

STEVENS POINT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

JANUARY 2006

Unless indicated otherwise all services and religious school begin at 11:00 am on Sundays at The Springs, 2820 Plover Springs Dr, Plover, WI 54467.

PRESIDENTIAL NOTES

*Julia Weiser.....

It has been great to see the new faces and the children attending our services. I hope that the move to The Springs will encourage even more visitors to our Fellowship. I understand we have had a couple of inquiries about becoming members; that is really good news. I am looking forward to the programs that are planned for the next months. I think they will be thought provoking and inspiring.

The weekly Wausau newspaper The City Pages in the December 15-21 edition titled "The Church Search" explores why people choose to attend and join specific churches. The question is what plays into people's decision to join a church? At this time of year attendance is usually greater than at others. The article says "Finding a new religion, the church search, pew hopping – it's a common phenomenon in a mobile society. A large part of the population is nowhere near the church in which they were raised, both physically and often philosophically. And there's also the contingent who haven't set foot in church for a decade or more (ever) and then have children." It goes on to say that the church search is not always a question of denomination. Rabbi Dan Danson says the theology is not always the crucial issue if there are others things going for the congregation. He observes that "People have an amazing ability to filter out theological messages they don't like in a congregation they do like."

Each person has a different set of needs; sometimes it is proximity to the church, the pastor, relationships with other attendees, discussion groups, day care centers, modern liturgy and music, social justice work, and even one that is popular and growing. Paul Beckel, the minister of the UU church in Wausau is quoted as saying that choosing a church for some can be compared to choosing a house where one has a lot of wants and has to make trade offs. Some people look for churches to feel welcome and hear messages authentic to their beliefs. Some like large congregations, others like small more intimate ones.

What do these observations have to do with our Fellowship? I think that we need to be more interested in the people who walk in to our services. Besides welcoming them we could ask them why they chose to attend and what they may be seeking.

On the CD titled "Lay Leader, Drive Time Essays" prepared by the UUA one of the short talks reports that we do not need to recruit from the outside. Instead we need to follow up on those who visit us in the course of a year. In our case, that could mean more visitors than we have members. We need to attract newcomers, not repel them.

This issue of the City Pages also has an ad promoting the UU Church in Wausau and our Fellowship. Part of the text reads "Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennoble our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision." I think this applies to our visitors from whom we can learn as well as from our members.

I will keep a copy of this paper and bring it to the service on Sunday, January 8.

COVENANT AGREEMENT

Please remember to review the draft covenant agreement that was mailed out to all members and return your suggestions for changes to Julia or Carol by January 15th. We want to have an edited version of a covenant ready for a Fellowship vote by February. Contact either Julia or Carol if you have any questions about this process, the covenant or any other issues regarding the covenant workshop.

BOARD MEETING

Mark your calendars! The next SPUUF board meeting is Sunday, January 15th at 9:30am. at The Springs. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please send Julia or Carol any agenda items for the meeting. The agenda will be sent out prior to the meeting.

SPUUF SERVICES SCHEDULE

Program topics for the weekly services for the Fellowship are filling up quickly. Thanks so much to the Program Committee and everyone involved in the scheduling and leading of services. Included in this newsletter is the confirmed schedule of services for the remainder of the year as of December 30th. Services are arranged by a first come first serve basis. Please contact the appropriate Program Coordinator if you would like to give a program for a service or have questions on a particular service. Program coordinators for the remainder of the year are:

January – Carol Weston
February – Jane Shoup
March – Open
April – Clara Cleve
May – Larry Weiser

SPUUF WEBSITE

Zach Shelton and Carol Weston have expanded and updated the SPUUF website. Newsletters, information on the RE program, a listing of the Board and Committee chairs, membership information and information on our new location has been added. You can review the “new and improved” site at: <http://spuuf.org/>

THANKS TO.....

- Mary Arnold for coordinating the Holiday Basket project. Details will be available in the next newsletter.
- All who donated to the Holiday Basket funds to purchase gifts, clothing, and food for the family the Fellowship was helping.
- Carol Weston for all her work on the covenanting session and for coordinating the winter holiday celebration. She went in ahead of time on both days to set up the room and make it festive.
- Arlene Heig for her presentation in November.
- All who have helped with the move to The Springs and the transition to the new facility.
- All of you who participated in the Covenanting Session. What a turnout!
- Jane Shoup for coordinating the Program Committee and getting so many presentations scheduled in the coming months.
- Dorothy Ginnett for her dedication to terrific RE programs for the children every week.

CALLING ALL MUSICIANS

Music Sunday will be February 26. All of you, young and old, who play instruments and sing are invited to participate. You do not have to be a professional, there is no judging, and memorization is not required. To volunteer to play that Sunday, please contact Julia Weiser who is coordinating the service this year. It would be really fun if we could find an ensemble piece to play, so if you have any suggestions, call Julia!

NEWS FROM THE UUA AND CMWD

- Sunday, Jan 27-29, 2006; **Winter Woman Spirit** ”[Lifechanges – Our Transforming Power](#)”; Keynote speaker Selena Fox. More information on this workshop on Women & Religion can be found at: www.womenandreligion.org/WS2006.htm
- Thursday, Feb 16-18, 2006 ; **Meadville Lombard Winter Institute**, “[Bringing It Home! New Family Rituals for our Living Tradition](#)” Featured Presenters Meg Cox, Rev Phillip Lund and Julie Tallard Johnson. More information is available at: www.cmwd-uua.org/pdfs/1205-Winter-Institute-2006.pdf
- Friday, Mar 10th, 5:30pm – Sat, Mar 11, 5:00 pm; **CMwD Religious Education Committee** Presents: “[Religious Education & Lifelong Learning Workshop](#)”,. First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. More information is available at: www.cmwd-uua.org/pdfs/1205-306REALLRegistrationFlyer.pdf

- Friday, Apr 21 thru Sunday, Apr 23; **District Assembly 2006**, The Madison Concourse Hotel, Keynote Speaker: Rabbi Michael Lerner; Rabbi Lerner founded the Tikkun Community, an international interfaith organization dedicated to peace, justice, non-violence, generosity, caring, love and compassion, which he chairs with Cornel West. Rabbi Lerner has been the editor of TIKKUN Magazine since 1986. TIKKUN was created as "the voice of Jewish liberals and progressives" and has become an influential publication in political and progressive circles. More information on the District Assembly can be found at: www.cmwd-uua.org/index.html
- A new independent grassroots affiliate of the UUA called, Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community, has been formed. Its mission is to engage, educate, and activate Unitarian Universalists to work for economic justice, recognizing that as people of faith in the struggle for justice, we are supporting and renewing our spiritual lives. The primary foci this year (2005-2006) are: a program to stop "Big Box Retail" Stores from destroying the economic fabric of our communities and another to address the national issue of "Corporate Personhood" (and power) and its impact on all aspects of our society and our global economy and environment. You are likely aware of our co-sponsorship of national showing of the movie: "Wal-Mart: the High Cost of Low Price". Additional information on the UUs for a Just Economic Community can be found at: <http://uujec.org/>

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES	
<p>Program Coordinator – Carol Weston Jan. 8 - Rev Robert Hardies "Born Again & Again & Again" Jan. 15 – Julia Weiser "The Other U in UU: Universalism" Jan. 22 – James Sage "Science and Religion" Jan. 29 – Rev Bill Beaton "Welcome to the Springs"</p> <p>Program Coordinator – Jane Shoup Feb. 5 – Paul Mertz "Civil Rights" Feb. 12 – Jane Shoup "Happy Birthday, Chuck (Darwin)!" Feb. 19 - Open Feb. 26 – Intergenerational Music Sunday</p>	<p>Program Coordinator - Open Mar. 5 – Pat Hoehn "Islam" Mar. 12 – Jane Jones "Forgiveness" Mar. 19 – Open Mar. 26 – Open</p> <p>Program Coordinator – Clara Cleve Apr. 2 – Open Apr. 9 – Rev Don Wheat "TBA" Apr. 16 – Rev Paul Beckel "TBA" Apr. 23 – Intergenerational Earth Day Apr. 30 – Open</p> <p>Program Coordinator – Larry Weiser May 7 – Open May 14 – Annual Meeting? May 21 – Open</p>

STEVENS POINT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

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