

Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Newsletter

December
2010

Message from the Fellowship President

Greetings OCUUF Members and Friends,

This has been an interesting Fall (Autumn, if you prefer).

There are so many people to thank for their support of Open Circle. As we reflected on "Gratitude" in our meeting the Sunday after Thanksgiving, I thought about how grateful we are for the many contributions to our fellowship community. Our Student Minister, the RE Committee, the Eco Food Group, the Maintenance Committee, the Hospitality Committee, the Service Planning Committee, the Board, and many others, have helped in significant ways over the past few months. Thank you all!

The Open Circle Book Club had its first meeting – Yea! The Eco Food Group hosted our wonderful Harvest Brunch. Liz Woodworth Zanto and others developed an intergenerational Halloween service celebrating the spirit of a person who inspired us. The "big wind" caused some minor damage to our building - the Maintenance Committee performed restorative work. There are also concerns about water drainage on the northwest corner of our building in the parking lot – the Green Sanctuary Committee is pursuing ideas to deal with our situation in a green way. Thanks to everyone.

Christina Leone, our student minister, has done a wonderful job, both in our Sunday services and in meetings with various groups. Her recent message on Praying was wonderful. Thank you Christina!

Unfortunately, at the end of the Service Year, Monica Walk will be ending her term as Religious Education Director. We owe her a great debt of gratitude for the marvelous job she has done in developing programs and curricula for our children. Those who have taught in the program report that they are wonderful. Even the teachers learn from the lessons. Thank you, Monica, for your dedication and superb service to Open Circle!

This also means that Kris Evert, Chair of the Religious Education Committee will be assembling a committee to search for a new RE Director. Thank you, Kris.

Each first and third Sunday, not only do we have a worship service, we also provide Religious Education for our young people. Many people have served as teachers.



It is a constant struggle to find people willing to serve in this way. The RE Committee continues to ask for help in staffing our classrooms. Please volunteer! One very important concern is that people who are teaching are unable to participate in the service or hear the sermon's message. While not the same as being there, Christine has begun videotaping her sermons and posting them on YouTube. Check it out on YouTube under "UU Intern Minister Christina". Her Halloween sermon was, "The Masks we Wear" see:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jd7fWM7nU80> .

We are still looking for help with the Web Site. Please see a separate message in this Newsletter.

Guest at Your Table, a program of the UU Service Committee, was kicked off in our Fellowship on November 20th. The program supports UUSC humanitarian and social justice work in the U.S. and around the world. You can find out more at <http://www.uusc.org/guest> . There are still boxes available at the Fellowship. Boxes will be collected in January. Our goal is that 50% of our members/families will make a contribution in this program.

Many of you supported the action of the OCUUF Board to write a letter to the County Executive supporting his restoration of funding in the County Budget, especially those funds related to diversity

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Get Involved with OCUUF!

Religious Education

Be a teacher! We *need* adults to teach in the Religious Education program on the first and third Sundays of the month. Lessons are fully prepared and ready to go--if you can read, you can teach RE! Please contact RE Director Monica Walk at monicawalk@hotmail.com to talk about teaching and to get on the schedule.

Green Sanctuary Program

The OCUUF will begin our own Green Sanctuary Program (GSP) in October. For more details contact John McDowell at eastbrook06@gmail.com.

Men's Group Announcements

The OCUUF Men's Group will begin breakfast gatherings on the first Sunday of every month. *Where:* Ramada Inn. *When:* 8:00 a.m. Next meeting will be Dec 5. For more details contact John McDowell at eastbrook06@gmail.com.

Worship Funshop March 19

Coming March 19 our Student Minister, Christina Leone, will host an afternoon "Funshop" (why call it a Workshop when it's going to be fun??) on worship.

What do we mean when we use the word worship? Why do UU services follow the structure they do? Can we create more meaningful worship among ourselves specifically for our unique Open Circle UU Fellowship? If you've ever wanted to be more involved in worship, have some feedback, or just learn something new, keep an eye out for more information about the March 19th Worship Funshop!

Book/Video Club

Will meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 6:30 to 8 pm at UU. Begins on January 18th at which time books & videos will be selected for the rest of the year based on the titles entered into the hat draw. (See more information on page 4.)

Presentation: "Dorothy Stang-A Modern Woman for Justice and Peace"

Marian University has been very fortunate to be able to schedule a presentation by David Stang on Dec 6th at 12:20 pm in Stayer Center Rooms 217/218. He is the brother of Sr. Dorothy Stang who was murdered in Brazil while working to help indigenous people and protect the rainforest. There was a recent movie about her, "They Killed Sister Dorothy".

Changes in 2011 for the Newsletter!

By Stephanie Catrina Evergreen

(official name change from Stephanie Jane Erickson effective starting March 7, 2011!)

Starting in 2011, we will be changing the frequency of the newsletter to bimonthly.

What does this mean?

The first newsletter of 2011 will be for events and happenings that will be occurring in January and February. The newsletter will be released during the first week of January. The second newsletter will encompass March and April and will be released during the first week of March. And so on... Articles and postings will still be due on the 20th of the prior month. For instance, submissions will be due on December 20th for the January/February 2011 newsletter.

We will still have the weekly announcements provided by Madonna and the website calendar. Because of this, if events are not listed in the newsletter because information was not available by the deadline, there are still other venues to announce these events.

I will also be changing the email that is used for submissions because I will be changing my name in March. Please send submissions to stephcevergreen@yahoo.com. I will keep the other email active, and will check it for a few months yet to ensure that the change-over goes smoothly.

If you have any questions please contact me at stephcevergreen@yahoo.com or erickson_steph@yahoo.com. Or feel free to ask me questions if you see me!



Double Ceremony Ordains, Installs Erin Gingrich

In a double celebratory event Erin Gingrich was ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister on Sunday afternoon, November 14 and then immediately installed as the senior minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston (UUCR). Her selection comes at a time when UUCR is celebrating its founding 40 years ago in Reston.

Rev. Gingrich is a 2010 graduate of Meadville Lombard Theological School, a Unitarian Universalist seminary in Chicago and a graduate of the University of Illinois.

Terry Mitchell, UUCR president, represented the congregation during the ordination and installation ceremonies which were held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Herndon to accommodate the large number of dignitaries, local and visiting ministers, congregants, visitors, family and friends who attended. A major reception followed to honor Rev. Gingrich at UUCR, 1625 Wiehle Avenue.

Participants in the ceremonies included Rev. Linda Olson Peebles, UU church of Arlington, who offered the meaning of ordination; Carol and Jim Gingrich, of Winnebago, IL, Rev. Gingrich's parents, who lit the chalice; Rev. David Bumbaugh, retired, and former professor at Meadville Lombard, who delivered the sermon; Rev. Anya Sammler, UU Church of Sterling, who offered the charge to the congregation; Rev. Jen Crow, First Unitarian Church in Rochester, N.Y., unable to attend, sent a charge to the minister read by Rev. Kate Walker, Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, who also offered a charge. Rev. Archene Turner, Cedar Lane UU Church, offered the blessing as congregants surrounded the new minister.

Other guests included Rev. Scott Sammier-Michael brining greetings from Rev. Dr. Richard Speck, district executive, Joseph Priestly District of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and John Farrell from the First Unitarian Church in Rochester, N.Y., who recalled Rev. Gingrich as loving, caring, funny, and possessing gifts beyond imagining.

During the ordination ceremony, Rev. Gingrich received her ministerial stole designed and created by Cecile Batchelor.

Paul Cohen and Marcia Hughes-Reese, co-chairs of the ministerial search committee, participated with President Mitchell in the installation ceremony.

Music was provided by Mary Ann East, UUCR's director of music, the UUCR choir, accompanist Dana Griffith and Denise Whittier.

Because Rev. Gingrich has a particular interest in dance as a spiritual practice, at the conclusion of the services, four members of a dance group in which Rev. Gingrich is a member, did an impromptu dance showing the interdependence of people and the support they can give each other.

Before graduating from seminary Rev. Gingrich was an intern minister at the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, N.Y. She was involved with the First UU Society of Burlington, VT for the past 10 years where she coordinated a young adult group. She was also student minister at the Open Circle UU Fellowship in Fond du Lac, fall 2009 – spring 2010. Rev. Gingrich has worked with high school students and community groups in an effort to help individuals identify their values and live accordingly as they try to find purpose in life and the energy to bring about social change despite obstacles.

She has written that she believes the purpose of the church is to provide a space where people can connect with their understanding of the mystery of life and their place within it.

Prior to being called to the ministry, Rev. Gingrich's interests and work lay in the areas of racism and oppression. She worked at a rape crisis center, an alternative high school, and a youth leadership organization. She was director of high school programs for the Green Mountain Peer Project from 2001 – 2006.

Ed McClaren, UUCR vice president, was chair of the ordination and installation committee.

For more information call Irma Brosseau 703-437-6308.



(continued from page 1...**Message**)

Several members of the board will be participating in some leadership training in Sheboygan on January 8th - we invite others who may be interested in participating to contact us. The board will also be conducting a planning workshop in January.

The board's monthly financial review showed us to be in reasonable financial shape for now.

<u>Operating Statement</u>	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Current Year to Date</u>	<u>YTD % of Budget</u>	<u>Current Budget</u>	<u>Previous Year to Date</u>
Total Operating Income	\$4,073	\$14,359	33%	\$43,477	\$13,175
Total Operating Expenses	\$3,553	\$10,360	24%	\$43,520	\$12,265
Net	\$520	\$3,999		(\$43)	\$911

<u>Fund Balances</u>	<u>Operating Fund</u>	<u>Vision Fund</u>	<u>Building Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Balance 10/1/2010	\$21,934	\$37,371	\$39,756	\$98,902
Balance 10/31/2010	\$23,335	\$37,421	\$40,544	\$101,140

As noted in a previous message, a major Board concern continues to relate to financing our building. At present, our operating expenses do not include rent or mortgage. As of July 1, 2011, however, we will have to begin paying on a mortgage. In order to minimize our mortgage principle and achieve the lowest possible monthly mortgage payment starting July 1st, we need to accumulate as much money as possible in our building fund between now and then.

The board meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.. If you have concerns or questions, please let me or one of our other board members know.

Peace be with you,

Jeffrey Reed, OCUUF Board President

Book/Video Club

Will meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 6:30 to 8 pm at UU. Begins on January 18th at which time books & videos will be selected for the rest of the year based on the titles entered into the hat draw.

Gentle Group Guidelines:

- Ø People will speak as they are so moved - not prompted
- Ø Opinion of material with possible ranking held to end of discussion
- Ø Meetings will be facilitated with a list of discussion questions
- Ø Equal participation - checking self for monopolizing
- Ø Stay focused to the selection choice
- Ø Vignette about the author may be helpful
- Ø Open to all; people who haven't read the materials take low profile

Schedule for 2011

January 18th- Video = As It is in Heaven with hat draw	
February 15th-	
March 15th-	
April 19th-	September 20th-
May 17th-	October 18th-
June 21st-	November 15th-
July 19th-	December 20th-
August 16th-	

Books Mentioned

Washington Rules: America's path to Permanent War - Andrew Bacevich
 Eearth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet - Bill McKibben
 Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide - D. Kristof & Sheryl WuDunn
 Death of Josseline: Immigration Stories from the AZ Borderlands - Margaret Regan
 Little Bee - Chris Cleave
 Animal, Vegetable, Miracle - Barbara Kingsolver
 Poisonwood Bible - Barbara Kingsolver
 The Fifth Sacred Thing - Star Hawk
 The First Paul - Marcus Borg
 A House for Hope: The promise of Progressive Religion for the 21st Century- John Buehrens & Patricia Parker

Videos Mentioned

Departures
 Religiosity
 Defending Your Life
 What the Bleep Do We Know



Eco-Food News

By Jane Dennis

How is your Meatless Monday going, or not going? Have you tried to eat less meat? What are you discovering about your food habits? I'm surprised at how often I still have meat, even if it's just a little bit for seasoning in a quiche or stir-fry, and how often I still long for that juicy, tasty hamburger with pickles and catsup. I feel less guilty about eating meat when I know the turkey or pig or chicken were raised humanely by a local farmer, but it's still meat! It's a complicated issue.

As an alternative to meat, eggs can be an excellent source of protein but the recent outbreak of salmonella in eggs from mega farms in Iowa is a good reminder that it's probably better to know the farmer and the source of our food. Local eggs can easily be purchased in FdL at the Village Market for around \$4.00 a dozen, expensive compared to the eggs we buy at the grocery store, which brings up the cost issue of food and social justice.

How do our food choices affect those who produce our food? What is the real cost of our inexpensive eggs? Again, there is not an easy answer. This is what we talk about in our Eco-Food Committee meetings, and any of you are welcome to come. We have all become more aware of the impact our food choices have on the producers, the local economy and our health.

UUs around the world are coming to the end of the formal study of this issue and preparing to vote on a Statement of Conscience at the 2011 General Assembly. As usual, there is plenty of controversy among UUs because there are so many different perspectives to bring to Ethical Eating. Committee members will share this with you next year. Please share any of your favorite meatless recipes with all of us. You can email a copy to me, jane.dennis@charter.net, and I will make copies for members to pick up at Open Circle.

Still Looking . . . , Still Need Help with . . . Open Circle Web Site

Need: Two or Three Volunteers to serve on a OCUUF Web Site committee

Tasks to be done: Solicit and review business/design proposals for updates to our web site at a reasonable cost, to make recommendations to the Board for a vendor, and to interface with the selected vendor on behalf of the board as they implement an updated Open Circle web site.

Skills Needed: Familiarity with web site development process and tools, web site design, and business proposals.

To volunteer: Contact Open Circle Board President Jeffrey Reed, at (920) 926-1664 (home), (920) 923-8759 (work), or jreed@marianuniversity.edu.

Background: Our updated web site needs to continue to inform visitors about Open Circle, let members know what is happening, help build and support our fellowship, and provide resources for our Open Circle Community. The desired outcome of this effort is an updated web site that it is easy to maintain and update as well as being attractive and reflective of our fellowship.

Location: Open Circle web site currently posted at <http://www.opencirclefellowship.org/>.

Problem to be solved: The web site is extremely difficult to maintain, update and modify.



Short-term Loan Available for Members in Need

The board is happy to announce that the fellowship now has a short-term loan available for members in need. A member may request up to four hundred dollars. The request must be made using an application that is available in the fellowship office. Only four hundred dollars is available at one time. This means if one hundred has already been lent to a member, then only three hundred is available to be lent to others in need. All applications must be approved by a majority vote of the board president, treasurer, and member at large. Please feel free to contact any board member if you have any questions, concerns, or are in need of a loan.

Application for short-term loan from Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Criteria for borrowing:

- Applicant must be a member
- Applicant must complete entire application and submit to fellowship office or to the following board members: president, treasurer, or member at large.
- Applicant must have repaid any previous loan from the fellowship in full.
- The total loan fund of \$400 is available from the membership for borrowing at one time; therefore, if someone has borrowed \$100 there is only \$300 available.

Approval of the loan application:

If the applicant has completed the entire application and has met all the criteria above, the final decision to approve the applicant's request will be made by a majority vote of a committee consisting of the following board members: the president, treasurer, and member at large.

Application:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Reason loan is needed: _____

Date money is needed by: _____

While the membership is respectful of the applicant's situation, we would request a short written statement below about the plan for repayment.

December 2010 Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 8:00 AM Men's Group meeting at Ramada Inn 10:00 AM Service presented by: Lynne Garner	6 12:20 pm "Dorothy Stang-A Modern Woman for Justice and Peace" @ Stayer Center	7	8	9 6:00 to 8:00 PM Food for Thought meeting	10	11
12 10:00 AM Service: Peace presented by Robert Ricigliano	13	14 6:30 PM OCUUF Board meeting	15	16	17	18
19 10:00 AM Service: Darkness and Light presented Christina Leone	20	21	22	23	24	25
						
26 10:00 AM Service: Holiday Sharing-cookie exchange and decompress	27	28	29	30	31	

**“Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love!”
~Hamilton Wright Mabie**

Christina's Corner

By Christina Leone

At this time each year, I think to myself... Where the heck did the rest of the year go??? And then I sit and consider it for a moment and realize that the year went to a lot of amazing places. There were people in my life this year I had never known, and things happened to me that were very sad, and very happy, and very disappointing, and very encouraging. Being a small part of life here at OCUUF has been a major part of this year, and I am excited to think that 2011 will bring with it many new people, challenges, and energy, including a new Neighboring Faiths program for the youth, growth, and a shift in your financial responsibility for your fellowship space.

The end of the year, at least in our hemisphere, is also a time when the darkness comes and the cold sets in. It is a time when the trees have shed their leaves in a show of brilliant colors and are ready to rest for a while. Without this time of rest, the land cannot regenerate itself fully in the spring, and aren't we grateful when that happens? I believe we should take a cue from the trees, let down our leaves for a while, and just *be*.

Unfortunately, the end of the year in our culture does not allow for much rest. There are gifts to be bought, food to be prepared, decorations to be hung, trips to travel. All of these things (gifts, food, decorations, trips) are a wonderful part of this beautiful season. These things, much like the candles and strings of lights we hang, are designed to bring light back into the darkened world. But they can also be a distraction from the necessity of the darkness and of the need we have for rest.

I will join you again for worship on December 19 in which I will be welcoming the darkness and the coming light with a holiday/solstice service in which all ages will be welcomed. We will participate together in ritual to close out the year, honor those who are not among us, sit in silence in honor of the darkness, and celebrate that which brings light and love.

December Sunday Services

12/5

Service Presented by: Lynne Garner

12/12

Service Topic: Peace

Presented by: Robert Ricigliano

12/19

Service Topic: Darkness and Light

Presented by: Christina Leone

The time of darkness is almost at its longest, and the light will soon return. In this season of cold and dark, what do we want to leave behind in the old year, and bring with us into the light of the new? A neo-pagan ritual of light will accompany some traditional and non-traditional holiday songs and imagery. Please note: This is a multi-generational service and there will be no RE.

12/26

Service Topic: Holiday Sharing, Cookie Exchange and Decompress

All services are held at Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship located at 19 E Third St in Fond du Lac at 10:00 AM unless otherwise noted.



This December, I hope you will pause, at least for a moment each day, to remember where your year went, and to rest in preparation for the year to come. Simply a few deep breaths might do the trick, or perhaps a more meaningful way to prepare: my housemate in Chicago is from Japan and he spends December 31st cleaning the house. "Why?" I asked him a couple years ago, thinking (as an American) that we clean like that in the springtime. He said that the New Year was coming, and he wanted to welcome it properly. What a beautiful way to think of this time. It is a time of preparation for a guest. 2011 will be coming soon and we don't want to be too tired, too frazzled, or too broke to enjoy its arrival. Until then, spend this season enjoying the gifts that 2010 has delivered, including family, friends, and your OCUUF community, and appreciating the year before it leaves your house for good.

See you in December,

Christina

Unitarian Universalist Guiding Principles

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Open Circle Mission Statement

We come together as Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship open to experiencing transcendent mystery and wonder, honoring diversity and religious freedom. We come to pursue Unitarian Universalism's prophetic vision of peace, justice, compassion and sustainability and to create Beloved Community.

Open Circle Vision Statement

To be a transforming presence in the lives of individuals and the Fond du Lac community.

Contact Information

Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Committees and Chairs

19 E Third St
Fond du Lac WI 54935.
Phone: (920) 924-8598
Email: OCUUF@tds.net

Membership Coordinator: Madonna Bowman

Religious Education: Kris Evert

Service Planning: Sylvia Reed

Hospitality: Susanne Dennis

Building Maintenance: John McDowell

EcoFood Group: Jeanne McDowell

Men's Group: John McDowell

Green Sanctuary: John McDowell

Library Committee: Linda Moore

Décor Committee: Madonna Bowman

Diversity: Paisley Harris

Board Members:

Jeffrey G. Reed - President

jreed@marianuniversity.edu

Paisley Harris - Vice President

paisley.harris@uwc.edu

Tracy Gravelle - Secretary

Ruth Lane - Treasurer

Jerry Danner – Member-at-

Large

Next newsletter deadline:

Please send submissions for the January/February 2011 newsletter to Stephanie Evergreen via email at stephcevergreen@yahoo.com no later than December 20, 2010. Thanks in advance!