



MID-COLUMBIA UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

## NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2013



**Flower Communion, May 2013**

### LEADERSHIP LETTER

“The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof.”

— Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal Dreams*

All of the sun and the rain these days are aiding in the growth this time of year. Flowers continue to bloom. Vegetables are rooting down and sprouting up. The grass and weeds just won't stop growing. The hopefulness of spring is manifesting itself all around us.

Our fellowship, too, is manifesting the hopefulness that we expressed with our vote to search for a settled minister. The search committee is hard at work gathering information and taking the many steps necessary on our journey toward a settled ministry. Thank you to the whole fellowship for your vote of confidence towards growth and the support and ideas you will offer throughout the long process.

It is also a time of transition for our fellowship as our current board changes faces. Thank you to all of the outgoing board members and to those who will lead our fellowship into the future. It has been a great opportunity of growth for me, and it has made me deeply appreciate all of the work our community does together in order to manifest our hopes.

In faith, Maya Trook  
MCUUF Board President

## FROM OUR MINISTER

Wow!

That was a sentiment expressed by many who witnessed the “Coming of Age” youth present their faith statements during our Sunday service on June 2. These thirteen young people spent a year doing in-depth study of Unitarian Universalism, engaged in varied activities with their peers, teachers, and adult mentors in the congregation, and finally thought about, articulated, and delivered deeply personal statements of their own faith and beliefs. It was an opportunity that I—as I heard some of you also express—wish I had when I was a young person. My own youth was marked by my participation in my family’s church’s “Confirmation” program, which was more about “confirming” my acquiescence to the church’s ways and teachings rather than inviting me to articulate my own beliefs and values. That can in some ways be a daunting task for a young person, and indeed many people seem to prefer an institution that tells them where they belong (spiritually) rather than asks them to find their place. It’s like we’re asking these young people to find a place of strength and solace while gazing up at that big question mark in the sky.

Ah, yes, but it’s not only question marks we Unitarian Universalists value—it is also the love and bonds of community. I recently heard some discussion about the sometimes awkward feeling some people get during our sharing of joys and sorrows ritual. People come up and share their heartfelt joys and sorrows, sometimes asking for or intimating a need for physical, emotional, or spiritual support, and then after lighting a candle we go on with singing another hymn and the rest of the “service.” But it’s important that we all know that the sharing is only the beginning; the ongoing task of loving and supporting us all—from age thirteen to one hundred—belongs to us all. I think it is especially important to us, as a community that doesn’t place faith in a higher power to attend to everyone’s every need, to take seriously the bonds of community and our need to support one another.

That, of course, is what we do well. I can hear these young people stand up and profess their heartfelt beliefs without fear of judgment precisely *because* I know there’s a community of faith that’s there for them—that will be there for them—to support and love them for the rest of their lives.

Many, many thanks to all the people who shepherded this Coming of Age program, especially Tom Hons and Marian Udelhofen who “taught” the class, and to Alicia Bhatt and Peggy Newman and all the mentors and others who supported the program in many ways. And especially a big thank-you to all the young participants, who had enough faith in our religious community to give of themselves their spiritual gifts.

In faith,  
Ken

## SUNDAY SERVICES

**June 9—Earth Ministries.** William Scavie, a UU from Bainbridge Island, will share his message about the 7th UU principle.

**Please bring back your FISH bags, with food, this Sunday—see announcement below for details and food ideas.**

**June 16—Rev. Ken Jones "Standing on the Side of Love."** Many MCUUF members and friends will be traveling to Portland this Sunday to participate, as part of a Unitarian Universalist contingent, in the Portland Pride Parade. Rev. Jones will present, for those

unable to make the trip to Portland, a short talk and discussion about UU actions in Social Justice over the years, and how we can "Stand on the Side of Love" here in the gorge.

**June 23—The Gospel of Climate Change.** The UUA's 7th Principle tells us to respect the "interdependent web of life," which we all depend upon. In our daily lives, it is often difficult to remember we are part of nature and rely on it. The reality of climate change makes respect for the interdependent web essential. Guest speaker Karl Arruda, a member of the Wy'east UU Congregation and a volunteer with the Climate Reality Project, will discuss what inspires him to work for a more sustainable society.

**June 30**—A day of music and meditation on the topic of hunger and generosity. Staff from the FISH food bank will come receive our contribution to their capital campaign

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Coming to You Next Sunday

Your Search Committee is hard at work and needs your help. Next Sunday a questionnaire will be distributed to the members of the congregation. The Search Committee will have a table downstairs where you can fill it out and, if you like, discuss it with others to make it more enjoyable.

The questionnaire serves a dual purpose: to help the Search Committee know what the congregation wants from a half-time settled minister; and, equally important, to let interested ministers know about our congregation. Part of the search process is for the congregation and potential ministers to be as transparent as possible so there are no surprises later. You will find that some of the questions are personal. The results will be aggregated (i.e. no one will know who said what), but our answers will help the minister understand our congregation.

The congregation has clearly taken the search for a half-time settled minister seriously; the Search Committee appreciates your involvement and interest. The questionnaire is fairly lengthy and will take about 15-30 minutes to fill out. However, it is important that you take the time to complete it. It is an essential part of the search process.

**Members of the Search Committee:** Cindy A., Paul B., Steve C., Todd D., Don H., Jay L., Debbie O.

### Our Whole Lives Lifespan Sexuality Education

The Mid-Columbia UU Fellowship hopes to offer an "Our Whole Lives Lifespan Sexuality Education" program for 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> graders next year, potentially starting in October. *Our Whole Lives* helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, *Our Whole Lives* not only provides facts about anatomy and human development, but also helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. Unlike many other sexuality curricula currently available, this program is comprehensive and progressive. In an inclusive and developmentally appropriate manner, it addresses sensitive topics that are typically excluded. The curriculum was developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. The program does not promote a specific religious doctrine. The underlying values of the program reflect the justice oriented traditions of both denominations. More info is available at: <http://www.uua.org/re/owl/>

We will need additional adult leaders. If you know anyone who might be interested, please let Peggy know.

Registration for the program will be available later in the summer when the schedule is firm. To get your youth on the pre-registration list, please email Peggy.

**June 16—Standing On The Side Of Love:** We’re approaching a time when we need to know who will be joining us as one of 10 greater-Portland UU congregations marching together in the **Portland Pride Parade**. We have eight so far; others have said they are considering. We will attend the First Unitarian Church service from 10:00 to 11:00, then march in the parade. First Church needs to know how many MCUUFers will be coming. Sign up with Tom K.

**“FOOD on the FOURTH”!**

We handed out our new “Food on the Fourth” collection bags on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of May, and then got off-scheduled since the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday (normally our food collection day) was the flower service at the Penchoens’. Thank you to those who brought their bags back with food that day! For all others, **please bring your bags with food back this Sunday**. We only have the bags that were given out already, and we want to get them back to give out again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of June.

Here a reminder of what FISH clients most ask for:

<b><u>Packaged</u></b>	<b><u>Canned</u></b>	<b><u>Staples</u></b>	<b><u>Canned meals</u></b>
Mac & Cheese	Beans	Sugar	Soup
Hamburger Helper types	Fruit	Flour	Stew
Ramen noodles	Vegetables	Dry beans	Chili
Cereal	Tuna	Rice	
		Pasta	

**Please represent MCUUF (online) at General Assembly.** Thanks to high-technology and a commitment to increased democracy, it is possible to vote on issues at the UUA’s annual national gathering from the comfort of your laptop. Would you be willing to share some hours during the week of June 19-23 to provide our input to the decision making? Contact Denise E.

**ODES on a Theme** is an adult religious exploration discussion program. Each month we consider, explore, and share our beliefs on a different topic. The emphasis is on participation, not prior knowledge. No advance reading or preparation is required, but excerpts and questions are available on request. Contact Eric E. All discussions are from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Hood River Library. (Enter through the downstairs door.)

**Monday, June 24, 6:30-8:00**

*“I am a rock, I am an island . . . but I can’t get good cell phone reception”*—A discussion of the roles of the individual, society and government. What do we rely on and what should we expect or demand of government? Is government the problem, or is the problem bad government?

**Monday, July 22, 6:30-8:00**

*“The Truth, The Whole Truth, and Nothing but the Truth—The oath none of us live by.”*  
Everybody lies. We lie to children. We lie to be polite. We lie because it is easier. We lie to stay out of trouble. We lie to ourselves rather than acknowledge our own limits and mortality. But we don't talk about lying . . . until now.