



# The Chronicle

FEB 2013

MARQUETTE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

## The Balancing Act VII

In his Second Inaugural Address, President Obama said, "Individual freedoms require collective actions." This came the day after our adult forum discussion which focused on "Individualism and Beloved Community." The latter phrase from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. seems appropriate as we celebrate the life and tenets of a hero of peace and non-violence. I can hear our former minister, Kayle Rice, using the term "beloved community" during Sunday morning services. In fact, the message on my answering machine, from the day my partner, Judy Bennett, passed away, indicates this. After expressing condolences, Kayle, then pastoring a UU church in Moscow, Idaho ended with, "**I'm so glad you have the MUUC community supporting you!**" She was right - I did, and once again I thank all of you who extended support and love to me at that time and continue to do so for each other in difficult times and to all in your everyday lives.

So how are we UU's doing on our "30 Days of Love," sponsored by *Standing on the Side of Love* which incorporates Martin Luther King Day and Valentine's Day? I have that goldenrod half-sheet on my refrigerator to remind me. Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow* (this year's UUA "read"), calls *these* 30 days "a spiritual journey for love and justice" manifesting a positive prophecy. If we reach in and then without, taking a step each day to visit someone, call someone, shovel some snow for someone, bake a loaf of bread to be shared, sketch a notecard and drop it in the mail, help out in our religious education classes, etc. we will spread some agape love while building community.

Thanks to our Community Development Committee we were offered a survey on January 27th. I hope you will seriously consider how you are willing or want to learn to serve our beloved community, even if it is with your presence as a greeter, for we are a Welcoming Congregation! Feeling unsure? Someone will help you, and perhaps the children and youth can draw on Dr. King's words, "Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

On this month's Presidents Day, I may picture the ad of the mom who helps dress up her daughter with cotton balls to look like Martin Van Buren; the film, "Lincoln;" or the five Unitarian U.S. Presidents. However, I am more likely to think of Obama's expression, "Seneca Falls and Selma and Stonewall," as we UU's continue to strive for equal rights within and beyond our country's borders for women, people of color, and those who identify as lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual, or queer. As we move through our dedication in February to Black History, we can recognize the need to continue to educate ourselves and each other so that we 1) don't repeat major mistakes and catastrophes and 2) remember the positive contributions made by people of color, which are often not recognized in American History books.

Are you ready to be an abolitionist of the 21st century? To help abolish poverty and the new Jim Crow of mass incarceration? To make progress in most any area, we need individual creativity as well as collective action. Our UU Principles challenge us ~ if not require, by covenant ~ to promote our values through collective action. Alone we can do some things, but together - so much more, as we create and re-create our beloved community.

In shared ministry,  
*Barb Michael*  
President, Board of Directors



### **Volunteer needs:**

If RE is to survive, much less thrive, the congregation needs to step up. This need is especially dire for the next couple months as we continue our search for a new coordinator. If RE is to continue, we need more involvement from more adults on a regular basis. Please ask yourselves how important children are to your congregation, how important a quality children's program is to what the UU means, how important teaching UU values to the next generation is to you. The MUUC kids are awesome and a joy to interact with.

At this point we need volunteers for the two classes described below.

### **For the older kids (age 11 and up):**

We are exploring two themes with the older kids this year: creating and implementing their own local service projects and exploring their own beliefs and spirituality.

We need:

1) a volunteer to meet with the kids on an on-going basis (but not every Sunday) to facilitate their planning and implementing their service projects. you can have them tell you what they have done this year, what they liked about it, (or didn't) and get them moving towards planning the next one. They said they wanted to go to a nursing home and take ice cream Sundays, or decorate cookies with the residents. We think they should go to an undeserved home, for example Norlite instead of Broodridge. We need someone to help them through this process, keep their conversation on track and coordinate the event. The kids are awesome and capable, they want to do this, they just need someone to play a focusing role for them. Taking part in service projects with these kids is super fulfilling, it will bring you more joy than the recipients of the projects. It'd be a shame if the congregation can't come up with a volunteer to guide them through this. They want to do the congregation's service in action, they just need a little guidance and structure.

2) numerous volunteers to sign up for a day at a time to talk to the kids about your own spiritual journey, how your own path and beliefs evolved over time, what things helped your journey etc..... Ask them some questions, and we will try to have them ask you questions. But as we have no coordinator or lead teacher you may need to help the process along a bit. feel free to bring in props, for example if music or art making is part of your path, bring music or an art project.....

### **For the younger kids (ages 6-10):**

We need a volunteer or two for each Sunday. We will give you a lesson plan or you can create a meaningful activity of your own. Signing up for more than one Sunday in a row would be great but if you can only do one, please sign up anyway.

### **For kids under age 5:**

### **For kids under age 5:**

We have a volunteer for the rest of the year. They enjoy supervised play, practicing the UU principles, in the small "Tadpole" room.

Thank you to our January volunteers!

## FROM THE CELEBRANT

Dear friends,

A happy Candlemass to you all! An old English poem hints at the origins of the U.S. version of Candlemass, Groundhog's Day, which is also known as Imbolc:

*If Candlemass be fair and bright,  
Winter has another flight.  
If Candlemass brings clouds and rain,  
Winter will not come again.*

Imbolc is the “cross-quarter” day falling between the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox. It is a time to ponder the seeds that are lying dormant in the Earth, and in us...a time to consider which of those seeds we will nurture with our attention and resources.

There are seasons in the life of congregations as well as of the calendar. In this, our seventh journey around the sun since claiming the ground that is our Meeting House, I view our present season as one of increasing our influence in the wider community as a liberal faith tradition committed to social justice and environmental stewardship by partnering with other community organizations...seeds that we are choosing to water. One such organization is Marquette Transition, which is working to help Marquette area citizens move toward an era that is not dependent on fossil fuel. At least a dozen MUUC members are involved with Marquette Transition at some level, and the group is now meeting at our Meeting House every other month. Any interested members and friends are encouraged to participate. (Ask around for details, or contact me at [uunancyirish@gmail.com](mailto:uunancyirish@gmail.com)).

We are a small congregation unable to address all of our concerns on an active basis, so intentionally overlapping other circles with similar ideals is an effective and efficient way for our members and friends to become active in environmental work or in social justice work, most actively at present our ongoing support of Harbor House and Room at the Inn.

Another development is the rejuvenation of Earthkeepers (see related article), of which MUUC is a part. Earthkeepers has offered a means by which we can act on our 7<sup>th</sup> Principle. In his book, *Growing a Beloved Community: twelve hallmarks of a healthy congregation*, Tom Owen-Toole writes, quoting Felix Adler, “The place where we choose to meet is holy ground.” For UUs, wise stewardship of our meeting place and the resources required for its operation is an integral part of our chosen spiritual path.

What about you? What seeds lying dormant within are calling to you for attention? Rumi wrote, “let the beauty of what you love be what you do.” May the spirit of Imbolc guide us in discovering the seeds in us that, with a little water of attention, will manifest the beauty of what we love.

Yours in service,

Nancy Irish, Celebrant/Coordinator

## A Great New Opportunity to Live Our 7<sup>th</sup> Principle

The 7th UU Principle is to affirm and promote “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” Our UU community has an unusual opportunity to join our interfaith colleagues in a new, innovative expression of our stewardship for the natural environment. Some of you may remember that, in 2004-2009, we participated in an Earthkeeping partnership that elicited formal commendations from State governments and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Benchmarks from those efforts were the collection of 320 tons of electronic waste, the disposal of 47 tons of household toxins and the planting of 12,000 trees.

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013, a group of ten religious leaders from across Northern Michigan joined together at a press conference to launch a commitment to carry on Earthkeepers II, an interfaith environmental initiative. Now, thanks to three years of behind-the-scenes work building on the original vision, this next two year effort will focus on two areas:

- (1) Energy conservation and pollution prevention among Earthkeeper congregations, and,
- (2) The establishment of 30 community gardens.

Earthkeepers have funds to provide, at no cost, a complete energy audit of 40 parish buildings. Our Board of Trustees unanimously voted at their January meeting to be among the first of U.P. faith communities to take advantage of this offer to explore ways to be more effective stewards of our property and encourage energy-saving practices among our members.

These audits are funded by a grant from the US EPA and are valued at \$2500 -\$3000. They involve a team making a 2-3 hour visit to our congregation. Following the audit, a formal report will be presented to us. There will be no obligation to implement any changes, but if our congregation so chooses, initial grants of \$500-\$1,000 will be available for our use. For larger energy conservation projects the EK team will work with us to provide matching funds (if we so choose) of up to \$15,000 which are available from the local power companies.

More news will follow regarding the Earthkeeper’s community garden vision. The intention is to support existing gardens already on congregational properties and establish at least 4 new sites over the coming months in collaboration with our interfaith partners.

Gail Griffith, our representative on Earthkeepers for their first round, is stepping down, and Heidi Gould will be serving as our formal MUUC Earthkeepers II representative for this new collaborative effort. Jon Magnuson, former ELCA Campus pastor at Northern Michigan University and now Director for the Cedar Tree Institute, is serving as the Project Director. Kyra Fillmore Ziomkowski ([kyra.ziomkowski@gmail.com](mailto:kyra.ziomkowski@gmail.com) or 906-250-7643), a member of St. Peter’s Catholic Church here in Marquette, is serving as the Earthkeepers II Project Coordinator. Charlie West, a retired Methodist pastor, will be providing thoughtful notes and articles along the way.

Earthkeeper organizers and participants hope to lead the way as witnesses on how the interfaith community gives rise to building a more just, cooperative, and compassionate world. May we support Heidi Gould and the Earthkeepers in their efforts through the coming years.

Nancy Irish, MUUC Celebrant/Coordinator

## MISCELLANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **CLIMATE CHANGE: A Community Conversation and Listening Session**

Wednesday, February 13, 2013 - 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Lakeview Arena - 401 E. Fair Avenue, Marquette, MI

*What is being done and has been done locally to mitigate the impacts of a warming climate?  
How can Marquette be more resilient in the face of climate variability and change?*

Light refreshments will be served and door prizes – two free home energy audits!  
Open to the public. Hosted by the City of Marquette and the Superior Watershed Partnership

### **Newcomer Gatherings Scheduled**

We have a wonderful group of folks new to our community. In order to help newcomers (and a few old-timers) get to know one another better and learn about UUism and MUUC in particular, a series of four gatherings have been scheduled during February and March. The gatherings will be in the evenings at 7pm around a fire at the Irish/Villa family home in the Harvey area, on the following days: Sundays, Feb 17 and 24<sup>th</sup>, and Wednesdays, March 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't already indicated your interest in participating in these gatherings, please let me know by emailing me at [uunancyirish@gmail.com](mailto:uunancyirish@gmail.com), or by phone at 906-249-1296. We'd love to have you join us! Nancy Irish

**CHOIR REHEARSAL** - Wed., Feb. 13 (for a special Music Sunday., Feb. 24)

at the home of Jeanne Trost, 911 W. Kaye St.

All singers and instrumentalists welcome!

### **The Michigan UU Social Justice Network is celebrating its 10th anniversary.**

Within that time, a number of you have been involved in their projects, programs, and email support to collectively amplify a moral voice . MUUSJN (Moose-jun) has worked on many issues including immigration reform, LGBT rights, economic justice, reproductive freedom, health care, anti-bullying, prison reform, and peace in Palestine (knowing that Michigan taxpayers' dollars are funding a violent occupation). After 10 years, MUUSJN is organizing an official Board of Trustees with new support through the UUA, and gg gordon will be part of that Board. gg, congratulations and thank you for representing us for social justice, as one of 27 Michigan UU congregations!

### **Building Community & Connecting**

The Community Development Committee and our Board feels it is important to hear why people have stopped coming to church. Is it illness, stress, transportation, or dissatisfaction of some sort? We don't always notice on a busy Sunday when someone is missing. Please let Nancy Sullivan know if we should check in with someone. We are happy to do that or find the right person to reach out. Often a call from a friend in the congregation can make a difference. We want do our best to keep our connections strong.

Please let Patty Sarvello know if someone may be in need of extra TLC support from our community. It is too easy to let needs slip by unnoticed, and we want to be a nurturing community. Help us build that with your suggestions and ideas.

Thanks for your help,  
Nancy Sullivan

### Call for Our Whole Lives (OWL) Teachers:

OWL will be offered again next fall (October 2013 - May 2014).

Please let Sarah Johnson or another RE Committee member know if you are interested.

Training is required and can be completed this upcoming spring.

Information regarding this valuable sexual education program is available on the UUA website: [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org).

**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!

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**Next Board Meeting:** 6:30 pm, Monday, February 11, 2013, MUUC Meeting House

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### MUUC Board of Trustees:

Barbara Michael, President - [michael.barbara.102@gmail.com](mailto:michael.barbara.102@gmail.com)

gg gordon, Vice President - [plumskiter@gmail.com](mailto:plumskiter@gmail.com)

Sarah Redmond, Secretary - [shelterbay2006@yahoo.com](mailto:shelterbay2006@yahoo.com)

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WE ARE  
ON THE WEB!  
[www.mqtuu.org](http://www.mqtuu.org)

### FEBRUARY SERVICE AND FORUM SCHEDULE

Date	Service (11 a.m.)	Forum (9:45 – 10:30a.m.)
Feb. 3	“The Wisdom of Ralph Waldo Emerson.” Service Leader: Kathy Klos	“Congregational Conversation about.....” Host: MUUC Board of Trustees
Feb. 10	“Essential Spiritual Practices Two and Three of Seven: Cultivate Emotional Wisdom, and Live Ethically.” Service Leader: Nancy Irish	“My Life Between Those Two Boxes: A T’s Story, by Susy S. Host: Susy S.
Feb. 17	“Intergenerational Valentine Tea Service.” Service Leaders: MUUC Children and Youth and RE Comm.	“The Line” (video). Host: Barb Michael (Follow-up to the Jan. 20 service In 45 minutes, <i>The Line</i> , documents the stories of people across the country living at or below the poverty “line”. They have goals. They have children. They work hard. Millions struggle every day to make it <u>above</u> <i>The Line</i> ...and others are trying not to fall below the line. Video starts promptly at 9:45 am!
Feb. 24	“Music Service.” Service Leader: Barb Michael	“Sharing Our Paths to Spiritual Growth.” Host: Teri Rockwood

**Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation**  
**P.O Box 687**  
**Marquette, MI 49855**

**To:**