

# *The Open Door Newsletter*

*August 2018*



*Please Note: Regular fellowship services are held twice monthly from September through May at 10 a.m. on the Northland College Campus. Our fall service schedule will reconvene on September 9, 2018. For more info, find us on the web at [www.chequamegonuuf.org](http://www.chequamegonuuf.org)*

## **August 12 Summer Gathering—Memorial Park, Washburn**

Sunday, August 12, marks our final summer worship gathering. We'll meet at 10 a.m. at Memorial Park in Washburn. The informal service will feature songs led by Donn Christiansen and a meditation led by David Saetre. Bring a camp chair (some seating provided) and enjoy the beautiful setting overlooking Chequamegon Bay as we celebrate the last hurrah of summer.

## ***We Were Made for This—Encouragement for Difficult Times***

(Mary Rehwald recently shared the following essay at our CUUF Board meeting and at the memorial service for Beverly Jensch. We thought all of you might appreciate these thoughts – perhaps to cut and post on your refrigerator door! –David)

My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized, visionary people.

You are right in your assessments. The lustre and hubris some have aspired to while endorsing acts so heinous against children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless, is breathtaking. Yet, I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially do not lose hope. Most particularly because, the fact is that we were made for these times. Yes. For years, we have been learning, practicing, been in training for and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engagement.

I grew up on the Great Lakes and recognize a seaworthy vessel when I see one. Regarding awakened souls, there have never been more able vessels in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind.

Look out over the prow; there are millions of boats of righteous souls on the waters with you. Even though your veneers may shiver from every wave in this stormy roil, I assure you that the long timbers composing your prow and rudder come from a greater forest. That long-grained lumber is known to withstand storms, to hold together, to hold its own, and to advance, regardless.

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**The Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship welcomes people of any age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, ability, religion or cultural background.**

## CUUF 2018 Fall and Winter Service Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker/Topic</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker/Topic</u>
September 9	David Saetre	November 11	Tom Clowes
September 23	Water Service	November 25	David Saetre
October 14	David Saetre	December 2	David Saetre
October 28	Allhallowtide	December 16	Holiday Service

### From the Minister's Desk—The saga of the boys from the Thai soccer team trapped in a cave near Bangkok, Thailand

On June 23, the Wild Boar soccer team ventured into Tham Luang cave during heavy rains after soccer practice. As the cave flooded, the boys were driven deeper into the cave to high ground 10 kilometers from the cave's entrance. The world was captivated by the story, from the relief of their discovery, then back to the tense and difficult process of extraction. You may have followed the story and shared the global sense of joy at their ultimate liberation from the cave.

Some called the rescue "a miracle". But the truth lies in the careful planning and the incredible global response of resources, money and expertise all directed at saving 12 boys and their coach. International agencies and diving experts from across the globe convened to save the boys. The story possessed a kind of compelling drama that engaged the necessary resources to pull off the extraordinary rescue.

I can't help but think of what it would take to direct the same passion and commitment to save children from the myriad "caves" of poverty, inequality, violence, absence of opportunity, political manipulation and unrest. Our own country continues to incarcerate immigrant children, separated from their parents at the southern border. In defiance of mass protests and a Federal judge's order, the Trump administration continues to hold thousands of children with no clear path to reunification with parents. So much for "family values".

I don't mean to minimize the joy for the soccer team rescue. I do want to ask a question about our collective attention and commitment to other children in distress. So many of our children are vulnerable, trapped in metaphorical caves in our own nation, our state, in our own back yard. Too many children are still left behind. Too many children suffer from unequal education. Inequalities in education result directly from policies, including Wisconsin's strange and sad retreat from funding rural and urban schools. That's our front yard as well as our back yard.

In our own small way this Fellowship has placed a high priority on our children. That's one thing we do and will continue to do. We welcome little ones into a community of care. We offer a religious education program that is progressive and loving, creative and engaging. Unitarian Universalist and other progressive causes have become the new face of "family values". We affirm all the different configurations of families in our community. And our values and principals compel us to seek justice and equality for children everywhere. Rather than giving in to despair we have good work to do. Support our own religious education program -- volunteer to teach or substitute, help fund our RE needs. Write letters and express your support for public schools and fair funding of education. This is an important election year -- become engaged. Thank a teacher (often). They are the "SEAL" team who go to work every day providing the bright light of learning that leads the next generation out of the proverbial cave of ignorance. And, simply, love your children every way you can (no matter how old they are now!). Social movements start in our own communities, our own neighborhoods. As we look forward to a new school year let's continue to celebrate and build community right here, beginning with our children.

### Attention UU Women!

UU Women will meet on August 19 at 10 a.m. at Café Coco. Contact Jill with any questions at 715-373-5908 or [jlorenz@centurytel.net](mailto:jlorenz@centurytel.net)



## Religious Education

Happy Summer Everyone! I am writing to reach out about the 2018-2019 plans for religious education. Part of the vision that the CUUF Religious Education Program has in educating our most precious resource, our children, is to make sure that we are sharing the beauty and diversity of our community through the values of our faith tradition. One of the best ways that we can offer this to our youth is for them to experience the stories, creativity, time, and talents of our fellowship members. Our goal this fall is to engage at least one fellowship volunteer in each of our roughly 14 Sunday RE classes. If you would like to support our RE goals and volunteer to share a little bit of yourself with our youth, please contact Kelsey Roth at [girlloftheearth@gmail.com](mailto:girlloftheearth@gmail.com) or Deb Aaron at [raaron@centurylink.net](mailto:raaron@centurylink.net). We would be so excited to hear from you!

I recently attended the Midwest Leadership School down in Decorah, IA. This was an intensive, week-long gathering of folks from all over the MidAmerica Region. Throughout the week we took part in lectures, breakout project groups, worship and much more. Presentations throughout the week varied from UU History, to dismantling White Supremacy Culture, to how to communicate and work together in a community setting during anxious and troubling times. I hadn't participated in a program like this before and didn't know what to expect out of the experience – I was blown away. I was nervous going into it but came out with nothing but gratitude and wonder for the experience. The organization of the school was amazing and the way the staff was able to connect the diversity of presentations and projects throughout the week made for a cohesive and meaningful experience. There is a parallel youth school that occurs at the same time as the adult school. It would be wonderful to see more folks from CUUF, adults and youth alike, attend MWLS. Thanks to CUUF for making this possible! —Submitted by Evan Flom



*(We Were Made for This—cont. from page 1)* In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or unended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency, too, to fall into being weakened by dwelling on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there. That is spending the wind without raising the sails.

We are needed, that is all we can know. And though we meet resistance, we more so will meet great souls who will hail us, love us and guide us, and we will know them when they appear. Didn't you say you were a believer? Didn't you say you pledged to listen to a voice greater? Didn't you ask for grace? Don't you remember that to be in grace means to submit to the voice greater?

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good.

What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these - to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.

There will always be times when you feel discouraged. I too have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it. I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate.

The reason is this: In my uttermost bones I know something, as do you. It is that there can be no despair when you remember why you came to Earth, who you serve, and who sent you here. The good words we say and the good deeds we do are not ours. They are the words and deeds of the One who brought us here. In that spirit, I hope you will write this on your wall: When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for. —Clarissa Pinkola Estes, American poet

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