

February 2012



SKAGIT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

Diversity Hall Journal

February Sunday Services Join us at 10:30 AM

Feb. 5 Rev. Amanda Aikman

Celebrant: Cheryl Mercer

"Always, Always Something Sings"

A birdsong in midwinter. A thread in the labyrinth. A rose in the desert. There are so many metaphors for that mysterious truth, echoed in all ages and places, that the voice of Wisdom is always calling to us. How do we discern that voice, pay attention to it, find the courage to respond?

Book Discussion Group, Session 1, 12:00 PM

Feb.12 Bill Malcomson

Celebrant: Doreen Dunton

"Religion as Co-Creation"

The service will deal with the nature of creativity and will examine religion as a co-creation, joining humans and Spirit.

Creators Group Meets 12:00 PM

Feb. 19 Rev. Amanda Aikman

Celebrant: Pat Young

"Is Humanity Improving?"

Is humanity truly going "onward and upward forever," or is humanity fundamentally and irreparably flawed? Steven Pinker's optimistic view of humanity's future and Chris Hedges' pessimistic one can both be backed up by data and historical evidence. What does our UU faith tell us about humanity's potential for both good and evil?

Third Sunday Potluck

Feb. 26 Sandi York

Celebrant: Ken Dunning

"The Care and Feeding of Demons"

A sermon adapted from an essay by Forrester Church examining the ways in which we nurture and foster our own personal demons and proposing ways to help us overcome or manage those demons.

Social Justice Meeting 12 PM

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Book Discussion Group

Amanda will facilitate a book discussion group on the first Sundays from February through June, at noon in the Sanctuary. It is based on the book **FROM ZIP LINES TO HOSAPHONES: DISPATCHES FROM THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH AND MEANING** by Jane Rzepka. All are welcome, but you must order your own copy of the book. Please bring a snack or lunch. There will be a donation to pay for child care.

Amanda will also offer this class simultaneously via a Google Group, for those who cannot attend the class in person.

To join, just go to this site: <http://groups.google.com/group/ziplines-and-hosaphones-book-discussion?hl=en> and join the conversation.

Class Schedule for February and March

Session 1 Feb. 5

How We Break the Rules
Our Slippery Spirituality
Drawing the Breath of Life

Session 2 March 4

Corn and Chaff Together
What Holds Us Together?
God and Variations on the Theme

News From Building and Grounds

Winter is the time folks love to plan projects for the pleasant days ahead. That's what our B&G crew is doing. A list of needs and improvements that can be addressed within our budget and expertise is being formulated. One of our main projects, glass doors for the entry and for the CRE rooms, was accomplished with the aid of our renter, the Green Tree School. The storage room has been improved by installing new shelving. Shelves added to the kitchen made it possible to clear the counter of coffee items.

You probably noticed that the **railing** along the entry ramp was struck by car. We are waiting for an estimate for repairs. We hope to be awarded an insurance payment above the deductible. Then we have to decide on the fix. Our entry is not ADA-compliant. The **ramp** is too steep, the short, level surface outside the door is abrupt, and the door threshold is not barrier-free. We have ideas on how these deficiencies can be revamped, but we need a plan, some funding, and knowledgeable

direction.

Other large projects are also important. First, the **roof** is at the end of its life. The shingles on the roof must be removed, new ones installed, along with vents and flashing. Second, the **chairs** are becoming eyesores. The welds are breaking, too. We have attempted to clean them, but there is only so much that can be done – at some point they simply must be replaced. The cheapest suitable chairs we have found so far are \$35, and that's a bargain. Perhaps a "buy a chair" campaign could be instituted to replace the worst of them . . .

Other, less challenging projects, that need to be dealt with, weather permitting, include another coat of **paint** on the building's exterior, interior paint, and **lighting** improvements. The improvement to the sanctuary would be substantial. Our ancient **stove** is on borrowed time. If we can find a good, used one, that would be a worthy goal. Our

aim is to keep the building in satisfactory condition, to do necessary repairs, and to make what improvements we can. Decisions about what we can afford to do, in terms of the budget, will be part of the current long-range planning effort.

We will post a list of building and grounds requirements as they appear. If you have additional ideas, please feel free to list them. Also, you are welcome to make comments on our list. If you can volunteer labor and/or materials that you might have stored, please tell us. While donations are always appreciated, we want to standardize materials such as paint colors to make future repainting easier. Appliances or other items intended for use in the building must be of appropriate quality to stand up to use in a building that is also a rental. If you have any item you think you might be able to give up, please check with **Pat, Dundas or Rosemary**. Spring cleaning soon.

Cares and Concerns

A Message From Marta

Hello all.

Miss you, though not the snow I hear you are having.

If you are ever coming this way be sure to call.

Marta Pearson
PO Box 33682
Tampa FL 33682

813-495-3021
fandf@trainingwithmarta.com

My health is back to normal and I'm settling in well.

I presented the sermon in Jacksonville Jan. 15th.

I keep up with you via the newsletter.

Love,
Marta

We bid a fond farewell to **Rae and Bob Gilbertson**, who have resigned their membership in order to pursue paganism (Rae) and Christianity (Bob). We wish them well and look forward to welcoming them back any time they are in the neighborhood. Thanks, Gilbertson's, for your contributions to our Fellowship!

An Ode to English Plural

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hices.

If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and three would be those,

Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England .

We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes, We find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. And why is

it that writers write but fingers don't fing,
Grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend. If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up speaking English should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.

Getting Together

Men's Group

The SUUF Men's Group will meet on **Tuesday, February 7, at 6pm**, in Diversity Hall.

The topic will be all matters financial; investing, lifestyle budgeting,

retirement planning, annuities, etc.

The meeting is open to all interested men of the fellowship.

Contact **Richard Treston** at treston2202@yahoo.com

Book Discussion Group

Session 1, Sunday Feb. 5

First Reading Assignment

How We Break the Rules
Our Slippery Spirituality
Drawing the Breath of Life

UU Book Lust

Credit must go to the originator of the "Book Lust" movement, Nancy Pearl, librarian and bookseller, author, award-winning commentator on NPR's affiliate KUOW at the U/W, and defender of books. She has a website, nancypearl.com, that is a wonderful resource for reading ideas. It's especially helpful when you are trying to choose a book for a child and you aren't sure what reading levels or subject matter are appropriate. The digital age is changing how and even what we read, and that's to be expected. But books

and the written word open doors to other worlds, when dictators come to power the first thing they do is destroy or control books and other reading matter. Our UU history is bound up with the importance of the written word and the freedom to read. We must never lose that.

Red Star Rogue: The Untold Story of a Soviet Submarine's Nuclear Strike Attempt on the U.S. by Kenneth Sewell and Clint Richmond

I just finished this book, read it con-

stantly for 3 days, couldn't put it down. I had read a book and seen a Nova documentary about the US government's project to salvage a sunken Russian submarine in the Pacific in 1968, 300 miles from Hawaii. What was never said, and which had been covered up by the US, was that this sub had nearly succeeded in delivering a one megaton, nuclear warhead on Pearl Harbor. The book goes on to tell of the political fallout of this event and how this led to the opening of China by Pres. Nixon and the fall of the USSR.

Tom Gillespie

From the Editor

Congregations and Beyond

In his letter to Congregations, UUA President Peter Morales, (see page 5) tells it like it is. His basic point about where we are as a religion, rings true for our little fellowship as well as the Unitarian Universalist international religious movement. We see it every Sunday when we look at the number of unfilled seats at our services. We know a lot of people who believe as we do and could benefit from being members. However, they don't make a commitment to support our fellowship or even to attend a Sunday services. Also, we have observed that children of UU's are unlikely to continue to attend UU services when they reach adulthood. In short, our UUA member numbers are not keeping up with population growth in general.

The UUA Board's proposal to expand the definition of a congregation comes after a decade of discussion that recognizes that the nature of congrega-

tions and of religious life is changing. Rev. Morales is convinced that our movement has enormous potential to involve more people and to have a greater impact on our world. To do this, he proposes that we think of ourselves as a *religious movement* rather than an association of congregations.

The implications of this thinking, he says, would open new ways of connecting to people who think of themselves as UU's but don't attend services with those people who share our values but who do not know about UUism. This would be done through new methods of *out-reach* and *not through membership*.

It is comforting to know that the leaders of the UUA are starting to think outside the box and are coming up with new ways to grow our faith. The current way of thinking is not working. This proposal by the UUA Board and Rev. Morales is interesting and

deserves to be understood by current members and discussed by congregations. Is it good for our UU Fellowship *not* to focus on membership, when we are struggling with stagnant growth and limited funds? This is an idea which I find questionable. It would fundamentally change the way we grow our fellowship i.e. wait for people to find us *after* they have become aligned with the core beliefs of our religion. At the same time I know that in the last ten years our membership has stayed the same. A new strategy is what we need, and this may be the 21st century thinking that can make our faith more relevant and vibrant in the future.

I hope everyone will take the time to read this important message. Please follow this link to read Rev. Morales' letter. http://www.uua.org/documents/moralespeter/120115_congs_beyond.pdf

Tom Gillespie, Editor

Social Justice Workshop

Social Justice Group

Please read the attached notice. We hope you can attend. It's not until March, so please mark your calendars. Carol told me that Rev. Gilbert is truly wonderful speaker, so it will definitely be worth the trip.

Don't forget, our Social Justice Meeting this month is the **fourth Sunday, after church**.

Peace Out, **Lezlie McDaniel**

GIVING LIFE THE SHAPE OF JUSTICE: A SOCIAL JUSTICE WORKSHOP LED BY THE REVEREND RICHARD GILBERT March 23-24, 2012

Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church, Kirkland WA

Can your congregation's social justice work be more effective and engage the hearts and minds of more people? Join us for this special opportunity to learn and experience effective congregation-based social action from the Reverend Richard Gilbert, an outspoken voice for Unitarian Universalist justice-making work.

The Reverend Gilbert, Minister Emeritus of First Unitarian Church of Rochester NY, is the author of the *Building Your Own Theology* curriculum and of *The Prophetic Imperative: Social Gospel in Theory and Practice*, and *How Much Do We Deserve? An Inquiry into Distributive Justice*, as well as meditation manuals.

Moments in UU History

America's first cemetery, Unitarian-style



Early New England graveyards were desolate, frightening places, the stuff of nightmares. Devoid of trees or grass, they were more like town dumping grounds. Vandals and vagrants hid in them. Markers were engraved with death's heads and skeletons. Graves were often left open to make room for more coffins. The living hesitated to walk past them, much less enter to pay their respects to the dead.

With the liberalization of Puritan New

England and the rise of Unitarianism in the early nineteenth century came a need for a new kind of final resting place. In 1831, Bostonians, led by two Unitarians, physician Jacob Bigelow and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story founded the nonprofit Mount Auburn Cemetery on a 74-acre farm in Watertown, four miles outside the city. The nation's first "rural" or "garden" cemetery, it was first to use the term cemetery, from the Greek *koimeterion* for "place of sleep," rather than burial ground. Mount Auburn is celebrating its 175th anniversary with a yearlong calendar of lectures, walks, and other events.

The early Unitarian view of death and commemoration is reflected in the cemetery's design: set in a natural country landscape, with trees and flowers, paths and ponds, hills and dells, a place where the living can come for reflection and to honor their loved ones. In contrast with the Calvinist idea of a terrible final reckon-

ing, early Unitarians saw death as a natural life passage to be welcomed as a reunion with Nature "to mix forever with the elements," as William Cullen Bryant penned in his popular poem on death, *Thanatopsis*.

The idea of garden cemeteries, where both the living and the dead could mingle with nature, quickly caught on. Within fifteen years, nine other cities had founded their own, and the movement spread throughout the country.

"People come here to view the trees and landscape, but this is something more than just a walk in the woods," says William Clendaniel, cemetery president. "Literally and figuratively, it is the repository of our community's heritage. You'd have to be very insensitive to come here and not to think about your own life and your own death."

A Message From the UUA

The UUA President, Peter Morales, has written a very important paper about the future of our faith and it would be ideal if all our folks would read it.

Here's the link. http://www.uua.org/documents/moralespeter/120115_congs_beyond.pdf

From Our UUA President

I want to share with you my vision of the opportunities and challenges that face Unitarian Universalism. I recently shared this document with

the staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). It outlines some of my ideas for the future of Unitarian Universalism, a strategic direction consistent with our values and our historic willingness to push beyond pre-determined boundaries.

This vision will, I hope, provoke some interesting discussions about the direction of Unitarian Universalism. If you would like to add to the conversation, we welcome your feedback! Please email development@uua.org with any comments, questions, or concerns.

Thank you, as always, for your support of the UUA. I look forward to working with you to further our movement.

In faith,

Rev. Peter
Morales
President,
Unitarian
Universalist
Association



New “Dr. Death” is a UU Minister

Doctor weighs in on physician-assisted suicide Should the terminally ill be allowed to end their lives?

Dr. Patrick Neustatter
7/1/2011

He looked more like Colonel Sanders than “Dr. Death,” this elderly, soft-spoken man standing at the podium of the local Unitarian Universalist Church last month. But he was selling suicide, not chicken.

The man was Dr. Lawrence Egbert, an 83-year-old retired anesthesiologist, Unitarian Minister and medical director of Final Exit Network (FEN). He wasn't really “selling” suicide, nor encouraging it. But he and FEN are advocating that, for those who want it, the option of physician-assistance suicide should be more widely available. Egbert thinks physician-

assisted suicide should be legal in more states than it already is—a view that prompted Newsweek to dub him “The New Dr. Death.” He’s inheriting the mantle from Dr. Jack Kevorkian, who had been off the scene for a while (in part because of jail time) before he died June 3, 2011 of natural causes.

Egbert has presided over some 300 suicides—which means reviewing the case histories of people who want to commit suicide and need help, and if deemed suitable, sending out volunteers as “exit guides” to advise. The favored method of FEN is a plastic hood and helium to breathe in—yes, the same stuff used to fill balloons. It’s purchased by suiciders from local party stores.

In his recent talk in Fredericksburg, Egbert noted that he and FEN are careful to merely advise, and not to even supply equipment. This is in contrast to the flamboyant behavior of Kevorkian, who

drove around the country in a VW minibus with his “suicide machine” and made a videotape in 1998 of him administering a lethal injection to a 53-year-old man with Lou Gehrig’s Disease—a nasty illness otherwise known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, which slowly causes paralysis until you suffocate. The video was shown on “60 Minutes”, just before the family show “Touched by an Angel”

Despite his caution, Egbert has been indicted in two states. In Arizona, he was indicted after “exit guides” helped in the suicide of a 58-year-old woman with mental problems and severe liver pains who thought her liver, kidneys and feet were being eaten by bugs.

He was not present when this happened in 2007, and he was acquitted in that case.

SUUF Choral Group Forming

Singers and Musicians Wanted

Music/choral group is now forming! We are planning to get together with interested SUUFers and work on some tunes. Last month we were entertained by “Joyful Noise” from the Edmonds UU church who asked us to join with them for their next appearance in March.

So far four members, Greg Sherman ukulele bassist, Donna Rieper on the guitar, Richard Treston vocals, and Doreen Dunton ukulele, have shown interest in this fun activity. We met after fellowship, which seems to be the best time to meet since we come from far-flung parts of the county.

This is not exclusive! Please join us if you have a desire to sing and/or

play. We want to gather some tunes from our hymnal and other sources.

Greg has graciously volunteered to help keep us on track. Eventually, we will be performing for the congregation. We recognize a real need for more opportunities to connect on a spiritual level. I can't think of a better way, can you?

Yours in harmonious fellowship,

Doreen Dunton

Recipe of the Month

Chocolate Charlotte

8 oz good quality dark chocolate
(we use Lindt Excellence or Scharffen-
berger 62 or 70%), coarsely chopped

1 cup sugar 1
tbsp instant coffee - optional) 1/8 tsp
salt 1/2 cup boiling
water 4 large eggs at room
temp 2 sticks of butter, softened
1 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 350

Pam spray bottom and sides of a 10 cup
souffle type dish or glass bowl (at least
4-5 inches deep)

In a food processor fitted with the metal
chopping blade, combine the chocolate,
sugar, coffee (if you use it) and salt -
run the processor to grind it all fine.

With the motor running, add the hot
water -process 15 seconds or so until
melted.

Add the eggs, pulse until mixed - then
the butter and vanilla - pulse again until
all mixed.

Scrape the mix into the prepared bowl
or dish - bake 45-55 minutes or until a
toothpick into the center comes out
clean. It will rise up, then collapse a bit
into the center - no worries. Let it cool,
then refrigerate until well chilled (best
to do the day before).

Prepare whipped cream using 2 cups
cream, 2 tbsp sugar and 1/2 tsp vanilla
- whip until quite stiff.

Have either some fresh raspberries for
the presentation, or make a quick rasp-
berry caulis from fresh or frozen rasp-
berries (we liquefy in a chopper with a
tbsp of sugar and tbsp of lemon juice,

Skagit Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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Visit our website at www.skagituuf.com

Our mission is to create a welcoming and loving religious community
that: cares for our planet and its inhabitants, inspires spiritual growth,
promotes justice and encourages lives of integrity, joy and service.

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then press through a sieve). Have some un-
sweetened cocoa handy.

To serve...immerse an ice cream scoop or large
spoon in hot water - scoop out a ball of the
chocolate charlotte and place in the center of a
plate. Put the whipped cream into a pastry bag
and pipe in small stars over the chocolate ball,
covering entirely. dust with cocoa, and drizzle
the raspberry caulis around the dessert at the
edge of the plate to taste - or arrange fresh
raspberries around the periphery.

Doreen Dunton

Hospitality Schedule

February 2012

February 05	Linda Kuller
12	Brenda Cook
19	Donna Rieper
26	Jenni Wilson

Meetings and Groups

Men's Group

**Meets at SUUF on the 1st Tues-
day of each month at 6:00pm.**

Contact Richard Treston

Board meets 2nd Wed. @ 5:30

Creators Group

The SUUF Creators Group will
meet on the **2nd Sunday** of each
month from noon to 1. We are
working on either personal pro-

jects or projects that we can give
to the Skagit Valley Herald
Christmas fund. It's a good time
to chat and get to know others.

Covenant Group meets the **1st
& 3rd Thurs at SUUF from 1-3**
and goes out to lunch the 2nd
Thurs. each month. Contact Joy
Lindberg, 424-8090 and plan to
join this group. All are welcome

Social Justice Meeting will held
every **4th Sunday** after the ser-
vice.

The **West Enders Covenant
Circle** meets monthly at the Sky-
line Cabana in Anacortes.
To be announced.

Book Discussion Group
meets every first Sunday, Feb-
ruary through June.

Check out other events at
[meetup.com/Skagit-Unitarian-
Universalist-Fellowship](http://meetup.com/Skagit-Unitarian-Universalist-Fellowship)