



The Free Spirit

News from the Big Sky Unitarian Universalist Fellowship • Helena, Montana

January 2007



Donna Davis leading a service about poetry and UU poet Ted Koozer.

Annual Membership Meeting Sunday, January 7

Plan to join us on the first Sunday of the new year when we hold our annual membership meeting. No service will be conducted that morning, but we'll open with a chalice lighting and possibly a short reading. Who knows, we might even sing one hymn! But the purpose of the meeting will be to take care of important business and give our members a voice and a vote in the future of our growing fellowship.

There are several items to discuss, such as our recent move to the Church of Christ, Scientist and how it is working out. We'll also talk about the content and quality of our worship services, plans to expand the religious education we are offering, and our financial health and needs in the coming year.

The annual meeting is also where we launch our annual pledge drive and ask members to make their yearly pledge of support and sign the membership book. The suggested yearly pledge is 5-10% of a member's annual income, but we will gratefully accept pledges of any amount and they can be paid monthly, quarterly, or in one lump sum. Members receive UUA's magazine, *UU World* and help support the fellowship's needs as well as contribute toward our annual charitable giving to the Helena community (see list of 2006 recipients on page 3).

Friends who have yet to join the fellowship and have decided to become a member should let a board member know, and we will sign you up. Our formal New Member Welcoming service takes place in the spring on Palm Sunday.

We are honoring several of our members who have made extraordinary contributions to the fellowship, so please come out to help us celebrate the great work of these good friends.

Religious Education and childcare will be provided. And a potluck will follow the business meeting.

We look forward to seeing you on January 7!

Sunday Service Schedule for January 2007

January 7

Annual Membership Meeting
Members, guests, and children welcome!

First Sunday Potluck

January 14

Growing and Sustaining our Fellowship

Led by Patti Borneman and Joyce Kronholm

January 21

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Led by Jennifer Forker and Jim Clarke

January 28

An Introduction to Islam

by guest Barry Ferst, philosophy professor at Carroll College

ALL SERVICES TAKE PLACE AT 11:30 A.M. AT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, 1800 HIGHLAND (CORNER OF HIGHLAND & LAMBORN)

MOST OF THE SERMONS GIVEN BY OUR LAY LEADERS CAN BE READ ON OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.BIGSKYUU.ORG



A BIT O' UU HISTORY

Essayist, poet, and leader of the Transcendentalist movement **Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)** was the son of a Unitarian minister. He had a short stint (1829-32) as a Unitarian minister before embarking on other intellectual pursuits. PHOTO FROM WWW.UUA.ORG. MORE ABOUT EMERSON AT EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG.

The Free Spirit

BIG SKY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

January 2007

We unite in this fellowship to seek truth, deepen our awareness of religious values, strengthen one another in our free search, maintain the sanctity of the individual conscience bound by no dogmas or creed, and uphold freedom, community, and equal rights for all.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Clarke - Co-Chair
Joyce Kronholm - Co-Chair
Patti Borneman - Treasurer
Scout Ferrel
Jeanne Powell
Lynda Saul
Winston Swift

COMMITTEES

WELCOMING
Jeanne Powell (465-0954)

WORSHIP/SERVICE
Lynda Saul (461-2838)

WEBSITE/NEWSLETTER/E-MAIL LIST
Patti Borneman (442-0656)

MAILING ADDRESS

Big Sky Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
PO Box 816
Helena, MT 59624
PHONE: (406) 449-3096

SERVICES

First Church of Christ, Scientist
1800 Highland
Helena, MT 59601
11:30 am - Everyone Welcome!

Sign up to receive email updates and our newsletter: write to pattib@mt.net or call (406) 442-0656.

www.bigskyyuu.org

Helena Unitarian Society founded 1891

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE:
20TH OF EACH MONTH. SEND TO:
pattib@mt.net

SAVE THE DATE!

- **January 7, 2007** - Annual BSUUF Membership meeting (instead of a service, we'll meet in the lower level of the church). All members and friends welcome to attend. Potluck Sunday!
- **February 17-19, 2007** - President's Day Weekend at Yellowstone. Everyone welcome! Another MAUUA event that is mostly social. Details to follow.
- **June 21-25, 2007** - UUA General Assembly held in Portland, Oregon.
- **October 12-14, 2007** - Mountain Desert District annual meeting will take place in Billings (see article on back page).



Greeters & Potluck Helpers Schedule

This is where we post the schedule of Greeters and Potluck Helpers for upcoming Sundays. If you've signed up to help, your name is below. If you want to volunteer, please contact Jeanne Powell at 465-0954.

- **January 7:** Come to lower level for meeting and potluck. Potluck helpers: Ruth Luke and Cynthia Overturf
- **January 14:** Georgia Lovelady
- **January 21:** Patti Borneman
- **January 28:** TBA - call Jeanne if you want to volunteer.

What do greeters and potluck organizers do?

GREETING: Church foyer

- Put sandwich board on corner of Lamborn and Highland
- Put up nametag board in foyer (find near office downstairs)
- Lay out UU info, guest book
- Introduce yourself to guests
- Have guests sign in and ask them a couple of questions about their background, what brought them to the church, etc.
- Introduced guests during announcements
- Put materials away

POTLUCK: Lower level of church

- 1st Sunday of each month – 2 people needed as helpers
- Check supplies and buy what is needed (treasurer will reimburse)
- Make coffee (check coffee supply beforehand)
- Set up tables and be there when people bring their dishes
- Clean up (take cups home to be washed)

UUs help build new house for Gardner family

When Ken and Jodi Gardner and their four children lost their home to fire in early December, the outlook was bleak. They had no insurance; Ken had recently lost his job. But the community rallied behind them, staging a four-day house-raising to get members of the Gardner family under their own roof again before Christmas.

UU was part of the effort, which was staged Friday Dec. 15 through Monday Dec. 18. Bill Kronholm and Jim Clarke were part of the construction crew. Bill helped frame internal walls as the house took shape the first day ... from a bare concrete slab at 8 a.m., walls were going up by 10 a.m., and the roof was on by noon. By 2 p.m. of the first day, electricians were already wiring outlets and light fixtures inside.

On Saturday, Jim and perhaps 40 other volunteers insulated the generator shack, carried pine boards for the inside walls and ceilings and did finish carpentry. Jim helped hang three interior doors as well.

Other UU's also were involved. Carolyn Laceky helped set up the dining tent that fed the construction crews, and others donated money and furnishings to help the Gardners.



Knitting and Needlework for Peace & Justice

Big Sky UUs are kicking off the new year to knit (or crochet) blankets, scarves, hats, and anything else that will warm the hearts and souls of our friends and neighbors in need.

The group is open to all, regardless of knitting experience, and the first gathering takes place at the home of Jim Clarke and Jennifer Forker, Thursday, January 4 at 7 pm. Those who attend this first get together will decide on the regular meeting place and time.

If you want to devote a few hours a month to create cozy, handmade items for charitable gifts and all in the warm company of UU friends, call Jennifer at 442-6698.

Big Sky UUs give to Helena community

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, the following nonprofit organizations received an end-of-year donation this year. They are:

- Helena Food Share
- The Angel Fund
- Area IV Agency on Aging, Rocky Mountain Development Council
- Home Delivered Meals, Rocky Mountain Development Council
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters
- Montana Youth Homes
- Wakina Sky Multicultural Education Center
- Family Transitional Unit - God's Love
- Wisdom Family Fund
- Center for Mental Health
- Friendship Center

Letter-Writing Ministry

The Church of the Larger Fellowship, a cyber-space congregation providing Unitarian Universalism to isolated religious liberals, offers a spiritual lifeline to incarcerated UUs.

Almost 300 prisoners across the U.S. have joined the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship, with more every month. With no access to the Web or UU Sunday services, prisoners' only way of learning more about UUism is through written publications, and letters exchanged with CLF staff and other UUs.

Sadly, dozens of CLF prisoner-members have been waiting many months to be matched with a UU penpal through the CLF's Letter Writing Ministry. Members of any UU congregation who might like to write to a CLF prisoner-member are invited to visit the CLF Web site at www.clfuu.org; click on "Prison Ministry." Penpals from the same congregation can form an informal study/support group together.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

Welcome Jim Clarke, Scout Ferrel and Joyce Kronholm to the Board of Directors!

THANKS TO FORMER BOARD MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS

Our gratitude and appreciation goes out to Cynthia Overturf (out-going co-chair), Joe Goldes (out-going co-chair) and Laura Behenna (out-going secretary, RE committee chair, and board member). We also want to thank Ellie Warren for providing wonderful religious education for the children of members and guests. And thanks to all our lay leaders who make our Sunday services wonderfully diverse, personal, inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and fun.



BIG SKY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

PO Box 816
Helena, MT 59624



The 7 Principles of Unitarian-Universalism

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

Corps of Discovery: Exploring Life Stories



Mountain Desert District Unitarian Universalist
2007 Annual Conference, Billings, Montana

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MDD CONFERENCE Billings, Montana - October 12-14, 2007

Mark your calendars now and make plans to join in the fun and fellowship as Billings, Montana welcomes Unitarian Universalists from eight states for the Annual Mountain Desert District Conference and Delegate Assembly to be held October 12-14, 2007.

You'll make new friends, share wonderful meals together, experience educational workshops, enjoy dynamic speakers such as our keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker. In addition you can participate in choir opportunities, and moving worship services, all while surrounded by Rimrocks that rise 400 feet above the Yellowstone River Valley. Perhaps you will even follow in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark and Calamity Jane as you explore this part of the "Wild West" for the very first time!

Register by May 31st to receive the special "Early Bird" rate.

This year's Conference will take place at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana, located near Riverfront Park and the Yellowstone River. This beautiful hotel offers a complimentary shuttle to/from the airport and to the historic downtown Billings area. Amenities include free in-room high-speed computer access, an indoor pool with waterfall, a fitness center, sauna and spa.

A block of rooms will be held until September 15 at a special conference rate.

For more information and registration forms, when available, please visit the MDD Conference 2007 website: <http://mddconf2007.googlepages.com>.