



The Free Spirit

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

March 2007

UUA Makes a Declaration of Peace

Last year's Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly passed a resolution to endorse the Declaration of Peace Campaign. This is a nationwide, interfaith, non-violent campaign launched in May 2006, and has been endorsed by over 30 religious and secular organizations.



Dr. William Sinkford, President of UUA, said, "Before this war began I spoke out ... to question its wisdom. After we became mired in war, however, it was less clear to me what it meant to stand on the side of love... It is now clear to me that the time has come for a scheduled withdrawal from Iraq."

This campaign endorses:

- Closing all U.S. bases in Iraq;
- Supporting an Iraqi-led peace process;
- Ending U.S. control of the political and economic life of Iraq, including Iraq oil;
- Making reparations and supporting reconstruction of this war-torn country;
- Increasing support of veterans; and
- Prohibiting so-called "preemptive" war against other nations.

If you are interested in this issue, contact Social Justice Committee chair Jennifer Forker at 442-6698.

Our Flaming Chalice

There is a rich constellation of meaning in the simple beauty of the flaming Unitarian Universalist chalice. The light of the flame stands for truth and reason. The warmth of the flame represents the warmth of compassion and human community. The flame is fed by the holy oil of healing and helpfulness. The chalice circle represents the common cup of community in which all worshippers are of equal worth. The circular chalice signifies the outstretched, cupped hands of service to humanity. The empty space in the bowl of the chalice means a non-creedal faith into which each of us must create the essence of our own values. Our chalice is the torch that we pass to oncoming generations.

Adapted from a sermon by Rev. Richard S. Gilbert



Come to a Circle of 8 Dinner
Saturday, March 17 - 6 p.m.

Get Acquainted with Fellow UUs, Laugh, and
Enjoy While Sharing a Meal Together

Sign Up by Calling or E-mailing:

Joyce Kronholm (457-8246 - w.kronholm@bresnan.net)

or Jeanne Powell (465-0954 - elliottbj@msn.com)

We have four hosts who have volunteered to provide the entrée and drinks at their homes. Those attending will be called by the host and asked to bring a side dish or dessert. We gladly accommodate the non-meat eaters among us.

See you at dinner!

Sunday Service Schedule for March 2007

MARCH 4: **That Sort of Kindness**, led by Cynthia Overturf
First Sunday Potluck and Equal Exchange Coffee Sale.

MARCH 11: **Eating Ethically: A Seventh Principle Approach to Food**, led by Jeanne Powell and Margaret Corcoran.

MARCH 18: **A Time of Renewal**, led by Scout Ferrel.

MARCH 25: **How Humanists Look at Ethics**, led by Ellie Furbush and Jean Weeks.

Our fellowship is a member of the Church of the Larger Fellowship. If you want to access member-only resources on their Web site, let us know.



The Free Spirit

BIG SKY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

March 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
Jeanne Powell, Secretary
Patti Borneman - Treasurer
Nick Hopkins
Lynda Saul
Winston Swift

COMMITTEES

WELCOMING & MEMBERSHIP
Jeanne Powell (465-0954)

WORSHIP/SERVICE
Lynda Saul (461-2838)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Becky Warren (449-6908)

COMMUNITY SERVICE & SOCIAL JUSTICE
Jennifer Forker (442-6698)

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



"God is Everywhere" This mosaic in the courtyard of the First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon, was designed and constructed by the children of the church school in 1960. It is 20 feet long, 6 feet high and made of native materials and smalti tile. Photograph by Ned Hayes.

A postcard from the heart... Jocelyn Furbush, a child of the Big Sky UU Fellowship

Dear Big Sky UU Fellowship:

At church today I was thinking about the differences and similarities between this place of over 1,000 members and my home fellowship. Here, of course, you can't all go around and share your joys and concerns, but a few are read and held in prayer from the pulpit, along with acknowledgement of those unspoken in our hearts.

When I arrive early enough, I light a candle in the gallery with my joys and concerns. Instead of Shalom at the end, we sing Spirit of Life each week as a "doxology." The music and programming of a large church are incredible, of course, but I often miss the intimate connections of what I grew up with. I hope to visit a service before too long! Thank you for helping to set me on a path of searching for meaning, acting for justice, and listening for "that still, small voice inside." Go in love and go in peace!

- Jocelyn

P.S.: You may know GA will be in Portland this year -- I'd love to host a Montanan or two, especially a youth. My first GA at 14 was a key moment.

Jocelyn Furbush is a member of the First Unitarian Church of Portland and granddaughter of Ellie Furbush, a longtime member of BSUUF. The illustration above is from the postcard that Jocelyn sent to Ellie, addressed to Big Sky UU Fellowship.

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.

Religious Education gets a book boost! And other news ...

The new curricula from the UUA Bookstore have arrived! Our fellowship now owns an array of materials, which will provide lesson plans for each age group. Becky Warren, who is chair of the Religious Education Committee, is bringing the books to the Feb. 25 service and to the March 4 service and potluck for you to see.

They include:

- *A Stepping Stone Year*, for 8-10 year olds. Sections on myths, science, birth, death, and decision-making
- *Timeless Themes*, stories from the Hebrew and Christian Bibles for 8-10 year olds. (and those of us who haven't studied the Bible for forty years)
- *Crossing the Bridge from Youth to Adulthood*, a guide for designing and implementing bridging ceremonies for young adults
- *Around the Church, Around the Year*, season-based sessions relating to UU practices, for K- 2nd grade
- *Religion and Life*, a reading and discussion guide for young adult women
- *My Seven Principles* Poster

As many of you may know, Jennifer Forker has also brought us *Chalice Children*, a series of lessons for preschoolers, and Laura Behenna left behind *In Our Hands*, another curriculum for K-2nd.

We also have a series of simple and usable weekly dated lessons from the Church of the Larger Fellowship. These are the lessons that Ellie Warren has been using for the last few Sundays.

The religious education committee discussed a number of issues at its Feb. 6 meeting related to how to serve our growing numbers of children and their parents.

Knitting for Peace - March 7 and 21 First & Third Wednesdays, 7 - 9 p.m.

We're knitting for a cause! Or rather, many causes . . . We have an ongoing project to create a blanket of knitted rectangles, but a new project just came our way. In March and April, some of us will begin knitting pink scarves to benefit the Breast & Cervical Health Program of the Lewis and Clark County Health Department. Pink scarves, mittens, gloves, and shawls will be given away as raffle prizes at two outreach events.



We meet the first and third Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. at Lynda Saul's home. If you'd like to spend a few hours a month knitting for a cause, call Lynda at 461-2838.

One issue was the question of backup care, when there are too many kids in attendance for Ellie to handle. The committee decided that when the number of kids exceeds five, one of the RE committee members would help out downstairs that morning.

The committee also agreed that "under three" would be a good age cutoff for advance notice on childcare. In other words, we will ask that those attending with a child under age three notify Becky or another RE committee member in advance, so childcare can be arranged. The request will be added to the website.

Still in discussion:

- Outdoor activities for kids in the summer -- campfires, potlucks, and short hikes.
- Enhancing the Helena kids' involvement in the Camp Child Retreat in September.
- A possible cooperative agreement with the growing RE program at Plymouth Congregational Church.

As always, we welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Committee members, in addition to Becky Warren, are Magalie Belanger, Ryan Grandy, Nisan Burbridge, Pad McCracken, Lowell Luke, and Jennifer Forker.



Hymn Singing with Banjos Before Church!

Do you enjoy singing, even if you don't think you're very good at it? Would you like to help the rest of us feel more confident when we sing hymns on Sundays? Then join us on Sundays a little after 11 a.m. to practice the songs planned for that day's service. Winston Swift and some jolly banjo players will provide joyous accompaniment!



Do you drink coffee and tea? Love chocolate? Join our UU Coffee/Tea/Chocolate Club!

Coffee, tea or chocolate from Equal Exchange is available for purchase at every First Sunday Potluck! Let Patti Borne-man know if you want to make a special order. You'll benefit the fellowship, your community, and in a small way, the global coffee trade and sustainable coffee farmers. Our UU principles at work!



Big Sky Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

A LAY-LED WELCOMING FELLOWSHIP IN HELENA, MONTANA
PO BOX 816
HELENA, MT 59624

SAVE THE DATE!

- March 7 and 21 - Knitting for Peace and Women's Health!
- March 17 - Circles of 8 Dinners. Sign up today to attend a dinner!
- March 20 / April 17 - BSUUF Board Meetings - 6:30 to 8:30 pm (lower level of church).
- May 4-6 - MDD Growth Workshop, Billings, Montana
- May 19 - Circles of 8 Dinners. Sign up today!
- May 27 - Last BSUUF service before summer break.
- April 7 - BSUUF Board Retreat (tentative)
- June 20-24 - UUA General Assembly in Portland, OR.
- September 9 - First BSUUF service after summer break.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MDD CONFERENCE

Billings, Montana - October 12-14, 2007

Corps of Discovery: Exploring Life Stories



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

Visit <http://mddconf2007.googlepages.com/> for more info.



General Assembly 2007 in Portland Registration begins March 1

The annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association (June 20-24) will feature the following speakers:

- **The Pentagon Papers Then and Now: UUs Confronting Government Secrecy:** Speakers: Daniel Ellsberg, William Sinkford, former Senator Mike Gravel, and former UUA President Robert West. Amy Goodman (Host of Democracy Now), moderator.
- **First Freedom First:** Speakers: Welton Gaddy, Barry Lynn, Donna Red Wing, Beth Corbin for The Interfaith Alliance Foundation and Americans United for Separation of Church and State.
- **Too Much Like Right: Ben Cohen's Peace Priorities**
- **A Conversation About Race and Class: Who Is Worthy of Our Efforts?** William E. Cross, Jr.
- **Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith:** Noted spiritual writer Kathleen Norris will share her ideas with us.

Registration opens March 1. The cost for the five-day event is \$280 and goes down depending on the days and activities. BSUUF may be able to apply for a reduced registration fee. Let us know if you want to attend and could use some financial assistance with expenses.

Details are on the UUA Web site (www.uua.org). See Patti Borneman for more information about this Portland, Oregon, event.