

Our reach should exceed our grasp.

REACH

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield
A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

January 2010



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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January Services & Events

Sunday, January 3 • 10 a.m. Silent time 10:30 a.m. Family time • Labyrinth Walk • Susannah Ciernia

For starting the New Year with a calm, peaceful, and clear spirit, many find walking the labyrinth a helpful gateway. This ancient tradition has a rich history – but is best known as a walking meditation symbolizing one's path from birth towards enlightenment. The repeated symmetrical turnings quiet the mind and help focus inward. Families with children are invited to arrive at 10:30am.

Sunday, January 10 • 10 a.m. • “Walking with One Another” • Rev. Kristin Maier

When a loved one faces a time of illness, crisis or nears the end of life, how can we journey with them in what is only theirs to work? Why does it seem, at times, most difficult to support those to who we are closest? When it is our turn to cope with our own crises, what is it we truly need from our loved ones?

Sunday, January 17 • 10 a.m. • “The Impact of Poverty in Northfield • Jim Blaha

Jim Blaha, Executive Director of the Northfield Community Action Center (CAC) will speak about poverty in our community and what is being done to assist those in need. We will have a special collection for the CAC during this service. As well, please bring a non-perishable food item if you can.

Sunday, January 24 • 10 a.m. • “This I Believe” • Bob Ciernia and Bev Topp

“This I Believe” is an opportunity for members of UUFN to share the beliefs, values, and experiences that have been most meaningful for them and have shaped the person they have become. These statements are often deeply personal and, like our lives, a work in process. May we receive them tenderly and lovingly.

Sunday, January 31 • 10 a.m. • Community Action Center Outreach

Natalie Marfleet is working with Jim Blaha to put together an outreach activity. We may work with the Food Shelf or on another project. Stay tuned to your Sunday bulletins and e-mail!

**New Member Sunday
Sunday January 10**

“When We Join Together”

Kristin Maier

Each Sunday that I have the pleasure of being at UUFN, I look forward to the time in the service where we welcome one another. When the members who are lighting the chalice that day ask if we have visitors who are brave enough to stand and introduce themselves, I am amazed how often new faces stand and do so. I am genuinely curious about who is among us each week and am grateful for those who tell us who they are, where they have come from and what brought them into our circle on that morning. I am more amazed, however, by the response from you all, the members and regulars of UUFN. The welcome that each newcomer receives is so genuine that it warms my heart to hear it each week.



Then, when it is time to stand and greet one another, it is done with honest gusto. Folks seem to bolt up, stick out a hand (even in flu season) and greet everyone, newcomer and old friend alike. There has been some discussion in the Sunday Services Committee about how long this segment takes. The folks on that committee take seriously the responsibility of creating worship services that meet our collective and sometimes wide-ranging needs. Personally, I wouldn't change a thing about the welcoming part of the service, even if we do sometimes have to tap a choir member on the shoulder who is caught up in doing what comes naturally – being community.

In January we will be welcoming several new members to our fellowship. This is cause for celebration and it is fitting that a community that is as genuinely warm as UUFN will be stopping to welcome those who are officially becoming part of our community. There is something heartening when others see what you see in a community. All of you who are members put a lot of love, sweat,

(and hopefully not too many tears) into this place. Clearly, the people of this community mean a lot to you. So does the common effort of making meaning in our lives and making a difference in the lives of others. This community, this place we make when we come together (in whatever building, armory, food pantry, highway we go), is sacred and it is very affirming when others want to be a part of it, too.

Joining UUFN is a serious commitment to maintaining this community and this space we create together. To become a member is to commit your heart to caring about what happens here and to doing what you can to take care of it and make sure it continues to exist for present and future members. No member is ever expected to give more than what they have to give of time, money, or spirit. Sure, we are all asked at times to do what we cannot, but it is always okay to say no to what we cannot sustainably do.

Of course, some folks (and many Unitarian Universalists) describe themselves as not-the-joiner type. That is perfectly okay! UUFN is also made up of several friends, folks who regularly attend, might even pledge, but for whatever reason have not joined. Many of our friends are beloved members of our community and will always be welcome. There is no need to ever pressure anyone to join – only celebration of what is brought by each person in our community (in whatever category). That is when we know we truly belong, when we are accepted as we are. For when we all come together, first time visitor, friend, new member or long-time member, we take our place in a larger sacred place of belonging that we create together.

Breakfast at the Ole Cafe 8:00 a.m. on...

Third Saturday of each month

Jan. 16

A chance to chat in an informal setting.

Let's coffee!!! Breakfast until 11:00 a.m.

arranged by Beth Robb

Happy New Decade?

Happy new year and new decade. I know I used this trope in September, too. Actually, given that almost anyone reading this was fortunate enough to witness the turn of the century and the turn of the millennium, a mere decade isn't a big deal. More problematically, and technically, the next decade doesn't begin until 2011. You may recall the discussion about whether the 20th century ended after 12/31/1999. At the time we were told by the math folks that that partying on 1999 was all wrong. The year 2000 was the last year of the previous millennium not the first of the next. So my title and introduction are a mess.



Like most people though, I tend to associate the 'decade dates': 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 with the decade they usher in. So in my mind we're leaving the "oughts" or the "oh-oh's" and we're into the teens. It's amazing to think about how quickly the last ten years have passed. As a political scientist I tend to mark the passage of time with major political and public policy events and the ten years since our big 1999 parties have been anything but a celebration. A contentious election, terrorist attacks, natural disasters (Katrina and the Tsunami), SARS, war, and financial collapse have more than just tarnished the start of our new millennium. It's no wonder that, in times like these, people begin to think that everything is about to come crashing down. I remember in 1999 a vocal minority thought that the world would end. When Y2K sailed by just fine they may have been disappointed but I doubt they were dissuaded.

During our recent poetry and storytelling Sunday, Hortense read the reworked Book of Revelations portion of "Killing the Buddha: A Heretic's Bible" and that got me to thinking about millenarian movements. Believing that the world is irreparably failing, millenarians expect and even hope and pray

for some enormous transformative event --one that is capable of sweeping away the old order. Typically the new society that is promised is one that epitomizes their group's beliefs and consequently is more: just, holy, moral, peaceful, pious or whatever. The real trick is that all you need to do to enjoy this new deal is become a member of the right club. Someone else does all the work!

Having missed out on Y2K the end-of-the-world types have now settled on 2012. This was prompted by the observation that some Mesoamerican calendar ends on 12/21/2012 exactly 13 great cycles of 144,000 days since some arbitrary and meaningless start day. Oh well, when that date ticks past, I'm sure they'll find another one. (I'm proposing date of the major solar eclipse that we'll experience in August of 2017. Since five years may be too quick for the "repent now" crowd to reorganize there is a second one scheduled for 2024. Interestingly the two eclipse's 'paths of totality' cross at a single point in southern Illinois! I expect a major 'rapture camp out'. Remember you heard it here first.)

Strangely, millenarianism is a central part of a number of theologies with the Christian 'second coming' merely being our most accessible. Millenarianism, of the sort that we read in the book of Revelations, goes way beyond foolish, date-shifting hysteria. and are highly religious convictions since who but God has the power to change everything in an instant. Consequently, understanding the source of millenarianism in religion, and potentially our relationship to it as UU's might make for an interesting discussion to have some time.

What are the roots of 'end of days' thinking? I suspect they're cognitively related to the 'start of days' thinking. The sort of mind that fixates on a 'creation' event with a distinct date might also like to know when the end comes. It just wouldn't make sense to have one without the other. So millenarians may be people who like distinct boundaries with clear starting points and ending. They also seem to evince a degree of helplessness. Having given up hope of changing this world, yet 'knowing' they are in the right, the millenarian seem content to let faith, time and God do their work. I suppose we

should be grateful about this malaise since we have enough fanatics out there seeking to end the world by human action.

Taken together, this desire for distinct demarcation coupled with helpless withdrawal might explain why we UU's just don't get very millenarian. We seem indisposed to search for absolute and finite points -- be they beginnings or ends. When we envision lines we like to make ours bend until the ends touch in a circle. Like the double circles encompassing the chalice in our symbol. Where do those circles begin? Where do they stop? Since beginnings and endings are nonsensical in this context, we accept ambiguity and uncertainty--even embrace it. We must also reject disengagement. If life, society, ecology--all the things that make up our world--are party of an on-going and unending procession, it would seem foolish to try to jump off and wait for the final curtain. As ignominious as the first ten years of the 21st century have been, it's not our style to throw up our hands, pick a date and hope for a reckoning. However, we'll need to work to ensure that on our next go-around, we don't retrace our path.

“Stone Soup and Pajamas” Deemed A Fabulous Success

Many thanks to all who helped sew November 29th, from those who were there only a short time, to those who continued to sew more kits at home and delivered kits to the Community Action Center!

Twenty-two of us completed sixteen kits. The food was wonderful! Thanks to the kitchen crew! Thanks to our **Supreme Seamstress**, Pam, who sewed our beautiful pillows and wall hangings and began this Christmas sharing tradition last year!

With more thanks to all,

Marilyn

MUSIC SUNDAY

Bev Topp

Thanks to all who participated in CHRISTMAS-TIME HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD on Music Sunday. The theme was a great suggestion from the Sunday Services Committee and seemed to be well appreciated by those who attended. I received comments like: "I never thought about the fact that Christmas is celebrated in such a variety of ways.", or "How interesting that, though there are so few Christians in Japan, they still have developed traditions around Christmas."

The choir showed their great attitude by being good sports as I introduced YET ANOTHER song with foreign language pronunciation to be learned. It was truly a "stretch" in a short period of time, but they did it!

And getting help from the percussionists, Nancy Huppert, Pat Jones and Kate Southwick, on Betelemehu put the finishing touches on the song. When the children first sang "One Small Voice" with us at practice that morning, I had a hard time seeing the music through moist eyes. We definitely need to do more singing with them!

Thanks to Claire Huppert, Suzannah Ciernia, Linda Frost, Jeanne Agee, Lee Topp, Bill McGrath, Ed Frost and Marty Ciernia for giving us solos, duets, and trios to round out the program. Guess who's idea it was to dance to "Blue Christmas"? And our continuing gratitude to Nancy Huppert, who so ably accompanies the choir.

Bob Ciernia and Chris Broughton's guided narration (with humor!) through many countries was the finishing touch on the program. They didn't get the final version until Sunday morning. Speaking of good sports!

And finally, to the congregation for your overwhelming support of the UUFN Choir: Your words of appreciation were so welcomed by the choir members and your generous contribution to the choir fund was such an affirmation of our program. Thank you!

Happy Holidays to all and wishing you great music to "spice up" the season.

The Mandala

Nancy Huppert

During December, we considered the significance of The Dharma Wheel and the mandala as symbols of Buddhist principles. This month we will take a broader look at the mandala as a symbol, important in many cultures, of the cycles of nature and life. As described by Bailey Cunningham in her book entitled, *Mandala: Journey to the Center*, the mandala “represents wholeness, and can be seen as a model for the organizational structure of life itself—a cosmic diagram that reminds us of our relation to the infinite, the world that extends both beyond and within our bodies and minds.” (pg. 12). During January our children and youth will begin the process of creating a collective mandala designed to celebrate and express the individual united in community.



Sunday, January 3

New Year Reflection – NO RE

Nursery: Nick Marfleet

Sunday, January 10

World Religions – The Mandala

Teacher: Nancy Huppert **Assistant:** _____

Nursery: Olivia Paulsen

Sunday, January 17

Lay Led Service – NO RE

Nursery: Autumn Kirkendall

Sunday, January 24

World Religions – The Mandala

Teacher: Nancy Huppert **Assistant:** _____

Nursery: Claire Paulsen

Sunday, January 31

Intergenerational Project Work Day – NO RE

Nursery: Will Marfleet

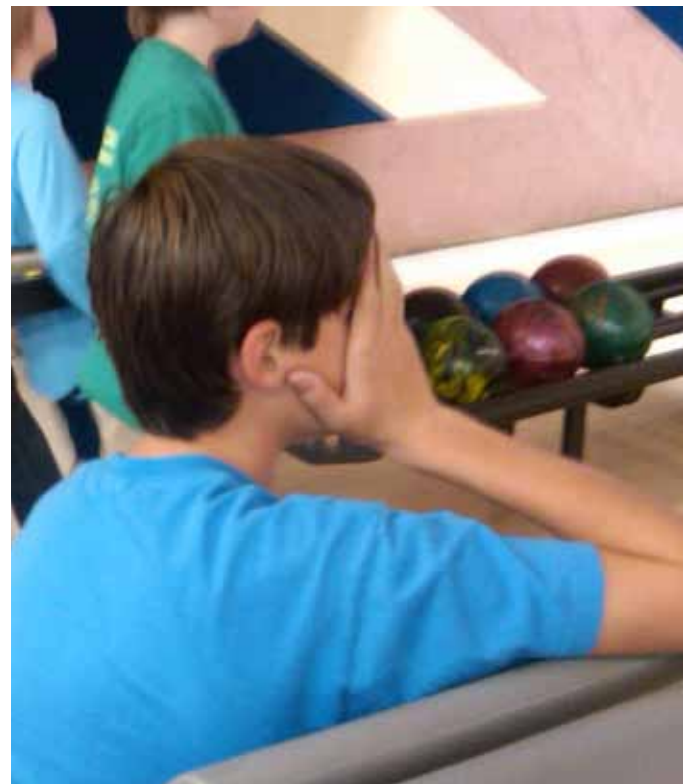
Help Wanted

Two Sundays every month the RE is in need of an assistant for the teacher Nancy Huppert. The sessions this year present the main ideas in various religions in the world. Nancy supplies the lesson and the equipment/materials. The assistant meets with one group and guides them through the lesson and activities. It is interesting to see what the young ones are learning and how they react.

The next two Sundays needing assistant teachers are Jan. 10 and 24. If you would be willing to help on these days or any during Feb., March, April or May, reply to this message and we will figure out which Sun. works best for you.

Thanks in advance for any help you can provide.

Marcia Jacobs 507-455-2053



Bowling Outing Gone Awry

UUFN Policy Board “Bits”

Here are notes from the latest meeting held on December 20. If you would like more information, please feel free to talk to a board member about any questions you might have.

- The Board accepted Susan Huehn’s resignation as Board Secretary. Under our ByLaws, the Board is authorized to fill this vacancy until the next election at the Annual Meeting. If you are interested in filling the vacancy, please talk with Greg.
- The Board noted with pleasure that the Music Sunday collection raised over \$200 for the work of the choir. The Board commends Bev for her outstanding leadership of the choir, and thanks all of the choir members for helping make music such a meaningful and enjoyable part of our services.
- The Board reviewed plans for the upcoming Valentine’s Day Dinner on Saturday evening, February 13 – mark your calendars! This will be the 2nd Annual Standing on the Side of Love feast and the community will be invited. Proceeds will be divided between a local community action group (yet to be named) and the UUFN Social Justice Committee.
- The Board discussed the upcoming Ministerial and Religious Education surveys. Members interested in participating in creating the surveys are invited to contact Greg or Bob.
- In preparation for the upcoming 2010 Pledge Drive, the Board is pleased to announce that Greg has volunteered to replace John as Stewardship chair. Mark your calendar: the date for the kick-off Stewardship Breakfast has been set for March 21.
- The Board is also pleased to announce that Suzannah has volunteered to replace Pam as Sunday Services chair. If you would like to volunteer your services for an upcoming Sunday service, please contact her.

Next meeting January 11, 7pm at the Marfleet home

ed. note - The Policy Board consists of Greg Marfleet, Natalie Marfleet, Mike Jonas, and Bob Ciernia (see the Reach masthead for contact information).

THANK YOU TO OUR FRIENDS AT UUFN

It was with very mixed emotions that we attended our last regular service at UUFN on Sunday the 13th. The music was inspiring and the dedication of the service and the kind words downstairs will stay with us forever. As we settle into Taylors Falls and look forward to new experiences here, we know how much we will miss our friends at UUFN.

We look forward to enjoying a wonderful meal with our gift certificate courtesy of our friends in Northfield—it will be a special time. Thank you!

We hope if any of you find yourselves in the Saint Croix Valley you’ll look us up. Our new address is: 34501 Vista Road, Taylors Falls, MN 55084; our new home phone is (651) 465-6900. We’ll keep in touch, and we’ll even drop in now and again to UUFN.

Keep the Faith.

Pam and John Horwich



We will Miss You, John and Pam

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!

Whatever type of food you'd like to bring will be appreciated. The average number attending has been 35 adults and 10 children.

Feel free to exchange with someone else if another date works better for you and please let Kate Southwick know about the changes at kate-kok2001@yahoo.com or 507-645-8790

Thanks to everyone!



Sunday	Social Hour Host
Jan 3	Randy and Paula Kirkendall
Jan 10	Kate and Roger Southwick
Jan 17	Natalie and Greg Marfleet
Jan 24	Mera Colling and Beth Robb
Jan 31	Community Outreach - No Social Hour

GREETER LIST

December - Janet and Bill McGrath

THE TALK OF THE TOWN



Youth Hanging in the Alley

HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT WE OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT?

A GOOD BOOK WE MIGHT LIKE TO READ?

OR A QUOTE OR POEM YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

SEND YOUR EPISTLES TO HORTENSE MACLEOD

turhanz@gmail.com

THE PEOPLE'S PULPIT

Hortense Macleod

Sometimes, one comes across a person, and one thinks to oneself, "Now, there's a Unitarian Universalist; they just don't know it." Karen Armstrong is just such a person. What follows is part of a press release about her Charter of Compassion and the charter itself:

International Charter of Compassion Launches to Promote The Golden Rule

**Karen Armstrong, author of "The Case for God" Joins
with Multi-national Council of Religious Leaders to
Bring Compassion Back to the Heart of Society**

Washington D.C., November 12, 2009 – Karen Armstrong, winner of the 2008 TED prize, along with religious leaders from around the world, gathered today at the National Press Club to unveil the Charter for Compassion (www.charterforcompassion.org). The Charter is a single document, endorsed by HH the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu among others. It was crafted by people from all walks of life, nationalities, beliefs and backgrounds with the intent to unify, inspire and bring compassion back into the heart of society. Compassion is the principled determination to put ourselves in the shoes of the other, and is often referred to as the Golden Rule - a tenet that is central to all major religions.

At the unveiling, Ms. Armstrong, and religious leaders, called upon the world to make a commitment to living a life of compassion. Over 60 Charter for Compassion Plaques, designed by Yves Behar and his team at fuseproject, will be hung in significant religious and secular locations around the world, in cities such as New York, Cairo, London, Ramallah, Melbourne, and Buenos Aires. The design focuses on the power and meaning of the Charter's words rather than purely the form. Consisting of sustainable maple, simple construction and laser-engraving, the plaques have a unique and iconic design reflective of the key messaging of Karen Armstrong. The text can be viewed at [HYPERLINK](#)

["http://www.charterofcompassion.org"](http://www.charterofcompassion.org) www.charterofcompassion.org. As Ms. Armstrong explains, "Compassion is not the feeling of good will or pity. Instead it is the principled determination to put ourselves into the place of the other [that] lies at the heart of all truly religious and ethical systems."

The Charter of Compassion's Call to Action

The final text of The Charter, unveiled today, calls upon all men and women

- # to restore compassion to the center of morality and religion.
- # to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence,
- # hatred or disdain is illegitimate
- # to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures
- # to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity
- # to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings ~ even those regarded as enemies

Charter of Compassion

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women

~ to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion

~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate

~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions,

religions and cultures

~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity

~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings—even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

I encourage anyone who is inspired by this charter to go to the website www.charterofcompassion.org and sign on. I did. Move over Charlemagne.

Numbers that Count

Number of personal care products the average consumer uses daily: 9

Number of unique chemical ingredients consumers are exposed to in those products: 126

The average age Americans under 30 say old age begins: 60

The average age Americans 65 and older say old age begins: 74

The average age Americans say they want to live to: 89

Percentage of all on-screen characters during the 2007-2008 TV season who were female, a historical high: 43

Percentage of characters in their 50s who were female: 30

Percentage of characters in their 60s who were female: 39

Percentage of all characters who were females 40 and older: 11

Number of Boeing 747 jets that could be built with the aluminum cans thrown away by airlines in 2004: 58

Height in feet newspapers and magazines thrown away by airlines in 2004 would reach if stacked on a football field: 230

Percentage of the 425,000 tons of passenger-related waste airports and airlines recycle annually: less than 20

Yes! Magazine, Winter 2010
www.yesmagazine.org

A few months after all that [Arctic] ice melted in 2007—30 years ahead of what even the more pessimistic scientists were forecasting—our foremost climatologists gave us a

new number to aim for: 350 parts per million CO₂. NASA's James Hansen and his team issued a series of papers showing that any atmospheric carbon content greater than that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted." In other words: Climate change is not a future problem for wise statesmen to patiently work to avert. It's a right now, present tense, capital-E Emergency.

Hansen and his team warn that a world of 450 ppm CO₂ is a world that will eventually be largely ice free. That will take some time—those Antarctic ice sheets are miles thick. But there's plenty of change coming at us already. Dengue fever, carried by mosquitoes rapidly expanding their range in our newly warming world, has increased thirtyfold in the past 50 years. (A recent report indicated it could easily spread to more than half the states in the union.) Glaciers are melting before our eyes. (Glacier National Park will need a new name as early as 2020—the source of the Ganges could be a dusty hillside 15 years later.) A recent study predicted a 50 percent chance that Lake Mead, behind Hoover Dam, will have dried up by 2021. Meanwhile, since all the water that's evaporated out of dry areas must eventually come back down, deluges (like the record rains in India that put a million people out of their homes in 2006) are getting worse. This is the kind of trouble you get at 387 ppm [our current level of CO₂]. You really want to go for 450?

We [Americans] give [climate change] a priority of 4.7 on a scale of 1 to 10, while Mexicans rank it 9, Chinese 8.9, Brits 8.2, Nigerians 7.8, and Russians 7.4. Only Iraqis (5.1) and Palestinians (4.9) come close to our nonchalance (and they have pretty compelling excuses for being distracted).

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www.motherjones.com



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The Wayside Pulpit

*If there is to be any peace it will
come through being, not having.*

Henry Miller