we were on that bus, a lot of those people were drunk. It seemed like they thought that was fun. Drunk on a bus in a big city? That's just dangerous. I'd never do that."

Go OWL...

Kristen Dillon
Board President

FROM OUR MINISTER

"All the world's a stage/And all the men and women merely players." – As You Like It

This quote comes to mind to me, your interim minister, as I celebrate with you the news that the Mid-Columbia UU Fellowship is bringing a candidate for settled minister to the gorge later this month. This is an exciting time, the beginning of many new relationships and possibilities, the culmination of much hard work and faith. It is also a time when the interim minister takes a step back on the stage and begins to prepare his exit. I'm not taking my bow just yet, for there is much work to do to complete the transition to a new settled minister, but I know the spotlight will be shining on a new and promising presence for professional UU ministry here in the gorge. It is an exciting prospect—and a time ripe with possibilities.

Perhaps, though, that is only one stage in this world—the stage we create as a congregation. The stages that are our real lives—or perhaps Shakespeare was wrong and our lives are not really

stages after all, in which case I'd just say our real lives—go on as before. As a popular hymn begins, “We laugh, we cry, we live, we die. . . .” So we'll continue to meet, share, listen, serve, work, play, mourn, weep, and worship together these days while our potential new minister prepares the next stage of her life's journey and prepares to join us. And so I'll continue to be here with you for the next few months and will continue to be available to you with your questions, your uncertainties, your losses, and your celebrations. This is why we gather in religious community.

The Search Team has done tremendous work—and done so under a fairly well-prescribed structure and process (some may accuse me of being diplomatic here). I can think of very few other venues outside of professional sports in which such a fixed structure exists outside of denominational clergy settlements. (I'm sure there are many, but it's one of the few I've had direct experience with.) Every UU congregation, of course, is free to call anyone it wants to be its minister, but we have chosen to work with this process because it is important to us to maintain a solid identity as a Unitarian Universalist congregation. The structure that we've worked with has been honed over decades of “settlement” practices that are what they are because we want the flexibility to choose among the widest number of candidates as possible. Yet we want to be sure all candidates have a basic understanding of what it means to serve a congregation wanting to maintain this identity. Of course, the “UU World” is a relatively small one, so it helps to have everyone working on the same page, as it were.

So take a minute in the next couple of weeks, while we're preparing the spotlight for that new presence on our stage, to thank the members of the Search Team. They've given us a great gift.

In faith,
Ken

SUNDAY SERVICES

April 6—Rev. Ken Jones, "The Real Connection." In this last (finally!) in the series of sermons on the seven UU principles, Rev. Jones considers ways to affirm and promote the interdependent web of all existence. While it sounds big, it really does boil down to something very close and personal—our connection to the natural world. There are very simple things we can do to nurture this vital link in our lives.

Please join us for a service recognition ceremony this Sunday. We will celebrate the work we do together at FISH, the Warming Shelter, Mentor4Success, and SOLV.

April 13—Member Steven Hawley and Bob Schwarz will present a service of Poetry and Music. Also, the Annual Meeting of the members of the Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will be held immediately after worship. The agenda will include election of officers, election of the nominating committee, and adoption of the 2014-15 budget.

April 20—Rev. Judy Zimmerman will preach her first sermon to the MCUUF congregation. (The Westside Fire Department will be holding its Blossom Pancake Breakfast at Rockford from 7-11 a.m. Parking for worship will be tight, so please bike or carpool if possible, and please park in the lot at John's Equipment to save space near the Grange).

April 27—Rev. Judy Zimmerman will again be preaching to us before our congregational vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Save the Dates: April 20-April 27

Our ministerial candidate, **Rev. Judy Zimmerman**, will be visiting us from April 20th through April 27th. She will be leading the services on April 20 and 27 and participating in small-group events throughout the week. The MCUUF Search Committee is presently organizing coffees and teas during the day and evening "desserts" that week. There will also be a picnic for youth, children and their families on Saturday, April 26. More publicity about these events and how to sign up for them will be appearing in the near future. Watch for it in the enews. Please take this opportunity to meet Rev. Zimmerman in a more intimate gathering.

General Assembly 2014–June 25-29, Providence, RI

General Assembly is the annual meeting of the congregations in the Unitarian Universalist Association, drawing thousands of UUs from across the country. There are workshops, worship, social activities and business meetings where we set direction for our association for the coming year. Our fellowship can send up to 2 delegates. We have money available to help fund travel expenses. If you're interested in being considered as a delegate, contact Board President Kristen Dillon at kristen@speedfish.com.

Women's Awareness Circle

The Women's Awareness Circle will meet on Friday, April 25, from 4-5:30 p.m. in the home of Irene K., Hood River. **We are excited that our ministerial candidate will be joining us for tea.** This circle is open to all MCUUF women. Please invite a friend. RSVP to Irene. Our topic for discussion will be: "What **currently** brings you inspiration? Please bring an object, symbol, poem, short quote or photo to share."

Adult Religious Education Book Discussion Group

The Adult Religious Education Book Discussion Group has two openings for new members. This five-year-old group meets every other Wednesday from 10 a.m. to noon to discuss books of religious focus selected by the group. Our current book is *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell. For details contact Don H.

District and Region Training Opportunities

[GoldMine Youth Leadership School](#)—An intensive week-long residential experience for youth leaders who have been recommended by their congregations, July 20-26 in Edmonds, WA. Check the GoldMine link for details and application form to be posted very soon.

[Russell Lockwood Leadership School](#) (RLLS)—A week-long leadership program designed for UU leaders who wish to be skillful contributors to our congregations and to our local and global communities, August 10-16 in Portland.

Full details and registration are available on the [Pacific Western Region website](#) at the RLLS link.

Witness for Peace teen delegation

One of our UU teens, Rory K., is planning to participate in the Witness for Peace teen delegation to Nicaragua this July and is asking for financial support from members of MCUUF. This is an opportunity for her to learn about Nicaragua and the impacts of American foreign policy and trade on the Nicaraguan people. She will be staying with host families and visiting a cooperative and the American embassy. For more information about the trip, you can check out witnessforpeace.org or email her. All financial contributions are tax-deductible.

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 Ken Jones or any member of our Care Team: Jane Fetisoff, Anita Johnston, Ray Klebba, Jay Larsen, Tom Penchoen, or Tom Kaser. The Care Team will do its best to organize respectful and appropriate help for this situation.

Evensong

MCUUF is holding an eight-week series of gatherings in which participants will explore individual life journeys through sharing thoughts, experiences, doubts, and beliefs about traditional religious concepts. Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch and meet at the Grange from noon to 2 p.m. Childcare will be provided. **Participants are free to join us at any point in the series.** If possible, let the Rev. Jones or Trish H. know of your plans to attend a session ahead of time. The group will be limited to 15 persons. If you wish to attend, contact Trish.

Listening is at the core of Evensong. It offers people the opportunity to listen, speak of what matters to them, and be with one another in respectful ways. Listening solidifies relationships and is a foundation for community. The program will be facilitated by the Rev. Ken Jones with the assistance of Trish H. The first session was Feb. 2. Remaining dates will be the Sundays of April 6, May 4, 18, and June 1.

OWL—Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education Schedule

Sunday, April 13, Lesson #24, Prevention, 9:50 a.m. at the Rockford Grange.

Sunday, April 27, Lesson #25, Sex Abuse, 9:50 a.m. at the Rockford Grange.

Sunday, May 11, Lesson #26, Harassment, 9:50 a.m. at the Rockford Grange.

UU Meetup Group

The UU Meetup and Hiking Group is an email list of people who like to share events with others. Examples of events that have been shared are musical and theatrical events at the Columbia Center for the Arts, movies, school performances, charitable events and, of course, hikes. Sometimes we meet up for dinner before evening events. Anyone can initiate a UU meetup by sending an email announcing the meetup opportunity to the UU Meetup email list. If you do not have the latest email list, you can obtain it from Steve C. or Anita J. If you would like to have your name added to that list, please email or call Steve at [shcastles at embarqmail dot com](mailto:shcastles@embarqmail.com), or email Anita at [anitajj at yahoo dot com](mailto:anitajj@yahoo.com).