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UUFC NEWSLETTER

January
2018

"Let's keep helping each other to learn, to grow, and to change."

Between Us.

As Unitarian Universalists, we're part of a long, long tradition of striving for freedom and truth. Formative parts of that tradition arose within the Protestant Reformation in Europe 500 years ago. Our particular heritage is most closely associated with the "radical reformation." We can count as our ancestors so many brave people in all the ensuing years who risked their health, their livelihoods, and even their lives, to make a difference in these struggles. If not for them, we would not be here now. We can tell stories about their lives, and agree that they were faithful to their ideals, that their faithfulness was strong.

Who might tell the stories of our lives?

And what stories will they tell? Hundreds of years from now, will we be part of this long heritage of struggle and faithfulness? Presented with opportunities and turning points nearly every day now, are we writing stories of dedication to the struggle? We are not the first communities to be faced with

destruction, and evil and danger. Yet while the dangers are both different and the same, the call to action is specific to our own times. The response we can each make is specific to our own lives. The mission of the Fellowship grows more important every day, as a guide for our lives and our choices in these times. Explore: We gather... to search for meaning – which means to keep learning. Love: build deep connections – which means to love our neighbors as ourselves, to remember that we are all in this together. Act: to inspire action toward a better world for all - which means to help each other do the best we can to serve the values of justice and freedom. These are not only the ideals, they are the actions needed for faithful living.

This month we'll continue our study of faithfulness with consideration of turning points, lessons from Martin Luther King, Jr., the Edict of Torda, our current work in the community, and more. A new

year is always a chance for new beginnings. Let's keep helping each other to learn, to grow, and to change.

Study Leave in February

With the support of the Committee on Ministry and UUFC leaders, I'll be taking the month of February as a study leave, spending a month in India. There are several parts to my work for that month, including attending a meeting of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists during which my retirement from that work will be noted. Walter and I will spend a week in south India doing some study of ayurveda, an ancient approach to health. The remaining two weeks will be spent in retreat with the Himalayan Institute, in the city of Khajuraho. The retreat, with a yoga master, is designed to support my own spiritual practice and needs. While I'm gone Elizabeth Sollie, the Committee on Ministry, the care and support team, and the staff will cover all needs, events and activities, and I have great faith that it will be a good month for all.



See you Sunday! *-Jill*

Governance

Board of Trustees News

This column is being drafted as the year draws to a close. But rather than having time for reflection, we find many, many tasks, events, and activities packing the remaining days of 2017, so this will be brief.

Redrafting UUFC Board Bylaws

A five-person task force is working together on redrafting bylaws that will govern the work of the UUFC Board (note: that didn't say "govern the running of the fellowship"...that is the role of policies). The Board received an update on the project from Kyle Jansson at its December meeting. The task force should have a rough draft for the Board to review and discuss by the January meeting.

Streamlining UUFC Contract Signing

The UUFC enters into contracts for many different services, from pest control to construction and lots in between. Carl English-Young presented an interim draft of a policy that will provide streamlined guidance on who can negotiate contracts on behalf of the UUFC, when the Board (or someone designated by the Board) must review contracts, and who has authorization to provide the final signatures on contracts. Based on Board feedback, minor revisions will be done with approval expected in January.

Board Member Non-Profit Leadership Training

At least three board members will attend training in early February designed for leaders of non-profit entities. The training is offered by The Center for Nonprofit Stewardship and will be held at LaSells Stewart Center the first Saturday in February. The training comes highly recommended by other Board members who have attended. Sessions like "Cross-Cultural Communication," "Understanding Board Roles & Responsibilities," and "Fundraising for Board Members-Four Simple Steps to Success" promise to be very informative. Since there are

several of us attending, we should be able to cover a wide variety of interesting sessions and put lessons learned to immediate use for the benefit of the UUFC.

A reminder that UUFC Board Meeting minutes are posted online in the File Cabinet section of the UUFC web site (bottom of page).

Also, the UUFC Board meetings include a time for Member Comments as a way for Board members to be in conversation with UUFC members. Generally, meetings are on the second Monday at 7:00pm, though we are meeting off-schedule on January 22 this time. May the new year ahead for us all be filled with blessings that keep us faithful to the work we do together!

Worship Services



"Three Commitments, for Life"

Rev. Jill McAllister

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Why bother with New Year's resolutions when you can work to improve your approach to life in general? Buddhist teacher Pema Chodron offers so much wisdom; today we'll consider her lessons on three commitments worthy of faithfulness.

"Turning Points"

Rev. Jill McAllister

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Isn't there an old Chinese proverb that says "May you live in interesting times"? I'd say that we have received that gift big time (!) and that choices for how to live, now, abound. Once again, there is wisdom and inspiration to be found in the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Words for Reflection

....At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment we do, our spiritual growth and journey come to a halt. The time of the lone wolf is over.

~Hopi Elders, 2000

January Events

- 6 Russian Dinner Fundraiser
- 7 Action Lunch at 12:30 PM
- 12 New World Kirtan Band at 7 PM
- 13 Men's Monthly Gathering at 9:30 AM in LIB
- 15 Next Town Hall: Climate Justice at 7 PM
- 21 Coordinating Council at 12:30PM
- 22 UUFC Board of Trustees Meeting at 7 PM
- 27 UU Path Class for new members at 9 AM. Sign up at the Welcome Table in the Foyer.
- 29 Leadership Supper at 6 PM

Justice

UUFC Social Justice Loan to Seeds for the Sol

The UUFC has a policy (3.11) to accept donations and to then use collected funds to create revolving loans to assist organizations conducting justice-related projects. A UUFC committee may propose a loan fund to the Justice Council for approval. If approved, the committee can then collect funds and follow the requirements of Policy 3.11 in loaning money to the project. The loan contract will last one year or less, after which time the UUFC Board of Trustees has the right to renew the contract, approve a new contract for a different use, or convert the money to UUFC use in accordance with another policy (3.9) that outlines use of donated funds. If you have interest in reading UUFC policies, see http://uuu.org/?page_id=421. We have one social justice revolving loan currently in play, a loan to Seeds for the Sol (SFS). This loan provides financial assistance for installation of solar panels in the mid-Willamette Valley - see <http://www.seedsforthesol.org/>. This loan was first granted in 2016, was renewed for 2017, and was just renewed for 2018.

Religious Exploration

ADULT RE: NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Adult Religious Exploration Discussions

What inspiration does Unitarian Universalism draw from the world's religions? What do other UUs believe? Why is there so much from Judaism and Christianity in UUism? What does humanism have to do with it? What can I learn about Earth-centered traditions? Ever wonder about questions like these? Discussions of the Six Sources of UUism have answers. Please join the next one January 21 st at 12:30 in the Gallery (back of the Fellowship Hall). Guided lively discussions have already taken place about the first two Sources. Don't miss out on the next one! The topic is wisdom from the world's religions. No previous experience or signup needed. Refreshments!

Other opportunities to talk with each other:

~Discuss the Sermon: January 14, 12:30, Sanctuary
Join us in a new opportunity to discuss your reactions to Jill's sermon – this is a chance to come together and

dig deeper into the themes for the week, state your opinions about what moved you and perhaps even what got you riled up! This is the time to make the service more interactive and bring your two cents (or more) to create conversation in community. Facilitated by Shikha Ghosh Gottfried.

~Braving the Wilderness: Using social scientist Brene Brown's latest book, *Braving the Wilderness* we will explore the four practices of true belonging through reading the book, discussion and reflective activities. Each practice challenges how we think about ourselves, show up with one another, and find our way back to courage and connection. The class will meet 6:30-8:30 PM on Mondays for 6 weeks: Jan 22, 29, Feb. 5, 12, 19 & 26 in Room 6 BC. Each participant will need to purchase a copy of the book and read the first two chapters before the first meeting.

To sign up, contact Susan Sanford 541-521-7416 (susanwulfe@gmail.com) & Alice Lyman 541-753-8125 (aliceklyman41@gmail.com).

What is the Edict of Torda?

On January 13, 2018, one of the world's first statements of religious tolerance will have its 450th anniversary. In 1568, in the city of Torda, in what is now Romania, a religious gathering presided over by Unitarian King John Sigismund proclaimed:

"In every place the preachers shall preach and explain the Gospel each according to his understanding of it, and if the congregation like it, well. If not, no one shall compel them for their souls would not be satisfied, but they shall be permitted to keep a preacher whose teaching they approve...no one shall be reviled for his religion by anyone... and it is not permitted that anyone should threaten anyone else by imprisonment... For faith is the gift of God..."

Unitarianism was officially recognized for the first time in the history of the world in the Edict of Torda. And, that proclamation is the beginning of our legacy to be a spiritual tradition that resists hatred, oppression, and the narrow view that there is only one way to be faithful, to be religious, to be free.



"Work That Makes a Difference"

Rev. Jill McAllister with guest Kenny Lowe

Corvallis resident Kenny Lowe has been working, volunteering, and advocating for the 'at risk', low income, and homeless Corvallis community for nearly a decade. He currently serves as the Housing and Adult Mental Health Initiative Program Lead at Benton County Mental Health Services. He joins Jill today to consider the work of the Fellowship.

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"For Faith and Freedom: The Edict of Torda"

Rev. Jill McAllister

On January 12, in the year 1568, in the small city of Torda in Transylvania, a young king issued an edict of toleration which was radical for his time, and remains radical in ours. This month marks the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda, which formed the foundation for Unitarianism upon which we still depend.

Council

SFS has solar partners available to sign contracts by December 31, just before the Oregon solar tax credits expire. SFS has helped install 378 KW of solar panels since 2014. That saves over 700,000 lbs. of CO2 every year. SFS experienced its strongest year ever in 2017. They helped 34 new solar clients purchase 175 KW of rooftop solar. They provided solar grants for three low-income homeowners, buying their systems outright for each. They helped find pass-through partners for two Habitat for Humanity homes with a third still in the works. They provided grants for three other Habitat homes in 2016. In the assessment of the Social Justice Council, the Investment Committee, and Board, the revolving loan to SFS is working exactly as planned in our policy. If SFS can make a continued case for loan continuation in future years, such will certainly be considered. Social justice loans are just another way in which the UUFC "lives" its principles and values. If you have questions about our social justice loan policy or procedures, please contact Russ Karow, Investment Committee Chair russell.karow@oregonstate.edu

Social Concerns

Our Fellowship is making a difference for many local charities! Through Sunday collections, action lunches and bake sales we raised \$1,800 for Youth Build in October and \$1,700 for South Corvallis Food Bank in November. In December we supported Community Outreach. Thank you to everyone who donated food, money and time.

Please contact Sylvia Yamada if you can help with the Action Lunch on January 7 by making a soup, fruit or vegetable platters, bring refreshments or help with set-up or clean-up.

In January 2018 we'll raise funds and awareness for the Institute for Applied Ecology's Sagebrush in Prisons Project,

an innovative program that works with prison inmates to grow sagebrush for habitat rehab-

ilitation, restoring hope as well as habitat. Sagebrush is a keystone species in the American West, supporting wildlife like the greater sage grouse. But wildfire and land use have taken their toll, and sagebrush ecosystems and the species that rely on them are in decline. Additionally, there are few prison educational opportunities for prisoners involving ecology and habitat restoration.

Since IAE started this project 5 years ago, 3,150 inmates across 14 prisons have gained vocational and educational certificates, touched the soil for the first time since incarceration, cared for and helped restore nearly a million sagebrush plants, and given back to the land and community. Unfortunately, funding for this project has recently been withheld by the U.S. Department of Interior, threatening its continuation.

IAE is raising bridge funds until a sustainable source of funding can be found for the future. For more information, check out the project website at <https://appliedeco.org/programs/sagebrush/>

UUFC Building Enhancement Project



Connections Council

The building project is on schedule and proceeding as planned. The soils analysis and structural analysis have been completed. Our architects are busily preparing the application to the City of Corvallis for Conditional Development Permit with Lot Development Option (variances). They plan to submit the application in early 2018, and the city will then schedule a public hearing. Prior to the formal public hearing, a more casual neighborhood meeting will be held at the fellowship to inform our neighbors of our plans, and answer questions. Dates will be posted when we know them.

Don't forget to follow our progress on our blog! <https://oursharedfutureuufc.wordpress.com/>

Because of uncertainties regarding the tax bills currently under consideration by the US Congress, you may want to consider pre-paying your building pledges before Dec. 31 (see detailed notes in last week's weekly announcements).

CONNECT UP offers opportunities for us to gather in a variety of interest based small groups to better get to know one another. **SIGN UP** on Sunday, Jan 28, to participate in or to host an activity in February! In December, our Connect Up opportunities included an art walk, cookie exchange, desert & discussion, and a craft day. What are your interests? Questions: contact Wendy Sutton connect@uucorvallis.org. For current events, visit Connect Up on the UUFC website: http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=3776.

Help us, help you!

The Fellowship has created a new system for letting us know about life transitions. If you have an important transition (e.g. illness, death, birth, engagement, etc.) that you'd like us to know about or to announce, please email: transitions@uucorvallis.org.

Young Adults

Interested to meet other UUFC young adults? Send a note to office@uucorvallis.org and we'll get you connected with other young adults!

Other Offerings



New World Kirtan Band

7:00 PM Join the New World Kirtan Band for their monthly gathering in the Sanctuary.

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Living with Depression, Your's or Someone Else's

7:00 PM Monday, January 8 and Thursday, Jan. 25. A gathering to share and support each other. All are welcome.

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Working Together: January Meetings

Town Hall: Monday, Jan. 15 at 7 PM

The third in our series of Town Hall meetings will focus on the climate justice work of the Fellowship. Led by our bold Climate Justice Team, the Fellowship has taken many steps to respond appropriately and effectively to the realities of climate change. What are our next steps, as a congregation?

Coordinating Council: Sunday, Jan. 21 at 12:30 PM

The Coordinating Council is comprised of leaders and representatives of all the other Fellowship Councils: Finance, Connections, Religious Exploration, Worship, Justice, and Administration, plus the Board of Trustees. The task of the Coordinating Council is communication and sharing so that all areas of Fellowship life and work are linked and aligned and aimed at our shared mission and goals.

Leadership Supper: Monday, Jan. 29 at 6:00 PM

The second of three leadership suppers in the 2017-18 church year. All leaders of councils, teams, task forces, committees and events are invited, as well as anyone interested in the work of the Fellowship. We start with a good supper, followed by check-in from each group and updates on Fellowship projects and events.

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