



## *The Open Door Newsletter*

*February 2011*

*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 – February 13<sup>th</sup>***

***Speaker: David Saetre***

#### **The Gospel According to True Grit**

The Coen brothers' latest film, "True Grit", offers up a full platter for film buffs and moralists alike. The movie is an adaptation of Charles Portis' original novel of the same name. It follows an earlier film adaptation in 1970, starring John Wayne in the role of Rooster Cogburn, a miserable, drunken, reprobate U.S. Marshall called upon to aid a 14 year-old girl in her search for revenge upon her father's killer.

It is interesting to note that a Western film can still compel our attention, and this one does. The film certainly exploits America's time-honored morality tales where victims get even and wrongdoers receive their due. The search for revenge and the wilderness we all enter when revenge is confused with justice frames the drama in classical garb. This could be a Greek morality tale (or Shakespeare), and the characters' language evokes the classical voice. But there is more to the Coens' ironic vision. The film explores the banalities of violence; the strange twists and turns of fate; the true oddities of human beings; the stubborn determination (at all cost) characteristics of the morally righteous.

But, I will argue, it is also a tale of redemption, and a rather profound exploration of the possibilities of grace, perhaps even love. Finally, the Coen brothers' moral vision stands in contrast to the earlier version of the film starring John Wayne. The Coens' vision of life is always darker than that sunnier version of American moral exceptionalism, but it is more honest and true.

There is something about the novel by Portis and the film by the Coen brothers that religious communities can pay attention to, perhaps even celebrate. You don't have to see the film or read the novel to enjoy the service on the day before Valentine's Day. As always there will be great music, meaningful worship, and fabulous valentine treats to share. Who knows, maybe we'll sing "That's Amore" again this year. See you there -- David

David Saetre Campus Minister/Assistant Professor of Religion

*"The prevailing wisdom of the day is that religion and spirituality are a way to feel good, but the search for religion is the search for truth"*

### ***Fellowship Service – February 27<sup>th</sup>***

***Speaker: Laurel Liefert***

#### **The Bejeweled Net**

Process theology is a school of thought influenced by the metaphysical process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, a British mathematician who described god as "the poet of the world." Rev. Laurel Liefert, guest minister from Berkeley, CA, will explore some of the fundamental principles of process theology and how they relate to the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

Our principles begin by emphasizing the sacredness of the individual person. How does this emphasis on autonomy fit with our 7th principle image of the interdependent web of all existence? The Unitarian Universalist Commission on Appraisal has called for a "paradigm shift from individualism to interdependence, from the autonomy of congregations to a community of autonomous congregations."

Process theology provides a dynamic view of our world in keeping with this call, inviting us into the joy of living in the bejeweled net, each new moment filled with creative possibilities as we embrace the reality of our interdependence.

## **Become a CUUF member – March 13<sup>th</sup> Service**

*Submitted by Karen Crowell*

We welcome you to become a member of the Chequamgon UU Fellowship. A member is anyone 16 years old or older who wishes to covenant to affirm and promote the UU principles of faith (below) and signs our Fellowship Membership book.

There are seven principles which Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The benefits of membership are being a part of a liberal faith community that you care about. It's asking questions of faith, hope, charity, love, grace, spirituality, religion, belief, ethical issues, divinity, or a transcendent experience of oneness with others who are also engaged in a quest for truth, meaning, and social justice. It's participating with others in services, meditation, discussion, the RE program for children and youth, social justice concerns, circle suppers, and other UU activities.

Members are expected to participate in the fellowship and give an annual pledge of financial support, offering their time, talent and support at a self-determined level.

You may become a member at any time or on **NEW MEMBER SUNDAY, MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup>**. To do so, please mention your interest in membership to Karen Crowell ([dancingmoon01@centurytel.net](mailto:dancingmoon01@centurytel.net)) or Andrea Haugo ([haugoom@hotmail.com](mailto:haugoom@hotmail.com)), or Brenda Brouder ([cuufad@gmail.com](mailto:cuufad@gmail.com)). You are also invited to attend a **membership Q&A discussion on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. place TBD.

## **Child Dedication Service – May 22<sup>nd</sup>**

*Submitted by Irene Blakely*

A Unitarian Universalist Child Dedication ceremony welcomes a child into the fellowship. It is an opportunity for the fellowship to recognize each child and to offer support to the child as s/he grows.

The ceremony is brief but meaningful, and takes place in May during the flower service. Children (infant to twelve years) who participate, come forward with parent(s) or guardians during this part of the service. There are no special requirements of the children or their parents.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Irene Blakely at [adahsdottir@gmail.com](mailto:adahsdottir@gmail.com).

## **Caring Corner**

If you know of people in need of our thoughts and prayers or people who have specific needs please contact Jacki Rae-Ledin at 373-0347 or [antiquegardeninn@hotmail.com](mailto:antiquegardeninn@hotmail.com). If you are interested in serving on the caring committee, please contact Jacki.

## **Podcasts: In Case You Missed It**

The CUUF Christmas Program video is on YOUTUBE: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP6QaVQripE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP6QaVQripE). Be sure to watch the credits. A great big thank you to Travis, he did a fantastic job on this. Most of this info can also be found on the CUUF website <http://www.chequamegonuuf.org/>

## **After Service Snack Host/Hostess Schedule:**

February 13<sup>th</sup> Tenney, Van Horn, Bussey, Dufek      March 13<sup>th</sup> Gonderzik, Hassart, Dufek, Crowell  
February 27<sup>th</sup> Bavlnka, Bergerud, Christensen, Blakely      March 27<sup>th</sup> Lorenz, Perkins, Ledin, Wichita  
Please call Patty Dufek if you have questions: 682-9015 Or 715-292-1676

Dear Friends,

Part of the worship committee's work is dedicated to enriching the Sunday Service experience for our members and guests. We plan future services, imagine themes and recruit speakers. We also discuss the opportunities to deepen the worship experience.

The Unitarian/Universalist tradition values community participation, spontaneity, and freedom of expression. Those values carry over into our worship services. Our own congregation expresses those values in our lay-led services, placing a premium on member participation and freedom of expression within the service itself.

Unitarian/Universalist traditions evolved out of non-liturgical, Protestant Christianity. Our worship bears the marks of Protestant suspicion of anything that smacked of orchestrated, priestly liturgical worship associated with Roman Catholicism. The "Living Tradition", as our worship is known today, still tends to avoid formal ritual in favor of informality in our gatherings. These values present a challenge as we seek to deepen the worship experience. Religious experience, by its very nature, requires a certain degree of ritual. Rituals are those acts which allow a group and its members entry to a sense of the sacred. Northland Chaplain, David Saetre, frequently reminds us of the scholarly consensus that ritual allows the seeker the means to enter sacred time and space. We seek to balance the value of freedom and spontaneity with the need for ritual and depth in our worship.

One of the regular (and essential) features of our worship service is the expression of Joys and Concerns. The UU practice of lighting candles of Joys and Concerns has a rich history, and serves as an extension of the ritual of lighting the chalice. Almost all UU congregations include lighting candles of Joys and Concerns as part of the worship service. Lighting the chalice and the candles of Joys and Concerns probably comes closest to a liturgical act in our worship services. We bring the whole community together in the mystery of shared joy and shared sorrow. It's critical to our sense of community, and our sense of framing deepest experiences within our shared search for meaning and transcendent purpose. Lighting candles of Joys and Concerns is the closest thing we have to prayer. These are the prayers of the people, shared among the people, to find common expression of meaning in our triumphs and tragedies.

Because we don't have a rich liturgical or ritual tradition, sometimes we lose that sense of transcendent purpose. UU congregations seem to share a struggle to balance freedom and spontaneity with a sense of dignity and ritual. An article dating ten years ago in the UU newsletter began with these words: "Done well, they [the Joys and Concerns] show that we're a caring and reverent religious community. Done poorly, they embarrass us. Joys and Sorrows, or Joys and Concerns, our sharing of the highs and lows of our lives, can be a rich and rewarding experience that builds community. Or, it can start the week on a sour note as speakers take off on political or commercial tangents, give excess vacation detail, and share their weight-loss successes."

Many UU congregations no longer express Joys and Concerns directly. Members and guests write notes on slips of paper that are collected as an offering of Joys and Concerns. The minister reads them and lights a common candle. That practice doesn't seem right for our congregation. We value the direct expression of Joys and Concerns from young and old alike. It's part of our "living tradition" at the Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

It is important to remember that candles of Joys and Concerns is not the time for announcements. It is not the time to enter into a congregation discussion. By providing time for announcements at the beginning of the service, the candles of Joys and Concerns should be reserved for our form of prayer. This includes the joyful exultations of children announcing an achievement or a birthday. It includes the sadness of children sharing the death of a pet or their concern for an ill relative. It concludes with the lighting of a candle for those joys too private and those sorrows too deep to share. These are our prayers - it's our form of prayer.

To honor that, the worship committee recommends that we practice a joyful and reverent approach to our Joys and Concerns. Let's try to keep our expressions to two or three sentences. Let's remember that Joys and Concerns is not the time for announcements or speeches, but the occasion for sharing from the heart. Let's continue to have our members, from two to ninety-two (or older!), do the sharing. And, let's continue working together to create meaningful worship experiences that honor our core values and allow us to explore the depths of our search for meaning. That's the UU way!

The Worship Committee

**Have You Considered Making a Planned Gift to CUUF?** *Submitted by Ruth Oppedahl*  
*"Life is a gift, and if we agree to accept it, we must contribute in return. When we fail to contribute, we fail to adequately answer why we are here. I believe we are here to do good." -- Albert Einstein*

There are a variety of ways to make planned gifts or bequeaths to the Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Please consider designating a specific sum or percentage of your estate or life insurance policy to CUUF. Or, perhaps you are able to offer a planned gift while you are living. Contributions may be set aside for specific purposes, with recognition or anonymously. Please discuss any ideas you may have with a board member.

Planned Giving is good stewardship. For more information contact Ruth Oppedahl at 715-373-0973.

## **Unitarian Universalist Association Events:**

### **Prairie Star District**

**One-day anniversary celebration of Camp Unistar:** Camp UniStar is a Unitarian Universalist camp for families, individuals, and youth located on Star Island in Cass Lake, Minnesota. UniStar is owned by the Prairie Star District of the UUA. 2011 marks Camp UniStar's fiftieth year! Join us in the celebration on: **Saturday March 12th, 2011 First Universalist Church, 3400 Dupont Ave S., Minneapolis.**

**Camp Unistar Summer programs:** UniStar offers 13 weeks of awesome experiences, with about 65 people attending from Saturday to Saturday. In 2011 there will be Work Week (June 4-11), two Youth Weeks (June 11-18; June 18-25) and ten Family Weeks for families and adults of all ages (every week from June 25 through September 3). Each Family Week has a theme with a daily two hour morning program. Programs may include topics such as sailing, dance, yoga, science, religion, current events, nature, and crafts. Campers may choose to stay in the lodge or cabins, or tent right next to the lakeshore. <http://www.campunistar.org>.

### **Prairie Star District holds its Annual Conference in Des Moines, April 8-10, 2011!**

"It Matters What You Believe," is the theme of the conference. There are 24 workshops offered, including: "Shared Ministry: Leading With Spirituality," "Engaging Our Interdependent Web," and "Compassionate Communication: Living Our UU 'Creating Peace' Statement of Conscience."

The conference is intentionally multigenerational, and there will be activities to engage your children as well as opportunities for families to be together. There will also be a Youth Conference offered concurrently. Youth will have their own activities and a group service project, but will be able to sign up for any of the workshops in the "C" slot.

For more information on the conference and to register, please visit the PSD website at <http://www.psduua.org/drupal/events/AnnualConference2011>. **Scholarships available.** Deadline for registration at the discounted early rate is **March 18**.

### **Youth Combating Homelessness**

In early November, 35 youth and adults from three PSD states came to UU Church of Minnetonka, MN for the PSD Northern Youth Action Con. They participated in The Sleepout (a Twin Cities campaign that raises awareness and funds to combat homelessness), and shared their experiences with the congregation. One youth wrote an account of her experience: <http://www.psduua.org/Newsletter/60January2011Youth>.

### **Online Workshops**

Consider attending one of the free online workshops offered by District staff and knowledgeable guest speakers. To participate all you need is high speed internet access and a separate phone line.

**Youth Ministry** February 8 & 17, 2011

**Mission, Mission, Mission** February 10 & 22, 2011

All these workshops are at 6:45 p.m. Central/ 7:45 p.m. Eastern. Registration is available at <http://www.psduua.org/Workshops/FutureWorkshops>

### **Prairie Star District, continued...**

**MidWest Leadership School** (MWLS) and **Youth MidWest Leadership School** develops youth and adult lay leaders in the Unitarian Universalist (UU) community. MWLS will be held July 17 - 23, 2011, on the campus of Beloit College in southeast Wisconsin. For information or a registration form, visit <http://www.mwls.org/>. Scholarships from PSD are available.

**Congregations now have the opportunity to participate in a number of UUA social witness decisions.** Vote in the Congregational Poll to approve placing the Draft Statement of Conscience (SOC). Submit comments on the Draft CSAI Immigration as a Moral Issue (closes March 1, 2011) For previews of the comment forms as well as directions on how to vote, please see [www.uua.org/csw](http://www.uua.org/csw). Also available: "What Are We Voting On?" and a guide for collecting congregational comments.

### **UU websites:**

National organization – UUA: [UUA.org](http://UUA.org)

Information regarding famous persons who were or are UUs: [www.famousuus.com](http://www.famousuus.com)

Regional organization: Prairie Star District: [www.psduua.org](http://www.psduua.org)

Prairie Star District newsletter: [www.psduua.org/newsletter](http://www.psduua.org/newsletter)

### **Community Events:**

#### **PFLAG** – Upcoming Programs

*Submitted by Mary Wichita*

- *David Saetre*, Professor of Religion at Northland College, will speak at the **February 22** meeting of PFLAG (Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbians and Gays) on domestic partnership and marriage-related issues. Meetings are open to the public – **7pm Washburn Public Library**.
- *Kevin Shanning*, Professor of Sociology at Northland College, will speak at the **March 22** PFLAG meeting regarding how to become a good ally of gays, lesbians, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals. Both gatherings will be eye-opening and supportive -**7pm Washburn Public Library**.

PFLAG'S vision is that the parents, families and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, celebrate diversity and envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Only with respect, dignity and equality for all will we reach our full potential as human beings, individually and collectively. PFLAG welcomes the participation and support of all who share in, and hope to realize this vision.

### **UU Calendar of upcoming events:**

<p><b>Feb 13:</b> CUUF - David Saetre, Northland College Campus Minister</p> <p>Feb 22 : PFLAG meeting, 7pm Washburn Public Library; David Saetre speaker.</p> <p><b>Feb 27:</b> CUUF - Laurel Liefert, visiting minister, Starr King School for the Ministry, Masters of Divinity</p> <p>Mar 12 : Camp Unistar anniversary - Minneapolis</p> <p><b>Mar 13:</b> CUUF - David Saetre, Northland College Campus Minister; New Member Ceremony – Karen Crowell</p> <p>Mar 18: Deadline for registration at the discounted early rate for the PSD conference.</p> <p>Mar 22: PFLAG meeting, 7pm Washburn Public Library; Kevin Shanning speaker.</p> <p><b>Mar 27:</b> CUUF - Alan Brew, Northland College Interim VP of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean</p> <p>Apr 8 – 10: Prairie Star District annual conference in Des Moines, Iowa</p> <p><b>Apr 10:</b> CUUF - Coming of Age Credo Service - CUUF Youth; Child Dedication - Irene Blakely</p> <p><b>Apr 24:</b> CUUF - Easter: David Saetre, Northland College Campus Minister</p> <p><b>May 8:</b> CUUF - Music Service: members, friends</p> <p><b>May 22:</b> CUUF - Flower Ceremony; Chang'aa Mwetii, storyteller, Assistant Professor of Education and Curriculum UMD</p>
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**Note: Fellowship service dates are in bold.**

**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

**Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**

Website: <http://www.chequamegonuuf.org> Mailing address: PO Box 641, Ashland, WI 54806

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