



Monthly Newsletter

January 2016 Worship Services

Jan. 2016

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Office Hours:
 Monday-Friday,
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Closed Dec 24-Jan 3

www.uucorvallis.org

Sunday, January 3, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Opening to a New Year”

Rev. Jill McAllister

As religious liberals we take pride in being open to wisdom and truth – but are we really open? What does openness look like and feel like, and do we truly value it? We’ll be joined this morning by Lea Bayles, Johanna Beekman, George Beekman, and Lyris Cooper of RhythmAsana, leading a simple movement meditation to help us feel grounded as we open our hearts to community, spirit, and the world.

Sunday, January 10, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Politics and Religion”

Rev. Jill McAllister

Far from being separate arenas, politics and religion are intricately intertwined, in very particular ways in our modern American democracy. Everybody has an opinion on how this relationship should work. I’ll try to describe my own perspective as a congregational leader and a minister.

Sunday, January 17, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Martin Luther King Jr, and Community Organizing”

Rev. Jill McAllister

Martin Luther King Jr was an inspiring preacher and writer, but he was also a brilliant organizer as the leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. His legacy as an organizer is too often overlooked, and has much to teach us.

Sunday, January 24, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Between Us: Our Shared Ministry”

Rev. Jill McAllister and Kyle Jansson

As planning for our 2016-17 church year gets underway, Jill and Fellowship President Kyle Jansson will share a look at the state of our shared ministry, and how we’re meeting our goals for the life and mission of the UUFC.

Sunday, January 31, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“A Culture of Critique”

Rev. Jill McAllister

A teacher of mine once remarked that “Practice does not necessarily make perfect. Practice makes you better at whatever it is you are practicing.” We have high ideals yet we often don’t quite manage to practice them. What we do practice, we become good at, which may explain why we live in a culture of critique. Is that where we want to be?

Emergency Preparedness

A task force is needed, to look at preparing the Fellowship to withstand a major earthquake, among other possibilities. If you’re interested in being part of this work, please let Jill McAllister know.

Between Us ...

Jill McAllister

I've heard that as we age and mature, the best we can do is replace one habit with another habit. If that sounds too mundane, think about it again. If the habit is projecting anger on others by use of physical force, and it's replaced with a practice of walking away and cooling down on your own, the effects are immense. If the habit is to address sorrow and grief with alcohol and drugs, and that habit is replaced by finding someone to talk and cry with instead of reaching for a bottle, the effects can be life-changing and life-giving.

Replacing destructive habits with less destructive or nurturing habits is not limited to big problems, or to those with the most intense emotional content. Often our smaller habits are what get in our way, sometimes because we can't even see them, much less name them as habits. Racism is like this most of the time, and sexism, and ageism, and homophobia, and religious prejudices, and other similar habits. For example, simply calling our approaches to diversity "habits" might be something new. It is usually quite a challenge, for any of us, to recognize that what we might think are facts about the way things are – such as "those people are..." – are simply habits that we have been taught, that we have learned, that we have internalized. Why for example, do white people nearly never say, "I met a white person," when we nearly always say, "I met a black person," as if white were an accepted and therefore unspoken norm for what a person looks like? (The reverse is true in many black-dominated cultures and societies.) Of course this represents a limited perspective, which we have definitely been taught somewhere, which we have internalized so that it is a habit. If you think this doesn't make sense, try changing it, for at least one whole day, by describing the skin color of EVERY person you meet.

Many of us at the UUFC are challenging ourselves to be more active in living our religious values in our daily lives. We keep aiming to live in right relations with others who are of different faiths, ethnicities, persuasions, personality types, etc. Right relations sometimes require challenging truths that others hold, and sometimes having our own truths challenged. Right relations often require being able to hold two opposing truths in order to simply stay together. This means going beyond our initial reactions to things and people (which give evidence of our habits), and it is often uncomfortable. That is the work of right relations.

While he was serving as a ministerial intern at a UU congregation a few years ago, a seminary student named Ricky Klein noticed how hard this work can be for both individuals and congregations. He wrote, "*The greatest challenge to counter-oppression work is that [some people want] to see greater diversity without doing the deeper soul work to understand why and what that would mean.*"

Deeper soul work. Perhaps that's what it means to replace one habit with another habit. Perhaps that's the most important thing we can be doing, the soul work or emotional work, of understanding how our habits can both help and harm. I know this requires calling on all our resources – intellectual, spiritual, and physical – and I know from experience that it's something I can almost never do on my own. That's why I love being part of this congregation with you. May we continue to help one another in this work.

See you Sunday— *Jill*

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

...It takes my fear away to understand that I am not wearing this world on my back – I am not that strong. And I don't need to be solid like stone, even rocks hold their breath, have hidden spaces, hidden room to expand and become. Even water leaves the shore it clung to just a moment before. The same wind never kisses my face more than once....

~ *Beth Bullmer*

GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

UUFC COUNCIL STRUCTURE CONTINUES TO GROW

Organizationally speaking, the Fellowship has begun to depend upon three main councils which each pay special attention to one area of our UUFC mission. The RE Council focuses on “Explore” and all the activities related to education and religious exploration; the Program Council focuses on “Love” by tending to activities which nurture deep connections between us; and the new Justice Council is developing a capacity to facilitate “Act” by coordinating and supporting our justice and outreach activities.

Two new councils join this structure. The Finance Council replaces the former finance committee, with a broad overview of all financial aspects of Fellowship life. It includes the chairs of the Stewardship and Investment Committees, meeting with the treasurer and business manager, chaired by Russ Karow, and will focus on financial coordination, strategy, and policy. The Coordinating Council has also begun to meet. This group includes the chairs of all the other councils, plus the minister, the President of the Board, and the coordinators of communication, pastoral care and buildings/grounds. The role of this council is coordination and communication between all the major “departments” of Fellowship life. The coordinating council is not a decision-making body. Its goal is to help all parts of the Fellowship work together.

Planning for UUFC 2016-17 Budget Begins

The planning the Fellowship’s FY 2016-17 budget has started. Our budget is one of the very tangible ways that we accomplish our goals as an organization, since it is a plan for what we will do with our money. The Board invites you to participate in this process. The process is similar to the one used last year.

Committees are reviewing the UUFC mission, their mission and their goals for the next three years in developing their budget proposal. The Board will be following budget practices similar to last year and posted online. The letter sent to committees seeking proposals and the proposal form are available on the website: http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=3100

Proposals should be sent to UUFC Treasurer Leslie Chartier mudslingingpyro@gmail.com by Jan. 18. If you would like help with your process – discussing both possibilities and realities – please contact UUFC President Kyle Jansson (kjansson1@minetfiber.com).

Board looking for team members to create new design for UUFC building

The UUFC Board is looking for about 10 people to be on a team that develops a new conceptual design for a remodeled Fellowship building. While everyone is encouraged to apply, the Board is particularly interested in people who are trained and skilled in facilitation, who will be under age 65 in 2040, who are familiar with current UUFC structures and their needs, who are renters, neighbors or partners of the UUFC, or who want to lead the team.

In short, the Conceptual Design Team will use a transparent process involving the congregation, its renters, neighbors and other partners, to create a modified physical plan for the current UUFC building.

More specifically, the Conceptual Design Team’s objectives are to:

1. Build awareness and enthusiasm within the congregation to engage in this process.
2. Develop a consistent message of why we are proceeding with this expansion—the building is a tool to achieve our mission.
3. Create revised conceptual drawings of a remodeled or expanded UUFC structure (a <10% expansion, and a >10% buildout) based upon its current location. This shall include phased development and rough cost estimates.
4. Carry out processes aimed at ensuring the congregation, its renters, neighbors and other partners feel included.
5. Maintain frequent communication with all participants and stakeholders.

The Board anticipates the Conceptual Design Team will make a recommendation to the Board prior to the congregation's annual meeting on May 15. If you are interested in being part of the team, please contact UUFC President Kyle Jansson (kjansson1@minetfiber.com) with a brief statement of your qualifications and why you are interested in being part of the Team. The Board will appoint Team members at its next meeting January 11.

The **Addendum to the Future Structures Task Force report** is now available on our website at <http://uucorvallis.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Future-Structures-Addendum.pdf>

Stewardship: Looking Ahead to the Pledge Drive

As 2015 comes to a close, the Stewardship Committee continues to appreciate your ongoing financial generosity and commitment in supporting our mission and programs. In order to accomplish all that we do, it takes each one of us contributing our share to the greater good. And looking ahead... in January we will request that each pledging household choose via a simple electronic survey whether or not to participate in online pledging for the coming pledge drive. You were enthusiastic with this process the first time last year, and we look forward to it being even more streamlined and simple this year. With ongoing gratitude, *Virginia Shapiro and Anna Sontag*

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

CHILDREN & YOUTH

DRE Michael Molk

Contact DRE Michael Molk: molk@uucorvallis.org, 541-752-5218 x225

January Topic for Children: *The Web of Life – how we are connected*

RE Sessions for Children and Youth, preschool through 12th grade, meet 11:00 AM-12:15 PM every Sunday. Infant/Toddler care is available every Sunday, during both worship services, at 9:30 and 11:00 AM.

Winter Cluster Youth Retreat for YRUU (9th-12th Graders)

January 29-31, 2016, at Salem 4-H Camp

With workshops, worship, and crafts, youth from Vancouver, Washington, Portland, Salem, Eugene & Corvallis, together will explore our theme: *“Courageous Love, Super Love—Love for Ourselves, Love for our Communities, Love for the Planet”*. Talk to a youth advisor or DRE Michael Molk for more information, and to register for this fun retreat!

Want to support the children's RE program?

We need a couple more people to serve on our RE Children's Support Committee. This committee works with DRE Michael Molk and other volunteers to support the Children's Religious Exploration program in various ways: with teacher appreciations, family socials, lesson ideas and craft projects. This is a fun and meaningful way to contribute to our Fellowship's mission. To learn more about this opportunity, talk to DRE Michael Molk.

Interested in being a youth advisor?

We currently need two more adults to be youth advisors for our high school youth group, YRUU. If you enjoy youth's company, are a good listener and communicator, like to play games and discuss and learn together, and can be present and participate with the youth, consider volunteering for this important ministry with great rewards. Advisors work with an experienced team of other adults, and receive support and training from DRE Michael Molk. If you are willing to give some of your time and energy to support and encourage youth in their ethical and spiritual development, talk with DRE Michael Molk to learn more or to apply.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education classes start in January, 2016, for Kindergarten/1st graders, 5th/6th graders, 7th/8th graders, and 9th-12th graders. For more information, contact DRE Michael Molk.

Why do we teach OWL sexuality education to our children and youth in our religious community? Because we want people to live healthy, happy lives. As Unitarian Universalists, we believe that our bodies, minds and spirits are interconnected, not separate entities. By openly, honestly, and accurately sharing information and feelings about sexuality, we encourage our children and youth to live safe and satisfying lives.

A sampling of OWL topics includes anatomy and physiology, gender identity and sexual orientation, communication, decision-making, sexual health, relationship-building, power and control, expressions of sexuality, and responsible behavior. Through age-appropriate discussions, presentations, role-playing, and other activities, we help children and youth take responsibility for their actions, stand up for justice, inclusion and diversity, appreciate the beauty and abilities of our human bodies, and know that their sexuality is an integral, normal, and healthy aspect of Our Whole Lives.

ADULT RELIGIOUS GROWTH AND LEARNING

DRE Ann Mbacke

What would it look like if we all treated others, not as we would have them do to us, but as they would have us do to them? Over the past few months with all the news focused on so much change, anger and world chaos – I thought this month we would focus on what we can do to bring joy in the community of UUFC and then the world.

If you are interested in and or in need of connecting and networking with other parents with varying ages of children please let us know. In the past we have offered parent classes geared to help you learn more about your children and how to protect them. We can continue that – let us know. However, I would love to hear from families with children letting us know what we can do better for you. We are offering programs on meditation, walks with the seasons, UU History/Identity and more but do these classes work for you as working families? Is there a particular time of day or day of the week that would work best for you? Would you be interested in having more family dinner nights? Tell us what would inspire you to live your truth more. Is location/travel an issue? Perhaps we can work on carpools, find a location and collaborate with a local group to utilize space and offer programs closer to you. These are all ideas worth exploring if we have people interested and in need of these options.

We want to be as open and creative as possible, often we are limited by the times that an instructor is available but perhaps we can come up with something more creative and think out of the box to offer something for our families and others who need classes during the day, on Saturday or later in the evening. Perhaps links or videos to previous classes that we have recorded would be an option. We can even explore TED talks.

Our goal is to serve everyone at the Fellowship. Remember childcare is always available and provided by the Fellowship for every event, class and or program. Please don't let the need for childcare stop you from exploring more. All you need to do is let us know at least two weeks in advance that you want to attend a class and need childcare. Our Childcare Coordinator Barb Holmes will set up the childcare.

Emergency Aid Fund Is Operational Again

Thanks to overwhelming support and generosity from UUFC members and friends, the Emergency Aid Fund and the rest of the Minister's Discretionary Fund is fully operational again. In addition to an increased capacity to meet local and emergency needs, at the request of many contributors we'll be able to send a large contribution to the ongoing work of supporting the UU's of Burundi and other Unitarian groups in need. Thank-you all!

UUFC VOICES: HOSPITALITY

From time to time, the UUFC Newsletter will offer perspectives from members, centered around a theme. We welcome suggestions and invite members to submit ideas for articles to news@uucorvallis.org.

Reaching out in Love: The Simple act of Welcoming

Anna Emery

Little did I know in 2010 when I agreed to help Newcomers serve coffee on the third Sunday of each month that it would lead to a transformative practice, for myself and for others. In joining the Membership Committee I learned of a workshop for anyone who had any curiosity or opinions at all about the Welcoming process. Well, simple curiosity evolved into something wonderful – welcoming people into our beloved congregation with a spiritual practice built on the Unitarian Universalist principles.

Each of our 51 Greeters, in reaching out to a newcomer, is practicing the first UU principle of “*The inherent worth and dignity of every person,*” as well as getting a good start on the third, “*Acceptance of one another* and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.”

In welcoming others we learn to open our hearts, make space for, and listen to the holy in each newcomer we encounter. In reaching out we are “living our faith.” (Peter Morales, UU World, Winter 2013) Each guest, by virtue of entering our doors, is searching for a spiritual connection, a spiritual community. By welcoming our guests with open arms we are doing ministerial work. This simple act of reaching out will change you.

The Newcomer’s response is validating. Reaching out with love puts everyone at ease and opens up the conversation. Just try searching out a green name tag in the social hall and saying: “Jane, I see you are a guest, my name is -----.” As you shake hands, then follow with “What did you think of the service?” the conversation will take off!!

Besides being a good spiritual practice (which enhances your own spiritual development), and besides being ministerial work for our guests, reaching out enables our newcomers to see and experience what Unitarian Universalism *is*, what it has to offer them, and helps our newcomers to know if the UUFC is their spiritual home.

Building a Welcoming Space

John Bailey

Those who use the Fellowship building in 2015 would hardly recognize the place from 1985 when my wife Lisa and I signed the membership book. Our ‘campus’ then consisted of two disjointed and smaller buildings, some walkways between them and the street, and lots of open space that was well kept but pretty natural. I was intrigued by the (obviously) older construction and quickly received the oral history of our Camp Adair buildings and their original uses, the purchase of the lot (on a **graveled** Circle Boulevard), the ordeal of building relocation, and the fitting of them to make a Fellowship space... not the Fellowship, for it already existed. Like now, the Fellowship and the Fellowship building/campus are different but fundamentally linked.

And the building is only one tool that we use to be a congregation and to explore, love and act together.

That physical space was important to me then – is important to me now. I grew up building houses and structures with my father and, in my work at OSU, I am a “field of dreams” forester: processes and function are invited and supported by structure and composition. If we build it, they will come. For us, the physical structure and the composition of our space is often the tool for greeting and engaging each other on Sunday mornings and beyond as we do the work of Fellowship. It is an outer projection of who we are and what we do – a constant reminder to ourselves, and an introduction to all visitors who come through our doors. I was made to feel welcomed those many years ago by the people *and* the campus ...and how

the people interacted with the campus. Our campus and buildings often first greet and embrace visitors, give identity to any growing interest they have in our Fellowship, and sustain them as members for the duration of their spiritual exploration.

We will need to hold these thoughts as we move forward in 2016 with a remodeling and expansion of our current facility. In fact, I think much of the feedback the Board has received about kitchen and social hall improvements, restrooms, and meeting spaces is more about our mission and being a warm and welcoming group than it is about space. I helped build our current facilities in two waves in the late 1980s – and those efforts were about us as a congregation working together, creating a beautiful and welcoming tool, and gifting structure and composition to the next generation. And that is what we will do again.

Hospitality as a Ministry

Marcia Olsen

In our UU congregations, we often speak of “shared ministry.” For our faith is not a top-down authoritarian structure; rather it is our members who call a minister, elect the Board of Trustees, and approve the budget. And it is our members and friends who serve as volunteers in the many functions required to keep the congregation going and to offer programs to expand our connections and activities beyond Sunday mornings.

So when Jill invites us to say hello to someone we don’t know, to seek out newcomers, or to join an activity, she is inviting us to be part of the “ministry,” to see ourselves as contributing to the overall health and wellbeing of our community. Our culture puts so much stress on the individual that our primary focus is often on ourselves only. We do have to “take care of” ourselves. We need to love ourselves in order to have love to offer to others, but UUFC is also a community. And it remains a faith community because of the contributions of its participants. This community continues whether or not we as individuals are here, when ministers leave and come and when staff and volunteers change. And this community thrives when we think of ourselves as an important part of that community, helping to keep it alive and vital.

Thus “hospitality” – the welcoming of a stranger – **is** a way in which we can all be part of the ministry of this congregation. It helps to strengthen our faith. By making ourselves available to someone new at coffee hour, in a class, or working together on a task, we each help this community, and our faith is stronger. And if we begin to think of ourselves as an integral part of the community then we are expanding our own lives beyond our small boundaries, acknowledging our connection with all that is.

Whatever your connection to UUFC, how frequently you attend or how deeply you’re involved, let us offer newcomers – and each other – a warm welcome, some conversation, and an invitation to come again. Then we are all involved in the ministry of our faith. Let it be so.

Voices from the Welcome Desk

Chris Bentley

Greeters at the UUFC Welcome Desk hear many comments and reactions from newcomers. Here are a sampling:

- “After visiting many, many churches in my life, this is just what I’ve been looking for!”
- “Finally, I have found the right place!”
- “Religious Exploration!? Ha! I love it!”
- “I travel a lot, and visit a UU church everywhere I go. The welcome is always so warm!”
- “I think I’ll just keep my green newcomer’s tag for awhile. I like having people greet me and show such interest.”
- “I felt like the minister (Jill) was speaking directly to me.”
- “Gosh! There are so many activities to be involved in here. It’s hard to choose.”
- “Thanks for remembering my name!”
- “I must have been a UU all my life, I just didn’t know there was a church for it.”

UUFC PROGRAMS

RhythmAsana Live! Sunday, January 3

RhythmAsana will offer a small movement meditation during both Sunday morning services on January 3, and then at 2:00 PM **RhythmAsana Live!** will fill the Fellowship Hall with its unique and joyous blend of yoga, movement meditation, dance, and heart-opening music from all over the planet. Band members **Johanna Beekman**, **George Beekman**, and **Lyris Cooper** provide a musical soundscape while **Lea Bayles** guides participants on a shared journey from stillness to rhythmic movement and back to stillness.

Child Care During Choir Practice

Soon we will begin providing child care during choir practice on Wednesday evenings. If you are interested in singing with us and need child care, please contact David Servias (music@uucorvallis.org). New choir members are always welcome; rehearsals are Wednesday nights from 7:00-8:30 PM.

Living with Depression – yours or someone else’s?

Linda Carroll, Diane Vezmar-Bailey and Jill McAllister lead a continuing series of discussions, sharing and support. Mondays, 7:00-8:30 PM in room 6C: January 4, 11 [not 18], 25, February 1 and 8. Come once or twice or as many times as your calendar and energy allow! For more information, contact Diana Vezmar-Bailey (541-740-9006 dianavb@inbox.com). This series is sponsored by the Pastoral Care program of the Fellowship.

Membership and Orientation Classes

- **First Steps** is first in a 3-part series of membership classes. First Steps classes meet every 4th Sunday from 9:30-10:30 AM in the UUFC Library. The next one is December 27. This class offers an introduction to UU’ism and the UUFC, and includes a tour of the building. No need to sign up ahead of time. Contact Melinda Sayavedra at sayavedl@onid.orst.edu if you have questions.
- **UU Path class**, Saturday, Jan. 23, 8:45 – 12:30, UUFC Social Hall. Second in the 3-part Path to Membership classes for those new to Unitarian Universalism or to the UUFC. Learn about UU history and ways to get involved in our Fellowship. Registration is required. Sign up at the Welcome Table. Light brunch food provided. Contact Melinda Sayavedra at sayavedl@onid.orst.edu if you have questions.
- **Membership class**, Sunday, Jan. 24, 12:20 PM, in the Minister’s Office. Third in the 3-part Path to Membership classes for those interested in becoming members of the UUFC. Participants will learn about the rights and responsibilities of membership, and have the opportunity to formally become members of the UUFC. Sign up at the Welcome Table. Contact Melinda Sayavedra at sayavedl@onid.orst.edu if you have questions.

Exercise/Aerobics

Intent on exercising but can’t seem to stick to a regular regime on your own? Join the UUFC class. We’re a small, friendly group that believes in exercise and likes the support and camaraderie of a class. An exercise professional leads us, paying attention to individual needs and limitations. Visit the class, check us out, join if it works for you. Winter session starts on January 4 and meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 4:15-5:15 PM in the Social Hall. Contact Nichele Deutsch (541-753-4664 or nandad@peak.org) for more information. Fee.

International Dinner to Benefit Partner Church Committee

January 30, 2016, 6:00 PM

Our menu will be similar to last year’s international entrees over rice, with Dobos Torte for dessert. We hope to have a multicultural program to conclude the evening; details to follow. Tickets will go on sale January 10. Volunteers to help with cooking, set-up, and clean-up are needed. Contact Beverly McFarland (bmfcmfarland2@yahoo.com) to sign-up.

JUSTICE COUNCIL

E.L.A. introduces E.D.I.

From our mission to **E**xplore, **L**ove, **A**ct comes **E.D.I.**, a task force on **E**quity, **D**iversity and **I**nclusion to explore issues and responses to racism, oppression, and exclusion:

- by mapping the issues, responses and resources around racism and multiculturalism in the communities where we live and;
- by developing programs on which to build awareness of institutional racism and shared language and communication skills in the context of this work and our faith.

You are invited to contribute your skills to this new task force as we outline specific actions to meet these objectives. Watch the Weekly Announcements for the first meeting date and time coming in January.

January Action Lunch

The January 10 Action Lunch will support Corvallis Housing First (CHF, formerly Corvallis Homeless Shelter Coalition). This is the 10th anniversary year of the Coalition, which started in 2005 in an unused fraternity house near OSU. The goal of CHF is to provide cold weather shelter, food and safety for the most vulnerable men in our community. CHF cooperates with other homeless and low-income services in the community including Room at the Inn (shelter for women), Stone Soup (nutritious food) and the Corvallis Daytime Drop-In Center (provides several hours of daytime shelter, snacks, and hot drinks along with personal assistance and advocacy). Join us after the 11:00 AM service for great soup, sandwiches, fruit and baked goods and to help a most worthy cause.

“Fire and Rain” Forestry and Climate Change Talk

Prof. John Bailey will give a talk entitled, “Fire and Rain: Forestry in the 21st Century,” on Thursday, Jan. 14 at 7:00 PM in the UUFC Sanctuary. As Oregon’s forests, grasslands and soils sequester most carbon in our state, it’s important to understand the priorities of forestry. He will address the questions “Will forests have much of a role in Oregon’s future? What are the tools for adapting to climate change? When are “protection” rules misguided?” The Environmental Action Council invites you to attend to learn the current forestry perspectives.

Men’s Cold Weather Shelter Volunteers Needed

The UUFC’s staffing week this year for the Cold Weather Men’s Shelter is **Monday, January 11-Sunday, January 17**. If you have not done this work before and are interested but apprehensive about what it entails, contact coordinator Lorene Hales to hear about others’ experiences. Lorene says, “The men who receive our assistance and those of us who are fortunate enough to be able to give assistance all benefit from the interchange. I will mix new-comers with experienced staff and, as often as possible, men with women. Although men can do it alone as well as women, I find the mix creates a whole different dynamic that seems to work really well in this environment. If you're really convinced you want to work with your best friend and not mix ... that can be arranged, too.”

Volunteer Opportunities:

- two-three persons** each night willing to staff the shelter during the **evening shift of 6:30-11:00 PM**: initially you’ll help see that the men are signed in and know their bed assignments (lately the shelter staff person has been doing this task), greet the men and check bags for forbidden items, and then provide general supervision of activities until they sack out for the night. The third person, if there is one, could go home early if it’s a really slow night. The extra person this year is because the shelter has added an “upstairs supervisor” to help people get settled.

- B. **one person** each night to back up the paid shelter staff person during the **night from 11:00 PM-7:00 AM**. Frankly, this person is known as the “overnight sleeper” as (s)he can sleep all or most of the shift – don’t forget a sleeping bag. You are a “safety second” in case the need arises. My experience is that it rarely arises and, then, the regular shelter staff person takes the lead in controlling the situation though you might be given a direction to help out, as needed.
- C. **one or two food preparers/servers** per night who agree to bring snacks each evening for the men. You would bring your snacks between 6:30 and 6:45 PM so they are set up for the men coming into the shelter at 7:00 PM. You would stay to serve and then clean-up the serving area until about 8:30. The shelter is closed to new entrants at 8:00 PM so everyone should be in and have snacks who want them. *There is a change this year and less will be expected of the food folk than in prior years. I will share with those of you signing up to help with snacks the new expectations and ideas/considerations of what to serve.*
- D. the **Group Lead/Coordinator** for the UUFC: Lorene Hales. I make sure we get appropriate people signed up for the various volunteer opportunities. I’ll be there before the opening of the shelter each evening and ensure that the men are settled and the evening shift volunteers comfortable with the environment before leaving you with the shelter staff person. I don’t usually disappear into the ether until around 8:00 PM – however, even when not physically present I remain a point of contact for you and the site supervisor. You’ll always be able to access me via phone, if a problem arises.

To sign up, contact Lorene Hales (541-757-9068, lorene.hales@comcast.net) with the volunteer position you want and dates you’re available. And remember – in the words of Carol Holmes: “*A happy life is made up of little things - a gift sent, a letter written, a call made, a recommendation given, transportation provided, a cake made, a book lent, a check sent* [, an evening helping at the Men’s Cold Weather Shelter.]” Or, if you want something a little more elevated in presentation: “*Compassion is the basis of all morality.*” Arthur Schopenhauer.

Lorene is also seeking someone – or even two someones – to co-coordinate this annual task. If you are interested in discussing this possibility please contact her.

Update on Burundi Situation

Violence in Burundi has escalated. Regrettably, it is now necessary for Burundi Unitarians to join the multitudes fleeing the country for personal safety. Assistance is being offered to all our congregants who need to leave and several large homes in another country are being rented to provide shelter. So far everyone has been able to leave safely, although some Unitarians remain in country. It is likely we will need to house and feed people away from home for a number of months. Provisions have been made for the Unitarian Church Building in Bujumbura to be secured and guarded. When possible, worship and prayer continues there.

The Rev. Fulgence Ndagijimana is living in one of the rented shelters, organizing relief efforts and looking after the spiritual needs of both Unitarians and non-Unitarians.

A significant grant from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) combined with the generous donations from Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists around the world is making all this possible. Any funds the Burundi Unitarians had have been frozen by the Burundi government.

The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) is working closely with the Unitarian Church of Burundi to support these efforts. Partners are assisting through a special multi-organizational working group coordinated by the ICUU and also including representatives of the Canadian Unitarian Council, International Bridges for Justice, UUA International Office, UUSC and the ICUU Francophone Mentoring Coalition.

THE BACK PAGE: FREEDOM AND POWER

Unitarian Universalists have long had a difficult relationship with power. Our heritage, on both our Unitarian and our Universalist sides, prizes individual, intellectual and religious freedom. We abhor the idea of being forced to believe (or to pretend to believe) what someone else chooses for us. In practice, this often means that we struggle to determine how to organize ourselves. The relationship between the individual and the congregation, and between a single congregation and its regional or national body, is infused with the tension between the emphasis we place on freedom and the need to be part of something bigger than ourselves.

We need to be part of something bigger than ourselves in part because of our emphasis on “good works” – again, a heritage that comes down to us from both sides of our tradition, an insistence on building the world we want to see now, working for this-worldly peace and justice. And we need to be part of something bigger than ourselves because of our individual needs for freely determined belief – how can we arrive at what we each *need* to believe about the world without encountering the viewpoints of others, which enrich and deepen our beliefs?

And yet we worry about entrusting too much power outside of ourselves, whether that’s electing a Board of Trustees, giving over decision-making power to a council, or accepting a national vision from the Unitarian Universalist Association. Why are these relationships of power such a challenge for us?

Perhaps we are challenged in these relationships because we are still working to change our understanding of power. Theologian C. Robert Mesle writes about two kinds of power: unilateral power, or “power over,” and relational power, or “power with.” Most of our cultural conceptions of power in the United States have been unilateral power – the boss who can fire us at will, the parent who snaps “because I said so!” Relational power is co-created, although not necessarily between equals – a parent can exercise relational power in parenting while still bearing more responsibility for what happens. Mesle suggests that unilateral power in parenting produces a parent who yells, “Put your shoes on, NOW,” while relational power in parenting leads to a parent who asks, “What’s going on that you don’t have your shoes on yet? Do you need help? Does your foot hurt?” and incorporates the child’s answer into the parental response.

So this is the real distinction, Mesle says, between unilateral and relational power: in unilateral power, the person with the power is not affected or moved by those they hold power over. The boss is not moved by the circumstances that made you late to work, the parent is not interested in knowing about or helping with the child’s struggles. In relational power, the person who holds more power IS affected and moved by those they hold power with. The parent who responds to the child’s particular concern, the Board whose decision is influenced by input from congregational members.

Our worries and fears around power concern unilateral power – we are unwilling to give others power over us, power to do things that affect OUR lives without the kind of relationship that lets us affect the powerful as part of the process. This is the kind of power we have often seen run amok in the world.

The power we need and must learn to practice is relational power – power we can trust, because it recognizes all involved people as people whose voices must be heard and whose perspectives and experiences affect the decision-makers. Relational power does not mean that every decision will go the way I want; it does not mean a flattening of authority into pure democracy. It means establishing relationships of trust in which some are given more responsibility and more authority, with the understanding that their authority exists in relationships of accountability.

Embracing relational power, using it in our congregational lives and our family lives and our work lives and more, is a radical act. What we practice in our lives, we teach and spread in the world. Imagine what Unitarian Universalists could do if we shifted our understandings of power, if we trusted and empowered those we give responsibility to and those with responsibility held the soft, open possibility of change alongside every opinion. Imagine what living in relational power could do to our ability to bring more peace and justice into the world.



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Looking for the calendar?

For the most up-to-date information, see our website at http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=211
Our online calendar is updated frequently!