



News from the Big Sky Unitarian Universalist Fellowship – Helena, Montana
March 2009

The Free Spirit

UU Happenings This Month...

March 1st Service – Pot Luck Sunday

“Florence Nightingale” Led by Kellie McBride

Adult RE- March 4th, 7:00-9:00pm

UUs and Earth-centered Spiritual Practices

Meet at CSC Church, Contact Jan Ellen 459-0102

March 5th - Knitting for Peace, 7-9pm

Home of Ruth Luke, 301 S. Rodney, 461-7435

Adult RE- March 7th, 9:00am – 4:00pm

Buddhist Meditation Retreat, at 720 Hauser, home of Joyce Kronholm, call 457-8246

March 8th Service - Sunday

“Talking Quaker” Led by Georgia Lovelady & Jessica Bailey

Membership Class, 12:30-2:00pm, downstairs

Adult RE - March 11th 7-9pm

Earth-centered Spiritual Practices: Our Ancestors

Meet at CSC Church, Contact Jan Ellen 459-0102

March 15th Service - Sunday

“Thoughts on Competition and Peace: Maslow and Stargirl” Led by Pad McCracken

Membership Class, repeat, 12:30- 2:00pm, downstairs

Adult RE - March 18th, 7-9pm

Spring Equinox Celebration

Meet at CSC Church, Contact Jan Ellen 459-0102

March 19th - Knitting for Peace-January 15th, 7-9pm

Home of Ruth Luke, 301 S. Rodney

March 22th Service – Sunday

“Spring Cleaning” Led by Carolyn Laceky

bUUk ciUUb, March 26th, 7-9pm, place to be decided

Contact Georgia Lovelady 443-7204

March 29th Service – Justice Sunday

“International Declaration of Human Rights turns 60”

Led by Social Justice Committee

April 5th Service – Pot Luck Sunday

Welcoming Service for New Members

Busy Month of March - Many Adult RE Classes

From Magalie Belanger, President

Most Sundays I get in the car with my little family after service and I open a conversation with Ryan by: “I didn't know that...” followed by some life changing realization to lighter things like surprisingly good mix in ingredients for a pot luck dish. I love to think that every week when we all come together it is an opportunity to celebrate learning and growth. We are learning through each other's beliefs, experiences and shared thoughts. From our lay leaders, from our guest speakers, and from religious education volunteers; young and old we have the opportunity to gain knowledge, compassion and spiritual thoughts.

Continuous learning also seems important to the fellowship when we look at religious education being a top concern this year for Big Sky UU and this month we have amazing opportunities for adult RE: from the Earth-centered Spiritual Practice given by Jan Ellen Siemers and the full day Buddhist Meditation Retreat on March 7th to the Membership Classes offered by the Membership Care Committee. So be sure to check this newsletter for information on these learning opportunities and if you have an idea for a classes that you would like to give or to see in the future for children or for adults please contact Jeannette Uland –children, or Lynda Saul-adult, our wonderful RE chairs. Also, please contact the people offering these classes soon so they can be prepared with enough space, handouts, and supplies for each participant.

Earth-centered Spiritual Practices – March 4, 11, 18th

“We Belong in Nature's seasons”.

Now is the time for you to get back in touch with the “sacred” of this amazing planet and...let your kid out to play!



Meadow Lark Mask ~ Pheasant Mask



JE - On the Lake ice in February

This is a 3-session class, given by Jan Ellen Siemers, to be held from **7:00-9:00pm**, gather at the CSC Church. In the first session we will explore our topic from a UU, a history, and a heritage perspective. Second session will be mask making and discussion about our indigenous ancestors. Then we will prepare for and celebrate our own Spring Equinox during the final session, March 18th. (Option to attend just one class is available.) Call Jan Ellen at 459-0102 or email at JEhelena@copper.net

Big Sky UU

Board of Directors

Magalie Belanger – President
Jan Ellen Siemers – Vice President
Michele Webster – Treasure
Patrick Johnson – Secretary
Jeff P– At Large Member

Committees

Membership - Joyce Kronholm
Religious Ed. Child – Jeanette Uland
Religious Ed. Adult – Lynda Saul
Social Justice - Magalie Belanger
Welcoming - Rebecca Hargis
Worship - Bill Kronholm

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Newsletter

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More information at
www.bigskyuu.org



Times are Hard
**Please Remember
Food Share**

Buddhist Meditation Retreat – March 7

“Blending Practices of Prayer and Meditation: Creating a Reflective Life”

This class will be led by Bob Jahner. Those attending will work with small group classmates to develop a personal practice which blends the traditions of formal meditation and prayer. The goal is to leave you with a personal practice of meditation/prayer that can augment and support your unique spiritual journey.

The retreat will run from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the home of Joyce Kronholm, 720 Hauser Blvd. There will be a \$20 fee. We will potluck for lunch. Space is limited to 10, so please call Joyce at 457-8246, or email her at w.kronholm@bresnan.net.

Children’s Religious Education

By Jeanette Uland

I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to all those who help make our children’s religious education a rewarding experience. Foremost is Becky Warren for all her time that she has given the fellowship in keeping the program going and for encouraging others to step up and tackle something that they have not done before. Second is Mary Decker, who is invaluable to our program. She is here every Sunday to help in any way that she can, and the children really enjoy her presence. And finally thank you to the parents who have spent time downstairs. Dave Highness shared his knowledge of Chinese New Year, and Magalie has helped decorate Valentine’s Day cookies.



Since the beginning of the year, we have had a varied attendance with as few as three to as many as thirteen. Our average has been around five children. Their ages range from around four years to eight years. This all makes it very interesting for planning our RE classes.

Our topics have been somewhat as varied as our attendance. We started the year with discussing the changes that winter brings to our earth. We had a Sunday of “Who are we and what do we believe?” in which we learned a little more about our church. We have talked about symbols and the Flaming chalice.

Hopefully many of you have noticed the newly decorated Food Share box with all the lovely colored chalices on it. Dave Highness spent a Sunday making lanterns for Chinese New Year. Currently we are exploring our first principle by finding out how unique we are and learning about our differences. I hope to continue exploring our principles for the rest of the year, but I am always open to suggestions. For instance, Dave has volunteered another Sunday to discuss adoption and to celebrate Emmi’s Adoption Day! Thank you for the opportunity to serve the fellowship in this way and for allowing me to spend time with all the wonderful little minds that we have.

Volunteers Needed – Can You Help?

We need **one** volunteer to take our food donations to Helena Food Share, **and one** volunteer to keep track of books checked in and out of our UU library down-stairs. Contact Magalie at neomagalie@hotmail.com if you can help.

Path to Membership Class - March 8 and 15

Are you interested in learning how to become a member of our Big Sky Unitarian Universalist Fellowship? Have you recently “signed the book”? Can you use a “mini refresher” on how our fellowship works? Then you are invited to attend our Path to

Peace

Be glad, for Peace has carried me back safely to you, and humanity has restored what greed essayed to take from us. Be not sad, but smile my beloved...

"Do not be frightened, for I am now Truth, spared from swords and fire to reveal to the people the triumph of Love over War. I am Word uttering introduction to the play of happiness and peace."

At dawn the two stood in the middle of the field, contemplating the beauty of Nature injured by the tempest. After a deep and comforting silence, the soldier looked to the east and said to his sweetheart,

"Look at the Darkness giving birth to the Sun."

Excerpts from

A Treasury of Kahlil Gibran the Arabic Writings from the Author of The Prophet

Excerpt from **Wikipedia** on
Unitarian Universalist Association

The fellowship of Unitarian Universalism is often referred to by its members as a *living tradition*, thus the principles and purposes have been modified over time to reflect changes in spiritual beliefs among the membership. As with most actions in Unitarian Universalism, these were created in committee, and affirmed democratically by a vote of member congregations, proportional to their membership, taken at an annual General Assembly, a meeting of delegates from member congregations.

Membership class on March 8, to be repeated on March 15, directly after our worship service in the northwest corner downstairs. It will conclude in less than two hours. You will learn about the commitments to membership and the governance of our fellowship. Lunch and childcare are offered. Attending does not commit you to formal membership. But for those who decide to join, there will be a Membership Ceremony on Sunday, April 5.

Please RSVP to let us know if you will be attending and which Sunday you will attend, if you need childcare, and if you have food restrictions. Call Joyce Kronholm, 457-8246 or email (see above) This class is taught by the Membership Care Committee Cynthia Overturf, Georgia Lovelady, Kat Imhoff, Mary Jo Olson and Joyce.

Many, many thanks.....



Jacob and Zoe McBride

Kellie McBride (and family) who was Service Leader for February and then some; **Lynda Saul** for the wonderful message about Shalom and the opportunity to sing the Salaam verse; **Jeanette Uland** as new Children's RE who has taken on the job with real enthusiasm. It is a large undertaking so please offer to help when there are many kids. To service presenters **Becky Warren**, **Kellie McBride**, **Lynda Saul**, and Quest speaker **Jane Bucks**. Also to Coffee Hosts and Greeters.

Report on Introduction to Buddhism Class by Jan Ellen Siemers

There was a small committed group who followed Donna Davis on a journey to a restaurant to learn the basics of Buddhism. As Donna has taught at the college level it was a lively and interesting presentation. And, since eating food was an unanticipated part of the experience, included here is one item we learned: **Five Contemplations** - This food is a gift of the whole universe-the earth, the sky, and much hard work. - May we eat in mindfulness so as to be worthy to receive it. - May we transform our unskillful states of mind and learn to eat in moderation. - May we take only foods that nourish us and prevent illness. - We accept this food to realize the path of understanding and love.

General Assembly Salt Lake City – Let's Go! By Joyce Kronholm

We have an amazing opportunity available to us this June. On June 24-28, thousands of Unitarian Universalists will gather in Salt Lake City for our annual national meeting, just a day's drive from Helena. It will be years before we have another General Assembly this close.

We will have four days filled with workshops, worship, celebrations, music, rallies, and distinguished speakers and ministers. We'll elect a new UU national president, and our Helena delegates will take part in making overall policy for carrying out the business of our national organization. You'll meet fellow Unitarian Universalists from all over the nation and the world.

Registration and housing information is available beginning March 2 at www.uua.org. Go to this website and you can search General Assembly 2008 to get an idea of what General Assembly is all about.

We'll have more information coming to you, but in the meantime consider joining folks from Helena and other Montana fellowships in this life-affirming event.