

The Chronicle

MARQUETTE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CONGREGATION

SEPTEMBER 2012



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“Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.”

Jalaladin Rumi

The Balancing Act



Your MUUC Board members gathered at the beautiful setting of Sarah & Dan Redmond’s home and gardens on Shelter Bay for an August retreat. We balanced the schedule a few times - before and during - demonstrating that flexibility is always a good attribute for any group. Give and take graciously. Compromise. Strive for consensus. At the American Youth Foundation camps downstate and in New Hampshire, where I have been on staff, we regularly infused the campers and leadership conference participants with: “It’s a mark of leadership to adjust.” Take some deep breaths, reconfigure as best as you can, and move forward.

At the retreat, we ate wonderful food, including Lake Superior trout which was caught and prepared by Dan, veggies from Michelle Halley’s and Sarah’s gardens, a “Decolonizing Diet” rice dish offered by Nancy Irish, wine from gg, topped off with a “gather-the-fruits” trifle...a well-balanced meal. Following a good night’s rest (except for at least one Board member whose creative juices just wouldn’t slow down), we were ready for blueberry pancakes, as well as fresh eggs from the Halleys, mixed up with green pepper and potatoes. You get the idea...our bodies were well-nourished, as were our souls, with readings from Kurt Vonnegut’s “harmonium” creatures (“Here I am.” “So glad you are.”) and the *Earth Prayers* book (“Sweet Spirit of Sleep...great nature’s second course, chief nourisher in life’s feast”). Our minds stayed attentive as we shared stories. Kim

Frost joined us for an hour on Saturday morning with some fun initiatives to build trust, teamwork, cooperation, and good communication. Melissa Middleton was on her annual camping trip but loaned us, in advance, her chime and some activities she’d picked up at her “Yoga Calm” training for children this summer.

In the afternoon, UU minister Emmy Lou Belcher shared experiences from other UU congregations. We dug into some topics which we would like to share with you at adult forums in the upcoming year. We designed this year’s Water & Ingathering Service for Sept. 9th. The retreat was a good balance of fun ‘n’ laughter and intense, serious work.

Your MUUC Board (gg, Michelle Halley, Cherokee, Barb, Sarah Redmond) and our Community Coordinator/Celebrant, Nancy Irish, also convened for a productive work session on Aug. 15 for the monthly Board meeting. Minutes from the meeting will be posted following approval so that - if you choose - you may check to see what we’ve covered. Remember that you are always welcome to join us at any monthly Board meeting. One of our goals for the coming year is to communicate carefully, which includes hearing from you with your ideas for our beloved community!

Barb Michael President, Board of Trustees

** Congregation of Abraxas*

Got TLC?

At our August meeting of the Community Development Committee, we came to the conclusion that the committee has too many functions under its general umbrella. A logical spin-off entity, we concluded, would be to form a group whose main purpose would be to provide TLC to members in times of need. A TLC “ministry” could evolve into more celebration of people’s significant life passages. Involvement could span a range from writing an occasional get well card to coordinating food for a family with a new baby.

With Nancy Irish’s reduced work hours this fiscal year, sharing this work among more people has become increasingly important. If you are willing to be involved in this aspect of our congregation’s shared ministry, please let Nancy know at unancyirish@gmail.com. The work of caring for and celebrating others can be among the most satisfying in a faith community.

Community Development Committee

From the Celebrant

Dear Friends,

A few rogue maple leaves have already turned towards autumn, so school and a new year at the Meeting House can't be far behind. New energy has been emerging from numerous sources within MUUC during the summer, holding promise of a good year.

I'm looking forward to a few things in particular. Having fun together, starting with a perennial plant exchange at the end of the month. Deepening the conversation among us through the small "Soul to Soul" groups the Community Development Committee is launching. Exploring and clarifying numerous aspects of our congregational life together. The board will be communicating with the congregation about the latter, so stay tuned and be prepared for a growth spurt!

Editing the Chronicle requires a lot of time and patience. I would like to say a resounding "thank you!" to Nancy Sullivan for serving the congregation as editor for a long time. I offer another huge thanks to Dave Stensaas for taking up the baton from Nancy.

I'll close with a Jalaladin Rumi quotation that calls me to task, this year and every year...perhaps it will call to some of you, too.

*Your task is not to seek for love,
but merely to seek and find
all the barriers within yourself
that you have built against it.*

Happy fall!

Nancy Irish Celebrant and Community Coordinator



Don't forget to bring your Econo sales slips, used ink jet cartridges and used cell phones to the meeting house. We collect these items and get cash for the congregation in exchange!

Next Board of Trustees Meeting

September 17th at 6:30 at the Meeting House.

All members are welcome to attend.

Newsletter Deadline and Submissions

The newsletter deadline will be the 22nd day of the month. This date will be after the monthly Board meeting. If you are not able to have your contribution in final form by the deadline, at least tell me how much space you will need: one page, half page, quarter page, and when you'll get it to me. I will work with contributors as much as possible but will reserve the right to pass on items not submitted by the 22nd. Also, please place anything that you want published that is more than a few sentences into a Word document and attach it to your e-mail message, as copying from e-mail is proving to be problematic.

Dave Stensaas
Newsletter Coordinator



Religious Education News

Yoga Calm comes to the UU:

The RE Committee and I are excited to integrate a new program into our Sunday morning classes. I spent a week in Minneapolis in June completing training in Yoga Calm for the MUUC children's program. Yoga Calm is a system that integrates mindfulness, yoga based movement and conscious social interactions. It's used in school classrooms, therapeutic settings and private studios. Some of our UU kids have experienced classes at the Marquette YMCA and some of the local public schools. We believe integrating this program into RE will maximize our opportunity to nurture the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual growth of our UU children.

"Benefits include the ability to relax, nurture, and regulate emotions, increased physical fitness, self-confidence, and self-esteem, improved concentration and imagination skills, subject retention, and test scores; enhanced communication, trust, empathy, teamwork, and leadership skills; and the development of healthy life choices." (From the text "Yoga Calm for Children: Educating Heart, Mind and Body"). This is a mind/body approach that integrates social/emotional development with the physical aspect of yoga.

Activities are based on five principles:

Stillness: the ability to quiet the mind and body, to be self aware, develop sensitivity, self control and self regulation

Listening: the ability to tune into what the heart, mind and body have to say, to develop self-understanding, discrimination, self regulation, and imagination.

Grounding: the ability to connect to the earth, be physically present in the body and to develop a sense of competence, physical safety, and security.

Strength: physical mental and emotional.

Community: nurtures the ability to give and receive support, build compassion, communication skills, and other abilities to live cooperatively with others.

"... children blossom when they begin to discover and develop their unique abilities. As they become more aware of themselves and others, their natural beauty and compassion grows. And when we nurture these abilities, we enable children to succeed." - *Lynne Gillen, co-founder of Yoga Calm*

This will be an excellent way to foster the health of our children while creating a great container for our lessons in the Seven UU Principles. See www.yogacalm.org for more information on this program.

We have plans to integrate elements into each Sunday morning RE class. In addition, some Sunday mornings will be complete Yoga Calm classes. **Stay tuned for Intergenerational Yoga Calm opportunities for the whole congregation.**

Fall RE plans: The Religious Education program begins with our families joining the entire congregation for the annual **Water In-gathering Service September 9**. Plan to bring your whole family and a bit of water for this MUUC reunion. **RE classes begin September 16**. A family orientation meeting will be offered one of the first Sundays of RE, details to be announced.

Our curriculum for this year will continue our study of the Seven principles for our youngest children. The older kids (teens and pre-teens) will continue to co-create their study in religion and UU principles. It's a joy to plan and offer lessons on the UU principles. They are doorways to rich opportunities for learning and growing into positive adults and to create a healthy community.

Camp MUUC: After thoughtful democratic discussion we decided to cancel Camp MUUC 2012 due to low enrollment in the targeted age group. We plan to host a one day camp this fall for the large number of tadpoles interested (children under age 6). We are also taking notes from this year's experience and intend to offer the camp in summer 2013. Thank you to the Camp MUUC planning crew Teri Rockwood, Emily Koren, Sarah Johnson, Kim Frost and Carrie Focchi.

Volunteers: Thank you to the folks who volunteered for summer childcare, especially Nancy Sullivan who filled in the gaps and monitored the schedule when able. Thank you parents who brought children this summer and who helped with the care of their own children.

We are gearing up for an exciting and growth nurturing fall. **I'm eager to learn who is interested in helping out with the RE program this year.** We can co-create a spot for you for the whole year or we can fit you in a Sunday at a time.

I'm looking forward to spending Sunday's with your children again,

Melissa Middleton Religious Education Coordinator

Friendly Notes

It's hard to top the natural beauty of the UP. But I was moving away. It was difficult enough to explain to myself, let alone to others. As I was driving away from Marquette, I thought about this, and kept finding myself coming back to the existential question, "Why are we here?" One of the most eloquent answers to this question is contained in that favorite UU poem, "Spirit of Life." I have wings! And they have set me free! Free to roam and experience new things!

But what about the roots? Roots are supposed to hold me close, according to the poem. Why did I turn out to be this rootless person? Why don't I care about growing deep roots? But then I think I got it. Roots don't have to be physical. They can be non-physical! Roots can refer to shared values and ideals.

I first heard of the UU when they staged a series of compelling anti-war demonstrations in Philadelphia in 2003. Peacefully and stoically they made the point that indigent unarmed women and children were the ones who suffer the most in war. And that while war may sometimes be necessary, we need to stop glamorizing war. I later learned that Mahatma Gandhi named his movement "The Civil Disobedience Movement" after the title of a book by a UU spiritual icon (can you guess the name of the book and author?). "Who are these people?" I wondered.

I found out when I moved to Marquette. For the good part of 5 years, I got my monthly (and sometimes weekly) spiritual, intellectual, social and emotional booster shot at the MUUC. I was constantly reminded that I didn't need to be driven by fear or hate. There were better ways to nourish my soul, and in turn my relationship with the rest of the universe. (By the way, if you've never attended an "Issues and Ideas Forum" - the session held from 9:45am onwards - you've missed out on some pure brain food).

The services, the books in the MUUC library, the space in the building, the music - all helped. But to me the most beautiful thing about the MUUC was the loving energy of the people there. I want to especially thank Nancy Irish, Barb Michaels and Sari Embley for their welcoming, loving energy. They have an uncritical, loving, accepting, welcoming presence about them. An entirely novel concept for me. I also want to thank Nancy, Barb, Milli White, Don Robison and Gary Stark (and I may be missing some others) for opening their homes to me. Tom Hall for taking me to Grand Island. Sarah Redmond for opening my eyes to environmental and international issues that I used to willfully ignore. And to the various lay and non-lay service presenters for some of the most powerful messages I've ever heard.

Barb sent me a quote from Rumi: "Be with those who help your being." I will, Barb, I will. MUUC I will miss you.

- Abhi Jain

Over the summer, a group of us got together to attend the play "The Mouse that Roared", which featured our own Maitri White, Kaes Gray, and Ketlove Gray. The play was fun, our UU's were stars, and a good time was had by all. So, we will be on the lookout for other activities which members and friends of this Congregation might enjoy attending together.

In that vein, **Susan Werner will be performing at Forest Roberts Theater on the NMU campus on Friday night, September 7, 2012.** I have been told by those who know her work and have seen her perform, that her shows are wonderful and her content is likely to be very pleasing to UU ears. Here is what Wikipedia has to say about her:

Born and raised near Manchester, Iowa, Werner became interested in music at a young age and went on to receive a bachelor's degree in voice at the University of Iowa. In 1987, she moved to Philadelphia, and soon earned a master's degree in voice at Temple University. Werner initially wanted a career in opera, but after seeing a Nanci Griffith performance became inspired and began composing songs of her own on acoustic guitar.

Performing around Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City, Susan began making a name for herself in the folk scene of the

early 1990s. She recorded five albums from 1993 to 2001, and eventually moved to Chicago. Her first five albums were all in the folk genre, but Werner's sixth album, I Can't Be New (2004), was a substantial departure, with original material in the vein of Tin Pan Alley, cabaret, and early jazz torch songs.

Werner's seventh album, The Gospel Truth, was released in March 2007 and addresses themes of religion, faith, social responsibility, as well as religion from an Agnostic's point of view. Her eighth album, Live at Club Passim, is a collection of original songs (gospel, jazz & folk) recorded with her band: Colleen Sexton, Trina Hamlin & bassist Greg Holt. For her ninth album, Classics, she performs pop music from the sixties and seventies accompanied by chamber instruments.

Her latest album, entitled "Kicking the Beehive," was released in March 2011. Produced by Rodney Crowell, it features guest appearances from Vince Gill, Keb' Mo and Paul Franklin.

So, if you are interested in attending, let **g.g. gordon** know (360-4302 or plumskiter@gmail.com) or just show up. You can purchase tickets on your own ahead of time or at the door (pending availability). Maybe some folks will want to get together before or after for food, drink, and/or conversation.

A Cry for Help from Harbor House

The Mining Journal recently ran an article stating that the Women's Center and the associated women's shelter, Harbor House, is in trouble financially largely due to cutbacks in state funding. Harbor House was MUUC's primary community service focus for this past year, so there is of course extra concern among us about the fate of this vital organization serving women and children.

The Board of Trustees has approved of the idea of a fundraising effort on behalf of the Women's Center and Harbor House to serve a dual purpose of building community within MUUC. Nancy Irish will coordinate the effort with help from Gail Griffith of the Social Action Committee (and also a Founding Mother of the Women's Center). To make a significant effort possible, a cadre of a few enthusiastic members and friends are needed to make a short-term commitment.

We will meet sometime in early September to brainstorm about a "fun raiser." Current ideas include hosting a simple supper or a dessert smörgåsbord. Our creativity is the limit!

Please let Nancy Irish (uunancyirish@gmail.com) know if you want to participate, and then we'll find a meeting time that works for those who volunteer. Especially given limited support staff time, the size of the effort will be determined by the available volunteer energy. And of course, if you can't get involved at this time, checkbook action is also a welcome way to help!

Nancy Irish, MUUC Celebrant and Community Coordinator

Radical Hospitality for Newcomers

One of our most important functions as a spiritual community is to welcome people who are searching for a spiritual home which may turn out to be us...MUUC. We all know what it's like to enter a group for the first time...and the second, third, and fourth times. It takes courage – courage that may not survive one lonely experience in a new group.

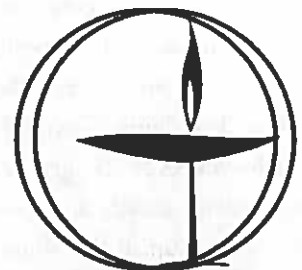
"Radical hospitality" is a term that refers to deep receptivity of another...the kind of receptivity that allows the other person to feel safe enough to be his or her truest self. That is the kind of hospitality we are called upon to offer every guest that walks through our doors on a Sunday morning. This is the work of every member, whether through attentive conversation or simply a genuine greeting or smile.

The Community Development Committee is working with Nancy Irish to improve our welcoming and integration of newcomers as they get to know us and work through their decision about whether our community is what they are looking for. We would like to initiate a new practice. After Nancy Irish makes initial follow-up contact with guests who sign the guest book and want further contact, we would like to have a small team of MUUC members ready to partner up with a newcomer to answer any questions they might have, make sure they are meeting other people on Sunday mornings, etc. - a buddy system of sorts. Members who sign up for this kind of "ministry" might have one or two newcomers to partner with per year.

Willing and able to accept this mission? Talk to or email Nancy Irish at: uunancyirish@gmail.com.



Fourtissimo, a string quartet which includes Maitri White, will be playing for the service on September 9th.



Soul to Soul... let us speak and listen deeply

Feeling like you want deeper, more meaningful relationships within your religious community? Long for a deeper sense of spiritual connection and uplift? Do you feel like you know people at church, but don't really know them on a deeper level? Would you like a structured practice to help create a deeper, shared experience at the Marquette UU Congregation?

We, on the Community Development Committee, have been giving these questions considerable thought and research over the past few months. And so, we propose starting a small group program this October using the guide book, *Soul to Soul* by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins. This text provides the structure and guidance for each group to follow in this deepening process.

So what happens in these groups? Groups start with a candle lighting, ten minutes of "On Our Heart" sharing about our current life issues, a few minutes of silence, a brief reading from the book, two or three rounds of sharing by each present and deep listening by all others, and a closing activity or ritual. In the process, people will learn about and practice, "deep listening."

Groups will meet twice a month and last about two hours. To prepare for each meeting, each person will read several pages from the book and will be encouraged to reflect, journal or draw an image ahead of time which is triggered by the topic. In each meeting, each person will have time to share his or her thoughts and feelings while being listened to deeply and open-heartedly by the others. The sharing will not be interactive, but each person will speak into the sacred silence and safety being created by the others.

Sunday, September 16, we will offer an experience of this type of sharing during our service. If you think you might enjoy being in one of these groups, please let me know or sign up at church. The first groups will run for three months, October to December. Assuming that this activity will be as popular as we hope it to be, groups will be re-started with new topics for January.

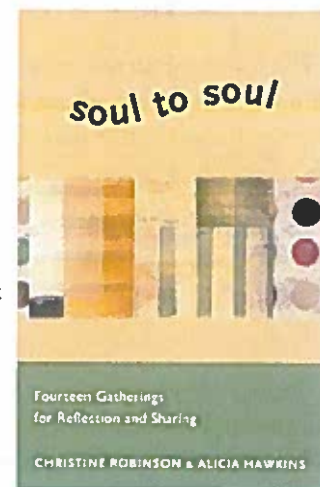
Questions? I am sure there will be. Call me at 360-3790 or zip me an email at nance249@gmail.com. We hope that you will join us in this new venture into deepening our connections.

Nancy Sullivan

"I only wish I could convey adequately the delight that the people in our first four groups have expressed on hearing that there are new sessions! It has been a special privilege for me to witness the profound impact of the program as our members awaken to the potential of listening as a spiritual discipline.

Each group has left the first session feeling a sense of deep kinship with their new group members and arrived at realizations that although the particulars of our stories are different, there are many universal experiences; that each of us has faced some sort of struggle and emerged knowing our own resilience; and that we are all striving to make sense of things and to be better people."

Angela Klassen, Director of Lifespan Religious Education First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto



Community Forum

LUNCH BUNCH ENCOURAGED

The goal is to get to know each other better, become a more cohesive congregation, exchange ideas and thoughts about where we want to go and even solicit support for such paths. The "bunch" would be informal, go to lunch wherever the group decides (or perhaps even plans ahead) and would consist of whoever shows up. If this sounds like a fun activity, meet near the coffee pots after services. Martin Steindler will lead this effort.

CALLING ALL GARDENERS

MUUC will have a plant exchange following our Sunday, Sept. 30th service, so reserve the date, start dividing and potting up your over grown perennials and plan on coming and helping. We'll open this to the public by publicizing in the local free media and with garden groups. For those not exchanging but wanting to pick up plants, we'll ask for a set donation price depending on the size of the plant with the proceeds going to the congregation. Questions? Willing to help (please)? Contact Sari Embley at sariembley@sbcglobal.net, or Sarah Redmond at shelterbay2006@yahoo.com.

MARQUETTE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

MEETING HOUSE LOCATION: 1510 M-28 E. Harvey, MI • PHONE: 906-249-9450

SERVICE AND FORUM SCHEDULE

| DATE | SERVICE: 11:00 A.M. | FORUM: 9:45 – 10:30 A.M. |
|--------------------|--|--|
| SEPTEMBER 2, 2012 | "Economic Justice" Service Leader: Chris Wagner | "Interesting Jobs That People Have Held" Host: Shaun Devlin |
| SEPTEMBER 9, 2012 | "Water and Ingathering Service" Service Leaders: MUUC Board of Trustees | TBA |
| SEPTEMBER 16, 2012 | "Soul to Soul" Service Leader: Nancy Sullivan | TBA |
| SEPTEMBER 23 2012 | "Ignorance and Fear in Religion" Service Leader: Tim VanderVeen | TBA |
| SEPTEMBER 30, 2012 | "In the Words of JFK..." | "The Impact on Society of Diseases of the |

Board of Trustees :

Barbara Michael, President; GG Gordon, Vice President; Sarah Redmond, Secretary; Michelle Harrison, Treasurer; Shirley Zimmer, Bookkeeper; Cherokee Helms Gleason; Michelle Halley

Staff:

Nancy Irish, Community Coordinator & Celebrant; Melissa Middleton, Religious Education Coordinator

Other Positions: Tom & Nancy Sullivan, Building Use Coordinators; Sarah Johnson, Religious Education Chair; Tom Sullivan, Program Committee Chair; Michael Erdmann, Building Committee Chair; Nancy Sullivan, Community Development Committee Chair; gg gordon, Stewardship Chair; Teri Rockwood, Gary Stark, Paul Kiesling - Mediation Council; Gail Griffith, Social Action Chair; Dave Stensaas, Newsletter Coor-

Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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To:

