

## ***The Open Door Newsletter*** November 2009

**Time and Location of Services:** Fellowship Services are at 10am on the Second Floor commons of the Ponzio Student Center on the Northland College Campus.

### ***Fellowship Service-November 8<sup>th</sup> Speaker: David Saetre*** *Campus Minister/Assistant Prof of Religion* ***“Table Grace: Recovering a Sacramental Sense of Food”***

Did you or your family every “say grace” before eating meals at home? Do you still? Does food ever seem “sacred” to you? What foods does your family share to celebrate special times of the year or important events in family life?

Do you know where your food comes from, how it got to your table, and what’s in it? What is our relationship to the food we consume, to the livelihood of those who provide the food, to the health of the land that produced the food?

Food and eating are hot topics today for good reason. Among the most basic acts required of us, eating is fraught with the complexities and detachments of our urban, post-industrial society. Our lives, even in small towns, include eating as consumption, and food as commodities detached from our consciousness. Meat comes from plastic wrappers, meals from McDonalds, milk from cartons. That’s a far cry from what religions have often expressed as a “sacramental” sense of meals and food.

If we wish to recover a sense of gratitude for the necessities of daily living, if we want to enrich our lives with greater mindfulness and consciousness toward life’s basics, and if we want to recover a greater sense of connection to the sources of those things we actually depend on, a good place to start is reconsidering food. Food is intimately connected with our relationships to the environment, to community, to family and intimates, even to our souls. This talk will explore those connections and efforts to recover what religious folk might call a sacramental sense of eating. To prepare for the talk and focus of this Sunday gathering you might want to ask yourself some of the questions I started with, and then ask your family and see what you come up with. Better yet, ask and discuss at a family meal!

Finally, this talk is in anticipation of Michael Ableman’s talk at the Presbyterian Congregational Church in Ashland on Thursday, November 12th 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Michael is an author and sustainable farming advocate. Hope to see you there as well. David

Note: More information regarding Michael Ableman and his talks are found in the body of the newsletter.

### ***Fellowship Service-November 22nd Speaker: Patty Porter Dufek*** ***“My Personal Mission Field”***

I have been involved with a group of women who collect medical supplies and equipment for hospitals in Jamaica. We also are involved with a school there. This all started many years ago when one woman saw a need and made this happen “one person at a time”.

More recently, due to changes in my health, I have changed my mission field. I volunteer with Special Olympics’ adult bowling teams.

My message is that we can all do something that will have a positive benefit for those in need.

Patty is a nurse at Memorial Medical Center and a member of the fellowship.

***MISSION STATEMENT*** - this fellowship exists to serve the human needs of its members and friends, to stimulate individual development of a positive and ethical philosophy of life, and to provide a common shelter for everyone’s personal growth. -- Founded, February 22, 1998.

## **Caring Corner**

If you know of someone who is ill, needs help, or has a great joy to celebrate, we offer support to members and friends of our fellowship. Jacki Rae-Ledin 373-0347 (antiquegardeninn@hotmail.com), Jan Perkins 373-5585 (perkworks@yahoo.com), Patty Dufek 682-9015 (pport57@charter.net)

## **Newsletter Submissions:**

If you have submissions for the newsletter please send them to the following address by Wednesday November 25th: [uunews@chequamegonuuf.org](mailto:uunews@chequamegonuuf.org).

## **After Service Snack Host/Hostess Schedule:** (Please note if you are on the list!)

Nov 8<sup>th</sup> service: Mike and Karen Crowell, Cindy and Paul VanHorn

Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> service: Marilyn Enspanier, Irene Blakely

Contact Karla Hasart at 682-4012, or [kkhasart@yahoo.com](mailto:kkhasart@yahoo.com) if you have questions.

## **Mexican Fiesta Feast – Fundraiser for Faith in Action – Thursday, Nov 5th**

Chequamegon UU members have been great supporters of Faith In Action's Mexican Fiesta Feast each year. Tickets are on sale now for the dinner that will be held on Thursday, November 5th from 4:00-7:00 at the Ashland Senior Center at 400 Chapple Avenue. The meal: a bean enchilada, beef taco, cornbread, and homemade dessert-yumm!!! \$8 for adults, \$3 for ages 3- 12, under 3 eat free. Take-outs available.

## **Michael Ableman – Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup>**

Author and sustainable farming advocate Michael Ableman will speak in Ashland on Thursday, November 12th 2009 as part of Northland College's Van Evera Lecture Series. He will give a free public presentation entitled "Feeding the Future: Stories and Images from the New Frontiers of Food and Agriculture" **at 7:00 in the Presbyterian Congregation Church** located at 214 Vaughn Avenue in Ashland. No reservations are required.

## **Michael Ableman – Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup>**

On Saturday November 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Michael Ableman will participate in "Feeding the Future: Sustainable Agriculture in the Chequamegon Bay," a summit at the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at Northland College. Featuring discussion sessions hosted by regional speakers, the summit will address a wide range of issues related to sustainable agriculture, including building local food systems and developing community gardens. The summit is free and open to the public, and includes an optional lunch of locally produced and organic food for a small fee. **Pre-registration is required, reservations can be made by calling (715) 682-1489, before November 6.**

## **From the Habitat for Humanity Board – Volunteers needed in November**

Experienced volunteers are needed to do finishing work throughout the month of November. Site supervision is provided on Mondays from 8 am to 5 pm, Wednesdays from 5 pm to 8 pm and Saturdays from 8 am to 5 pm. Please contact Angela or Rick Fairbanks at (715) 682-8425 for more information, or visit <http://www.cheqbayareahabitat.org/calendar.html>.

## **Pledge Drive Begins Now!**

Dear friends, as Thanksgiving approaches, please think of how the Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship has been a part of your life. What does our Fellowship mean to you? Please do your part and make a pledge to help the Fellowship develop and maintain a sustainable program that:

- supports your search for truth and meaning in life
- provides a vibrant Religious Education for our children by dedicated volunteer teachers
- helps our young adults grow in their spiritual path through the "Coming of Age" program
- follows deeds not creeds in service to our community and beyond
- stretches every dollar contributed with dozens of volunteers who keep our lay-led community together!

Have you like me, had a good laugh from one of David Saetre's talks, or been moved to tears by a friend's candle of concern, feasted on Megan's enchiladas, or just heaved a contented sigh returning home, because of an eye-opening experience in the warmth of community? What we have is special, and it takes a lot of work and it does take money.

Our budget is right inline with the priorities that we hear from all our members. For example, we understand that our Sunday services are the main expression of our community, so a large portion of the budget supports the speaker honoraria, rent, music, printing programs, and ordering religious education materials that make our services meaningful. We have lots of small line items in the budget for \$100-\$200 that have a big affect, like the Caring Committee sending cards and flowers to those in need, or providing free childcare so parents can participate in the services. Another significant commitment we make is to the personal development of our members to provide scholarships to UU conferences, trainings, youth conferences and other programs that invest in our members who bring their new talents back to our Fellowship. Finally, our budget also recognizes our connection to the larger liberal religious community via our annual contribution to the Unitarian Universalist Association and our Prairie Star District.

Our budget for this year (thru June 2010) is \$16,580. This is about \$4,000 more than what we raised last year. The increase is mostly due to a very important step we are taking to hire a (very) part-time administrator. Our growth has been steady and our organization is beginning to require regular administration of our operation (database, mailings, key records, reports etc). For three years we budgeted for a 5 hour/week administrator to handle these tasks. This year we are taking the plunge!

**Fall is our pledge season.** Your pledge, which is a written intention of making a gift, helps us make plans so we accomplish our budget to carry out our mission. We are doing something different this year; **we ask that you bring your pledge card with you to the Dec 6<sup>th</sup> service.** We would like to collect all the pledges that day. We need to know what our pledges total so that we can make a commitment to the projects we support and to the part-time administrator. That is why we are pushing for the Dec 6<sup>th</sup> due date for pledges.

Pledges can be paid anytime before the end of June by either writing a check, or giving a gift of cash in an envelope (write your name on it) and placing it in the offering basket. Pledges may be paid in installments over time, monthly or otherwise. The contribution schedule is up to you. Your contributions are kept *entirely* confidential and are tax deductible.

You will be receiving a pledge card in the mail and hopefully a personal call from one of us on the board in case you have any questions about our financial goals. Please give full consideration to increasing your pledge to help us step up to this next stage in our Fellowship's development. This is an exciting time for us, thanks for being a part of it all!

Ruth Oppedahl

## **Religious Education**

**Ages 5-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Tapestry of Faith's "Wonderful Welcome"

Instructors: Mary Gonderzik and Brenda Brouder

Welcome. Welcome in love. Welcome in friendship. Welcome in faith. The Wonderful Welcome curriculum engages and challenges leaders and children alike to explore how and why we are willing to welcome others into our lives. We welcome not only strangers, but family, our peers, our neighbors and even entities that are not people such as our animal friends and nature itself.

How do we welcome? We welcome by sharing intangible gifts, those positive qualities which we all have inside us such as kindness, love, invitation, covenant and empathy. In this program, children learn to articulate and express a variety of intangible gifts, empowering them to share these gifts with others. The intangible gifts explored in Wonderful Welcome are all components of welcoming itself, a core Unitarian Universalist value. This program helps children understand and practice other values central to Unitarian Universalism such as friendship, hospitality, and fairness. It offers children safe, positive and intentional ways to relate to one another, the people in their families, and the world around them as they investigate how they use gifts they can't see or touch to welcome others into their lives. Children will think about the intangible gifts they bring into the world, and the intangible gifts they receive. When and how do they get love from others? When and how do they show empathy? Who has given them the gift of friendship? How do they show that they want to be someone's friend? What does "helping" look like? Each session begins with a Wonder Box that contains a symbol of the session's theme. The Wonder Box engages the children's curiosity and encourages a spirit of inquiry and reflection. Throughout the program, a Wonder Box poster serves as a continual reminder of the gifts explored in each session.

### **The Gift of Love**

In our first session, the Wonder Box was empty to reinforce the idea that intangible gifts, such as the gift of love, cannot be seen. We read the story, "The Real Gift" which is about a child who makes a blanket with his grandmother. The child is upset when the blanket is lost, but the grandmother explains that the real gift was the time they spent together and that gift can never be lost.

### **The Gift of Covenant**

In our second session, the children explored the intangible gift of covenant. They learned how covenants are made in various contexts such as on the playground, in their school classrooms, and in the larger Unitarian Universalist faith community, and they made a covenant for how they want to be together in Wonderful Welcome.

### **The Gift of Forgiveness**

When children opened the Wonder Box during our third session, they found a picture of a dove bearing an olive branch — a common symbol for peace. We talked about the intangible gift of forgiveness, something we can use to restore peace to a relationship when we feel hurt or wronged. The children learned that forgiving somebody can make things fair again and can be a way to welcome someone back with you after a conflict.

<http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/wonderfulwelcome/index.shtml>

Submitted by: Mary Gonderzik

### **Coming of Age Class**

We have a vibrant and sizable group of 10 (and sometimes more!) teenagers participating in the UU Coming of Age curriculum. We have spent the first few weeks getting to know each other, setting ground rules for the program, and writing our "spiritual autobiography." Our group will also be involved in helping Faith in Action prepare for their annual Mexican dinner. We are working to match our teens with adults in our Fellowship as mentors; if you are interested in getting to know one of these terrific teens better and helping guide them through the Coming of Age process, contact June Bavlnka.

Submitted by: Kristin Quinlan

## **Letters to the Fellowship:**

### **The Sound of Music**

From my perspective, last Sunday's gathering at the Ponzio Center was destined to be a typical thought provoking and social event for our Chequamegon UU Fellowship. Yes, I accepted the invitation to be the day care provider, a bit out of the usual, but not enough to change my approach toward the service. Yeah, I might have been a bit apprehensive not knowing if any children attending would be willing to join me in the play room with alphabet puzzles, dinosaurs, toy trucks to crash, and whatever other surprises were stored in the tub. I was pleased when two wonderful children chose to join me so I didn't have to play with those toys on my own!

However, what really affected my perspective and enjoyment of this service was the amazing flute music that echoed down from the second story and into the entry way. It was faint, but audible as soon as we entered (wrestled our way into) the building. I paused and consciously reveled in the spiritual feeling that occurs when one enters a sanctuary. My first thought was that it was a recording being played by students in the commons area, though I saw no one around. To be sure, I took the longer walk to the glass enclosed stairway rather than my preference for the back stairway, simply to enjoy and take in as much of the music as I could. It occurred to me during that short walk that it was the first time I had ever felt like I was entering "church" at the Ponzio Center. I was inspired in a way that happens seldom for me and almost exclusively through music and nature. This music was palatable, and it touched my spirit. As I proceeded up the stairs, I saw Craig Mealman walk from the balcony into our gathering room to continue his welcoming music. After the service I approached Craig to express my appreciation for his wonderful gift of music. He told me that he sensed the spiritual potential of music echoing down from the balcony and into the entry way and wanted to provide that experience to those attending. Thanks Craig for making my day.

Henry Quinlan

### **Thanks for the Hospitality:**

Thank you to the giving people that have donated snacks to our UUA hospitality table this year and in the past years. I am delighted by the wonderful variety of delicious snacks, the beautiful decorations for the hospitality table, and the positive energy our congregation is displaying towards this portion of our service. I appreciate your generosity of snacks, caring attitude towards our members, and thoughtful actions of your donations in order for us to mingle after our services, allowing us to get know each other better. This time spent together, combining our positive energy, can only lead to amazing things for our church. Thank you so much for providing this opportunity for our UUA group.

If you have any questions, please contact me, Karla Hasart at 682-4012, or [kkhasart@yahoo.com](mailto:kkhasart@yahoo.com). OR you are always welcome to stop by my home at 30795 Hwy. 118 to ask any question or to just visit!  
Thanks, Karla

### **It was a Good Day in the Neighborhood:**

The Habitat for Humanity house located at 317 7<sup>th</sup> Ave E in Ashland is progressing along. It is in the finishing stages – hanging doors, putting up trim, putting shelving braces and brackets into closets and cutting and laying flooring. Presiding over the project is Roy Halverson, a 74 year-old dynamo who is explains construction problems and experiences in an interesting and detailed way, throwing a few finlander jokes around in the process.

Halloween was the UU volunteer work day. Tracey Ledder, Debbie McRoberts and Colene Lee (who brought her own chop saw) came at different times and worked on various projects – shelving braces and brackets, flooring, etc. Being the least experienced, I was Roy's human tool belt. I was a contributing factor in door hanging that became rather lengthy, but redeemed myself by the end of the day. Penny Neuman from HH arrived in the afternoon. A Northland College student who installed flooring the previous weekend arrived with several friends to help on Saturday.

Roy will give you a tour if you just want to stop by to see the house. Habitat is looking for experienced rehabbers or carpenters to help finish the house, as is described previously in the newsletter. It is remarkable what a community can do when it works together.

The UU youth group offered their time and energy to the project. Unfortunately, with only one site supervisor it was difficult to plan a project to keep that many willing spirits productive. Thanks to Kristin Quinlan and the youth group for considering this project. HH needs you on the next house – stay tuned. Please stop by and tour the house.

Marilyn Einspanier

## November UU Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 Mexican Fiesta Feast Ashland Senior Center	6 Registration due for Ableman @ Sigurd Olson	7
8 David Saetre "Table Grace"				12 Michael Ableman Presbyterian Church 7pm		14 Michael Ableman Sigurd Olson 8:30am-4:30pm
15						21
22 Patty Dufek (nee Porter) "Mission Field"			25 Newsletter submissions due	26 Thanksgiving		28
29	30	Dec 1				

An excerpt from "Have a Little Faith" by Mitch Albom: "Even in our own faith (*Judaism*), we have questions and answers, interpretations, debates. In Christianity, in Catholicism, in other faiths, the same thing – debates, interpretations. That is the beauty. It's like being a musician. If you found *the* note, and you kept hitting that note all the time, you would go nuts. It's the blending of the different notes that makes the music."