



REACH

Our reach should exceed our grasp.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield

A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

February 2012

Services are held at Fellowship Hall, corner of West 2nd & Linden Streets in Northfield. Babysitting and children's religious education are provided.

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February Services

Sunday February 5 • 10 a.m. • Humor Sunday • Marcia Jacobs •

Come join in the laughter to shake off those winter blues! A popular tradition at UUFN, Humor Sunday answers questions like how many UUs does it take to light a chalice? and other deep mysteries. Laughter is good for the soul and good for our health, so if you've heard a good joke lately, bring it along - the more the merrier!

Saturday February 11 • 7 p.m. • "Marriage Equality from the Heart" •

Interfaith Forum • This year's Standing on the Side of Love Rainbow Event will be held at the United Church of Christ Congregational Church. UUFN in collaboration with other congregations in Northfield has organized a public forum to address the upcoming vote on the marriage amendment. A reception will immediately follow the event.

Sunday February 12 • 10 a.m. • "What's Love Got to Do with It?" •

Rev. Kristin Maier • Our minister will speak on the theme of marriage equality, the perils of speaking with one voice on the matter, and the danger of saying nothing.

Sunday February 19 • 10 a.m. • "Unitarians Visit the West Bank" •

Pam McInnes • Pam McInnes, a UU from St. Paul, spent time in Palestine last summer with Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East. She will describe her experience, and will also explain the UUA's participation in "Churches for Middle East Peace." Join us for a taste of the culture, music and food of the Arab world.

Sunday February 26 • 10 a.m. • "To Know and Name the Holy" •

Rev. Kristin Maier • How do we experience what we know as most holy about this life? When do we feel most in touch with the sacredness of this Universe? Does it matter how we name those experiences? Is it a presence? Is it a process? Is it God?



Still Standing on the Side of Love

by Kristin Maier

Several times a year, the Unitarian Universalist ministers in Minnesota come together for an afternoon of worship, mutual support, and to hear a presentation about something that may help us be better ministers. Last month, the group invited Javen Swanson, from Outfront Minnesota and Ralph Wyman from MUUSJA (Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justices Alliance) to talk about how our congregations might engage the upcoming anti-equality marriage amendment. The meeting was informative and especially enjoyable because I got to brag about you.



In the presentation we were told that such amendments had passed in every other state where they were attempted. Not encouraging news. However, we were also told that part of what was different about Minnesota's campaign against the amendment is that people of faith are being invited into the discussion right from the beginning and have an especially important role to play. Then the group began discussing things congregations might start doing.

And this is where I got to brag. Okay, I didn't brag exactly, but I did get to tell the ministers and the guest speakers about how the congregation I have the pleasure of serving is working hard to live out their values when it comes to marriage equality.

It brought me great joy to share that UUFN has taken a leadership role in our community around the inclusion of LGBT persons with our Annual Rainbow Dinner and Speaker. And this year, the congregation took that effort a step farther by reaching out to other faith communities.

When the organizers of our Annual Rainbow Dinner/Standing on the Side of Love event first talked about collaborating with other congregations

in the community, no one knew what the response would be. To our surprise and pleasure, many Northfield clergy and congregations from a wide range of religious traditions were excited about supporting what has now become a Rainbow Community Celebration.

Reaching out to other faith communities to expand a program that was already going well held some risk. The organizers knew UUFN would have to give up a degree of control over "our" event in order to make it a truly "community" event. The pay-off however, is in the greater good that is created by mobilizing a larger and louder voice for equality that only a broad coalition of different faiths could yield. A positive side effect, perhaps, is that we will get to see how many others stand with us on the side of love. If the human tendency is to think in "us/them" terms, our "us" just got bigger.

And yes, our little congregation laid the groundwork for this event over the past four years now. Our little congregation dreamt big and reached out to ask others to speak out against hatred. And yes, I did brag about you, shamelessly, though I made it clear I was bragging about you, not me. This was an effort that was started before I came on board. It is organized and executed by lay leadership. And, our survey last year indicated that it was the single event that the vast majority of members supported and wanted to participate in. It has truly been a congregational effort.

When I think of UUFN, I think of a small congregation making a big difference. I also think of Margaret Mead, who said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has." Regardless of the outcome of the referendum, I know the world is better place because of your work, UUFN. Thank you.

4th Annual*

**Rainbow Community Celebration
and Interfaith Forum:
Marriage Equality from the Heart**

Saturday, February 11, 2012, 7pm

**First United Church of Christ
300 Union Street, Northfield**

Interfaith Panel featuring

**Javen Swanson, M.Div.,
Faith Organizer, OutFront, future ELCA pastor**

6:30pm: Doors open for seating

7:00pm: Interfaith Forum begins

Gala reception to follow

Adults \$10, Students \$5

**Tickets available at local churches, colleges, community organizations, and
Monkey See, Monkey Read Bookstore, 425 Division Street**

The evening's proceeds to benefit:

Minnesotans United for All Families

**Visit www.uunorthfield.org
for more information and a brief history**

*Started in 2009 by the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Northfield

Special Meeting Called for Sunday, February 12

As many of you know, in November Minnesotans will vote to approve or reject a Constitutional Amendment that would define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. In effect, this would mean that same-sex couples would be constitutionally banned from marrying in the State of Minnesota.



Late last year, the UUFN Board was asked by a member to support a statement titled “Resolution Against the Constitutional Amendment to Ban Marriage for Same-Sex Couples.” MUUSJA (Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance) which has been a leading advocate for LGBT rights for many years requested that we join this effort being spearheaded by OutFront Minnesota.

According to our policies, approval by the congregation as a whole for such a resolution requires a vote at a Special Meeting. Please read the Resolution that appears in this issue of Reach and come to the Special Meeting on February 12 following the service. The only issue on the Agenda will be for the congregation to discuss and then approve or disapprove the Resolution.

This issue relates deeply to our efforts last year to become a Welcoming Congregation, a vote that passed unanimously at the last annual meeting. The issue of marriage equality has also been a focus of work within the Unitarian Universalist Association at regional and national levels and through General Assembly resolutions.

Please plan to attend the Special Meeting to expression your opinion, listen to the opinion of others, and then vote. For the Resolution to be signed by the Board, this Resolution must receive a minimum support of two-thirds of the Members

attending. Of course, individual members are free to speak for themselves on this issue, including signing any resolutions as individuals, regardless of the outcome of this Special Meeting.

Additionally, everyone is invited to the 4th Annual Rainbow Community Celebration on February 11th at 7pm at the 1st United Church of Christ at 300 Union Street. In previous years, we have organized and staffed the event ourselves... quite successfully, with 60-70 people in attendance on each occasion. In an effort to expand our reach and make more people aware of our commitment to Stand on the Side of Love, UUFN Rainbow planners have worked closely with several other churches in town to create an interfaith event that we hope will draw 200 or more people.

The theme for the evening will be: **Marriage Equality from the Heart**. Rather than a single presenter, there will be an interfaith panel and an ordained gay Lutheran minister from OutFront Minnesota. Taking place the day before UUFN’s Special Meeting, it will be an excellent opportunity to become more informed about this issue. Tickets are \$10 (\$5 for students) and are available at UUFN. We hope everyone will be able to attend this important interfaith event.

We look forward to seeing you at the Special Meeting on the 12th.

On behalf of the Board,

Bob Ciernia, President



RESOLUTION AGAINST THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
TO BAN MARRIAGE FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

Date _____

Mail or fax to the contact information below

Resolution - Congregation

We oppose any amendment to the Minnesota Constitution that prohibits marriage for same-sex couples. OutFront Minnesota and Minnesotans United for All Families may use my name in opposition to any constitutional amendment barring the legal recognition of same-sex couples.

Name of Congregation: _____

Signature of Authorized Representative: _____

Printed Name of Authorized Representative: _____

Title of the Representative: _____

Address of Congregation: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

How many people are members of your congregation? _____

This document serves as verification that the above congregation has authorized the public use of its name in conjunction with campaign materials, publications, voter pamphlet statements, display ads and/or letterhead to defeat a constitutional amendment to bar marriage for same-sex couples.

Please mail, fax, or scan and email a copy of this resolution to OutFront Minnesota. If you have any questions, or need any assistance, please contact Javen Swanson at jswanson@outfront.org or 612.822.0127x7660 / 800.800.0350x7660.



310 East 38th Street East, Suite 204, Minneapolis MN 55409-1337
612-822-0127 • 800-800-0350 • Fax 612-822-8786 • outfront.org

RE in February

by Nancy Huppert

Sunday, February 5

K-4 The Big Orange Splot

Teacher: Nancy Huppert
Nursery: Olivia & Claire Paulsen

When Mr. Plumbeans' house is splashed with bright orange paint, he decides a multi-colored house would be a nice change.

This story celebrates creativity and individuality and will inspire us as we begin to prepare a musical selection for the upcoming Music Sunday service.

Youth Group: Attend Service - Humor Sunday



The festival is fun for all until the year Irving and Muktuk, muffin stealers of the worst kind, show up to crash the party. How will Officer Bunny save the Muffin Festival? What will *we* do if Irving and Muktuk come to the UUFN next week for our Muffin Fundraiser?

Youth Group: Attend Service

Sunday, February 26

Activity Sunday: Muffin Fundraiser

Chaperones: TBD

Nursery: Ben & Theo Lucas

Sunday, February 12

K-4 Maria's Comet

Teacher: Lois Burnes
Nursery: Ben & Theo Lucas

This book imagines the childhood of Unitarian Maria Mitchell, who was America's first woman astronomer and professor of astronomy at Vassar. We share this book to celebrate the value of curiosity and science in Unitarian Universalism.

Youth Group: Heresy Apparent: The Heresy of Reason

Teacher: Suzannah Ciernia

This session introduces youth to the influx of other religious thought and philosophies into Unitarianism and Universalism in the early 20th century. The session also explores the beliefs of famous recent Unitarians and Universalists.

Sunday, February 19

K-4 Irving & Muktuk: Two Bad Bears

Teacher: Nancy Huppert
Nursery: Nick & Will Marfleet

Every year the little town of Yellowtooth celebrates the New Year with a Blueberry Muffin Festival.

Bill and Janet Visit New Orleans

by Bill McGrath

Water was four feet deep inside the First Unitarian



Universalist Church of New Orleans in 2005, when Hurricane Katrina flooded roughly two-thirds of the city. When Janet and I visited the church in 2008, the sanctuary looked like this.

The old wooden pews and wainscoting had been ruined and removed. Everything felt temporary and tentative. But money was raised from within the 179-year-old congregation, as well as from national sources.

On our visit in January, 2012, it was inspiring to see that this church now looks like this:



A stained-glass window has been installed, and the walls have been painted. Most striking is the labyrinth floor. It was made from donated ceramic tiles, which were then cut and placed into the floor, primarily by the women of the congregation.

A large commercial kitchen is being added to the rear of the building, at a cost of \$800,000. The food will be delivered to AIDS victims and other New Orleans residents who are in need. More information is at www.firstuuno.org.

Coffee Hour

Below is the list of those who have volunteered to set up, bring treats, and clean up for Social Hour. Thank you all! We are trying to simplify for the hosts this year so are asking that you provide just one sweet and one savory treat.

Feel free to exchange with someone else if another date works better for you and please let Bev Topp know about the changes at bevorleetopp@frontiernet.net or 612-702-6127

Thanks to everyone!

Sunday Social Hour Hosts

Feb 5 – Marilyn Prevost
& Burt Fleming

Feb 12 – Bev & Lee
Topp

Feb 19 – Bill & Janet
McGrath

Feb 26 – Bob &
Suzannah Ciernia



Greeter List

Greeters are asked to serve for a month of Sundays. In the event there is a Sunday in your month that doesn't work, please just contact Bill McGrath at billmcgrath52@gmail.com (or 645-7660) and we will find a fill-in for you.

FEBRUARY - David & Vicki Miller

MARCH - Marcia Jacobs & Klaus Huehn

APRIL - Mera Colling & Paula Case

MAY - Marilyn Prevost & either Mike or Megan Jones

TRANSCENDENTAL
CLUB
THURSDAYS
FEBRUARY 9TH & 16TH
7:00 P.M.

DON'T FORGET OUR FUTURE FUND!

The UUFN Future Fund is set up for larger goals such as a building fund or other larger expenditures (example: a piano). It grows by having un-used budget money at the end of each year that can be moved to this larger purpose fund, but it also grows from tax deductible gifts received and dedicated specifically to the Future Fund.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT FOR 2012

UUFN has received memorials to the Future Fund and we would like to encourage you to think about it when you are giving memorials for the deceased, for anniversaries and for birthdays. A gift can be given in memory of those whose loved ones have asked for memorials of your choice and can also be given in honor of special life celebrations.

In the last year we have received more memorials for this account than we ever have previously. Please consider this very special way to affirm your support for our fellowship's future.

Adult RE Film/Discussion Group Now in Full Swing

by Suzannah Ciernia

If you've ever been in the downstairs Fellowship Hall after a Sunday morning service, you may have noticed a common Unitarian Universalist trait in action – we love to talk! Whether it's about ideas, events, articles, or recent discoveries, it seems that 4th Principle 'A free and responsible search for truth and meaning' really is important to many of us.

In light of this fondness for discussion, there will be a series of four screenings - 2 lectures and 2 films - with follow-up discussion, **on alternate Friday evenings** beginning January 6.

To meet screening guidelines, these viewings may not be scheduled in a public place, so the setting will be an informal one at Bob and Suzannah Ciernia's home. The idea is to have a light supper of 'bring your own' frozen or take-out pizza and beverage of choice from 5:30-6:30pm, then head to the deluxe screening room in the basement where the evening's coordinator will provide an introduction and lead the follow-up discussion.

Dates and Topics in February

Friday, February 3 5:30 pm: BYO pizza & beverage

6:30 pm Screening of 2 lectures "Jesus the Apocalyptic Prophet" coordinated by Jay Lindfors.

Two selected DVD lectures by Bart D. Ehrman. Professor Ehrman is probably well-known for his New York Times best-selling book *Misquoting Jesus*. It appears that Jesus proclaimed an apocalyptic message, that God would soon intervene in the course of history to overthrow the forces of evil and establish his kingdom on earth.

You will get more out of this class if you first read the book of Matthew, searching and making note of verses including the expressions *kingdom of heaven*, *Son of man*, *taste of death*, *the day nor the hour*, and *coming in the clouds of heaven*. Try to note when this apocalypse will happen. If you are feeling ambitious, you could read all four gospels, or even the whole New Testament (only 209 pages in my Bible). Read also my *Reach* article *Jesus is Coming*

Soon, which you should receive via email. If you don't have email, ask Jay for a print copy.

Friday, February 17, 5:30 pm: BYO pizza & beverage

6:30 pm Screening of "Inside Job" coordinated by Bobbi Baker. This documentary provides a comprehensive analysis of the global financial crisis of 2008, which at a cost of over \$20 trillion, caused millions of people to lose their jobs and homes in the worst recession since the Great Depression, and nearly resulted in a global financial collapse. Through exhaustive research and extensive interviews with key financial insiders, politicians, journalists, and academics, the film traces the rise of a rogue industry which has corrupted politics, regulation, and academia.

Prairie Star District (PSD) Conference to Explore War & Peace

Join fellow UUs the weekend of April 13-15, 2012 in Bloomington, Minnesota, for the Prairie Star District Annual Conference which will address the challenging theme, "Lessons From War & Peace: Stories of Faith, Hope and Courage."

In addition to examining this profoundly moving theme, you can benefit from workshops designed to strengthen your congregation, deepen your social justice work, and enrich you on a personal level. Come and experience some of PSD's top talent, culminating with the joy of shared worship and musical celebration on Sunday morning. For more information about the conference, please visit <http://www.psduua.org/AnnualConference2012>

UUFN Policy Board “Bits”

by Marcia Jacobs

Here are notes from the latest meeting held on January 3. If you would like more information, please feel free to talk to a board member about any questions you might have.

- Bob reported that UUFN has been designated as an Honor Congregation, and that the Prairie Star District sent a thank you for our Fair Share dues payment for the past year. The Board was pleased to hear that the UUA also sent a note thanking us for supporting our denomination at the national level and paying our Fair Share dues to the UUA.
- The Communications Policy detailing how members and staff of UUFN should use the various media at our disposal (including our newsletter and website) was given an initial reading. This document has been reviewed by the current Reach editor and Web master and meets with their approval. The Board will give the proposed Policy a second reading and discuss approval of the Policy at its February meeting. The Board expressed appreciation to our Minister for the work she did in crafting this policy.
- The Board is reviewing/revising the Position Statement Policy that was written by its predecessor Steering Committee in 2003 and then revised in 2004. Board members will give the policy a second reading prior to the February meeting with the expectation it will then be approved.
- The Board expressed its desire to support a resolution opposing a Constitutional Amendment Banning Marriage for Same-Sex Couples, while honoring the Position Statement Policy currently under review. The Board was in unanimous agreement that as this resolution is supported by regional and national bodies within the UUA (including MUUSJA, votes at several General Assemblies, as well as statements from the UUA President and Board), and given the process just completed by UUFN as it sought accreditation as a Welcoming Congregation, we were comfortable calling a Special Meeting of the Congregation on February 12 to formally vote on UUFN’s support of this resolution. The Board approved calling a Special

Meeting for this purpose and will send out the formal notice required by our ByLaws on or before January 29.

- Work continues on the Rainbow Event to take place on February 11, 2012. Tickets are now available at a number of Northfield churches and a good turnout is anticipated.

- Hortense reported on the formation of a Transcendental Group (formerly, ‘meditation’ group). The Board thanked Hortense for her efforts and expressed appreciation for her work to re-form this covenant group.

- The Board continued the discussion started in December regarding a policy to define who has access to and use of the sanctuary and social hall. The following policy was approved:

Due to concerns about liability and the terms of UUFN’s lease, the Board has determined that only UUFN-sponsored services, events and meetings will be authorized to take place in the sanctuary or social hall.

- A membership forum will be held on Jan. 22nd with Lee presiding to discuss the process of selecting Board members and the duration of their tenure. Several scenarios were discussed and will be presented to the congregation to receive suggestions before the board makes a recommendation to the congregation.

Next meeting February 7, 6:30 pm at the Ciernia home

ed. note - The Policy Board consists of Bob Ciernia, Lee Topp, Greg Marfleet, Marcia Jacobs, and Mairi Doerr (see the Reach masthead for contact information).

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Brought to you by Bob Ciernia

This Little Light of Mine

Howard Zinn wrote the following in March 2003 in *The Progressive*: "There is a basic weakness in governments—however massive their armies, however wealthy their treasuries, however they control the information given to the public—because their power depends on the obedience of citizens, of soldiers, of civil servants, of journalists and writers and teachers and artists. When these people begin to suspect they have been deceived, and when they withdraw their support, the government loses its legitimacy, and its power."

"[T]he core problem [is] that there is immense wealth available, enough to care for the urgent needs of everyone on Earth, and that this wealth is being monopolized by a small number of individuals, who squander it on luxuries and war while millions die and more millions live in misery. This is a problem understood by people everywhere." They grasp with "supreme clarity," he added, that "the world is run by the rich."

He never doubted that the people would rise up, and he urged us to keep striving for that day. "You never know what spark is going to really result in a conflagration. . . . You have to do things, do things, do things; you have to light that match, light that match, light that match, not knowing how often it's going to sputter and go out and at what point it's going to take hold."

Editor's Note, *The Progressive*
December 2011/January 2012

www.progressive.org

Q&A with Tony Benn, former British Member of Parliament

I've always seen you as having a balance of optimism and skepticism. You are an optimist, aren't you?

A. Well, you have to be optimistic, because if you don't feel as if you can win you don't put the effort in. And the mainstream media is always pessimistic about every campaign—they say it won't work, it's not realistic, no one will support you. If the media can spread pessimism, they can dampen down all the campaigns that might bring about change.

Hope is the fuel of progress. In every human being, since the beginning of time, two flames have burned: the flame of anger against injustice, and the flame of hope that you can build a better world. My job is to go around fanning both flames as hard as I can.

You and I have lived through the creation of the welfare state, which we were really proud of. And now it is being unraveled.

I remember in January 1944, on a troop ship going to South Africa, I went to see the colonel in charge and said we planned to have a meeting to discuss what would happen when the war ends. He said "No politics in it, Benn!" And I said, "Oh, no, no." Of course, we had the most wonderful political discussion. One lad made a speech I've never forgotten. He said: "In the 1930s we had mass unemployment. We don't have unemployment in wartime. If you can have full employment killing Germans, why can't you have full employment building homes, building hospitals, recruiting nurses, recruiting doctors and recruiting teachers?" That spirit led to the welfare state changes in Britain in 1945.

Those ideals have not completely disappeared. The question remains: Why is there plenty of money for war, but not enough for peace?

In These Times, January 2012

www.inthesetimes.com

Joining UUFN



If you would like to join the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Northfield, or participate in an orientation on Unitarian Universalism, please contact Bev Topp at (952) 469-4859 or via email at bevorleetopp@frontiernet.net



The Wayside Pulpit

With our thought, we make our world.

The Buddha