

Expression

Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka

FEBRUARY 2008

Sunday Services at 9 and 11 am

The Religious Education program for children and youth from birth through 12th grade is offered at the 9 am service with care for children up to age 5 at the 11 am service.

Words from Kent

After an intense month and a half of searching through the western suburbs of Minneapolis, and after taking into account a vast array of considerations, my wife Heidi and I finally found a house to call – and to buy! – our very own. The house is in Hopkins, that actual little town with actual city blocks and sidewalks, an actual main street with coffee shops and restaurants, and a town park and bike path right next door to where we will live. After we are fully moved in, Heidi and I expect to have an open house for the church sometime this summer.

We love the house. This is the first home for both of us. After living in seven different apartments in the past six-and-a-half years of our relationship, we will now have decent closet space, a beautiful kitchen with lots of counter and cabinet space, a separate room we can use as our office, room for children, lots of other storage space, and a yard. It is amazing how good this feels: to finally have a home, to finally feel settled, to finally have a sense of permanence and commitment to one place.

Of course, we do not like a few things about our new house. It has a very small main floor bathroom, and there are no coat closets by the front or back door. But this is the way of things. It is rare, if not impossible, to find everything we want in one house, in one town, in one person, in one relationship, in one job, in one religion, in one community. So, to live as well as we can, we find in things the pieces that give us the greatest joy with the least amount of disappointment, and plunge in with a sense of commitment.

I can't help but think about this in the context of a spiritual life, and the life of an individual living in relationship with a larger religious community. We spend our lives in search of a perfect physical, spiritual or emotional home. The truth is we are not likely to find it. But on our good days, we recognize and accept that the universe throws imperfect things into our world and into our lives, and that we too are made with our own flaws. When we are at our best, we may even understand that our imperfection and beauty are all wrapped up together.

From my own experience, when I recognize my own flaws it is easier to move through the world with a sense of appreciative humility and be more forgiving. As we – you and me, and you with each other – move forward together these next few years, as we work with architects, with the City of Wayzata, and with each other to construct our new church building and spiritual home, I pray that we hold on to our vision of perfection while at the same time acknowledge our flaws. It will take a lot of hard work, extraordinary patience, deep commitment, and an active practice of continual compassionate forgiveness with one another.

Imperfection. Beauty. Both, wrapped up together. This is the way of things.

In peace,

Kent



Congregational Meeting—Sunday, January 27 at 10:15 am
All members are encouraged to attend as we vote on the
Resolution to buy the property at 2030 Wayzata Blvd. E.

News from the Director of Religious Education

Andrea Purdy Heier 952-473-0448



Extra! Extra! Read all about it!

The RE Team has decided it is time to prepare for two sessions of religious education programming again, possibly beginning as early as fall 2008. Many of you may breathe a sigh of relief at this news since the 9am class time was not everyone's preference (yawn!). Quality programming remains the priority, and so beginning to plan now for the next phase helps assure a fitting result! Please know that the RE Team and I realize the 2-service transition has required flexibility on the part of families, especially those with children and youth. We are grateful for your patience.

With this intent in mind, the RE Team would like both your input into and your help with this endeavor. Everyone has a role. For example, a few adults stepped forward this year to offer support and guidance in creating a program at 11am. Now is the time to be in touch! Please contact any of the RE Team members – or me!

Also, to help guide planning there will soon be a brief on-line survey for all religious education families to share their preferences and perspectives for a second RE session. Every family is asked to take part, no matter which service each plans to attend. This survey will take just a few minutes to complete, with 10 or less multiple-choice questions. Participation on the part of every family will save the RE Team oodles of hours, besides enabling a proactive rather than reactive planning process. Watch for directions as to how to access the survey, which will be coming out shortly. Hard copies will also be made available.

There has been an interesting conversation on one of the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA) religious education list services about the word "religion". It began with the question, "Do you use the term religion when referring to UU faith with children/families?" Apparently there is hesitancy on the part of some religious educators to do so, which, as a born and raised UU, was quite surprising to me. But the question led to reflection on the derivation of "religion" and "religious education" which is appropriate to consider at times like these, times of transition and new development within an RE program. Director of Religious Education, Karen McCarthy, commented on LREDA-L, "...I'm prepared to refer to the etymology of the word (religion) as I understand it: *re-ligare*, or 'tie together again' ... a religion is a path we choose to re-connect ourselves with each other and with the holy. And religious education is our effort to teach our children those connections."

This brought to mind a 1995 UUA pamphlet "Spiral Journey" that arrived at a definition of religious education that is quite meaningful to me. Deriving the root of "education" as meaning "to lead out" it concludes:

The aim of liberal religious education is to lead us out into new understandings, abilities, and ways of being within the context of a caring community. Liberal (from the Latin, liber, "free") religious education provides both roots and wings; the roots of community and shared values, and the wings of the free mind and spirit.

In that spirit, let us continue to cultivate a religious education program that helps each of us develop lifelong roots and wings. May we be "tied together" in our shared values as we freely "lead (each other) out" into new ways of living and being. And as the program mission statement asserts, let us "help each individual develop a personal religious identity and a sense of belonging to our UUCM community." It is once again time to take wing from our roots together. I hope you will fly along.

Andrea

Upcoming Newsletter

Deadline: Friday, February 15 by Noon

All newsletter submissions should be sent to Office Administrator Emilie Fitch at officeadmin@mtn.org. Please include name and phone number for editor verification purposes. *Expression* is published once a month and will be in homes the last week of a month with news for the upcoming month. The deadline for submission of articles is the third Friday of the month.

Upcoming Deadlines are:

March 21

April 18

Update from the Relocation Task Force

The Letter of Agreement between UUCM and LOCUS Architecture has been finalized. The LOA covers work to be done by LOCUS between now and completion of the rezoning process in September, 2008. The agreement specifies a not-to-exceed amount of \$46,000. During the next 8 months LOCUS will provide leadership as the congregation defines the space and program needs for our new church, develop a site plan for 2030 Wayzata Blvd. East, and produce schematic building and elevation designs for presentation to the congregation, to the Wayzata City Planning Commission and City Council. We will also get a preliminary cost estimate for a new church at the end of this phase of our project.

The tentative outline of the schedule for the coming months is as follows:

February - March, 2008	Congregation meetings to determine program and space needs
Saturday, April 5	Pre-design meeting #1 between LOCUS and UUCM ministry leadership
Late April	Pre design presentation by LOCUS to the congregation with congregation feedback
Mid April	Pre-design meeting #2 between LOCUS and RTF with initial design concepts
Early June	Pre-design meeting #3 with LOCUS presenting a refined conceptual design
June	Presentation of design concepts residents of the Holdridge neighborhood
July - September	Presentation of application to the City Planning Commission and City Council

During February and March meetings will be held to gather your input on what you want the new UUCM space to look like and how you want that space to work for us. Dates for these meetings will be announced soon. **All members and friends are strongly encouraged to attend.** This will be your opportunity to share your ideas and hopes and dreams for our new building.

Submitted by Christy Dachelet, RTF Chair

Board Column January Meeting Update

The Board certified, with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), 189 members. This number will be used in assessing us for dues to the UUA. The cost is approximately \$54 per member.

Relocation Task Force Update - (see article) The Task Force has recommended using LOCUS Inc. as our Architect firm. They'll be studying space needs for our community.

The Capital Campaign has raised \$1,184,000 to date and will be conducting follow up phone calls.

Treasurer Update – Our pledges are coming in at normal levels and there have been no unexpected expenses to date.

Kent brought to the Board's attention an accessibility issue regarding the General Assembly in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida this year. In order to attend this year the Port of Ft. Lauderdale, where this event will be held, requires participants to provide government issued photo identification – driver's license, passport etc. This requirement could prevent people from attending the General Assembly this year. Kent and the Board have agreed to revisit this issue with the rest of the community to receive input.

For more detailed information, the minutes for this meeting will be posted in the North Room, after they have been approved at the February board meeting.

Expenditure Oversight Committee Announced

The Board of Trustees has appointed an Expenditure Oversight Committee to monitor expenditures from the Building Fund. As the Relocation Task Force proceeds with its work the oversight committee will regularly review major spending requests. The intent is to provide an extra layer of accountability as to how money is expended and to assure that a transparent process is maintained. Members appointed to the oversight committee are Ellen Silva, Jackie Zimmerman and Steve Sundby.



Moving In Faith, Growing Our Future UUCM Capital Campaign

As of the end of December 2007 we have received just over \$300,000 of the approximately \$1.2 million currently pledged to our Capital Campaign. Thank you to all who have pledged and given to date! Gifts and pledges are still being accepted. Please contact Alison Albrecht at 952-938-9246 or alisonalbrecht@comcast.net if you would like more information about giving.

The governing of Unitarian Universalists has been referred to the herding of cats. I disagree. The wonder and beauty of our faith is that it relies heavily on the democratic principles that we are surrounded by. Democracy in itself is a very messy and chaotic process requiring an informed electorate to keep it honest. For a democracy to work leaders need to be as transparent as feasibly possible to allow the flow of information to reach the electorate and the electorate needs to engage in the process by giving their attention to issues that matter to them.

In our community, your leaders have had transparency as one of its goals created at the start of our board terms. We've kept that in mind as members get ready to vote on approving the purchase of the property located at 2030 Wayzata Boulevard. Following is a brief summary of what led the Board to approve recommending this sight for the future home of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka.

To quote from one of the many reports I and the Board have received concerning this topic:

"Our Relocation Task Force, after two years of searching, has identified and recommended a piece of land – 2030 Wayzata Blvd. E. – as the future home of UUCM. The recommended site is less than two miles east of our current location and an architect who looked at the property to assess its potential as a church site called it "an exceptional location and property for a church." The location features 2.7 acres of wooded land with good access and visibility from 394 in the very heart of our service area. An added bonus related to this property is that there is the possibility of adjacent properties becoming available for sale in the not too distant future."

In the summer of 2007, before the property was purchased, I along with others from the Executive Team – Chris Hermann (our Treasurer), Steve Sundby (our Vice President) and Kent Hemmen Saleska (our Minister) met with the Relocation Task Force to discuss the pros and cons of this property, along with the potential of any conflict of interest issues that might arise from having members of UUCM purchase the property than resell it to the church. We decided the pros – location, cost and availability outweighed the cons – size of the land.

The Executive Team also addressed the conflict of interest issue and determined that the purchase of the property, with contingencies – suitability of land, rezoning for a church, land preparation issues etc., protected the interests of UUCM.

In an effort of transparency the Relocation Task Force and the Executive Team decided forums were necessary to address conflict of interest issues and any other concerns members and friends may have regarding the property. Three forums, attended by approximately sixty six (66) friends and members were held in the late summer and early fall. I attended two of the three forums and detected a strong support for the recommendation of the RTF to go ahead. Encouraged by the responses from the forum Bob Dachelet preceded with the purchase the property. Through a persistent and determined effort the Dachelets acquired the property for \$400,000 in hopes that it would become UUCM's new home.

A Capital Campaign – "Moving in Faith, Growing Our Future" was than conducted and successfully raised close to approximately \$1.2 million dollars to acquire the property and pay the associated costs incurred. I believe that the purchase of the property located at 2030 Wayzata boulevard was vitally important to the success of our Capital Campaign.

An Oversight Committee has been created and a savings account has been set up to handle the money raised from the campaign. The Oversight Committee will be tracking the costs related to the property, including building, testing, fees, etc.

During this time, the Relocation Task Force had been interviewing numerous architect firms and decided to use a firm that designed the building addition for White Bear Lake – LOCUS Inc. Here's another quote from the Task Force:

"Paul and Wynne impressed us with their passion for sustainable architecture that does not compromise beautiful design. Quoting from their proposal to us, "We do not specialize in a certain type of project, but carefully choose projects that align with our unique qualities, passion and world view". When they started working together in 1995 Paul and Wynne set out several goals for their company. They determined they wanted "to work with clients who challenge their actions based on the environmental and social context in which they live" and that they would seek out projects "with the potential for meaning and substance....We are acutely aware of the importance of choosing projects that align with these goals. Your project fits both our goals." LOCUS is a leader in applying sustainable building principles to their projects. They employ a two-pronged approach to sustainability; "equally managing our benefit of use and our burden of consumption. In short, we use less and produce more. We use less energy and fewer materials and chemicals; yet produce more beautiful and vital spaces. Our feeling is beauty, alone, is sustainable."

News from the Ministries

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

Facilitators: Clair Cunningham, 763-546-0479, clairec529@msn.com & Lisa Stevens, 952-401-3959, stevensem@aol.com

Mission: *To encourage communications that reflect UUCM's values and covenant*

COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Facilitator: Jody Watts, 763-557-0978, jnkwatts@msn.com

Mission: *To sustain a thriving, caring community that welcomes & embraces human diversity*

Wednesday Soup Suppers

Soup Suppers are a great way to simplify your life! Team up with friends to pick up a salad, bread and make the soup mix available at church. Full instructions and a sign-up sheet are in the kitchen.

About Our Members

It's a baby boom! On December 28 **Rose Saoirse Calabria** arrived and was welcomed by mom and dad, **Marie** and **Mark**, and siblings **Mario**, **Rory** and **Sophia**. All are doing well. It was a New Year's Baby for the **Brandt** family! Mom **Malia**, Dad **Sam**, and big brother **Liam** welcomed **Henry Leck Brandt** on January 1! On

Sunday, January 6, at 10:29am (between services) **Katherine Doris Stine** made her arrival. Mom **Amy**, Dad **Kelby**, and big brother **Ian** are thrilled.

Sharon Lockwood had surgery just before the holidays at Methodist Hospital for a recurring hip infection. She was discharged to Texas Terrace for IV therapy. She has been home since January 14 where she will continue with her course of treatment until February 1.

Our thoughts are with John and Caroline Skaar Page and their family. John's father, Russ Page, died suddenly on January 8th at the Eden Shores Senior Residence. Russ Page, who took great pride in his children and grandchildren, was eighty years old.

Jodi Holden had a bunionectomy on her foot on January 11. She may be off her feet for as long as three to four weeks. Jodi says she is doing well, but would appreciate phone calls.

Submitted by **Elaine Ruder**, elaineandart@comcast.net

If you know of someone in the congregation who needs assistance from the Caring Ministry please contact co-chairs, Judy Kaster, judykaster@comcast.net, Stephanie McCullough-Cain, stephaniemcain@visi.com, or Kent Hemmen-Saleska, at revkent@mninter.net.

**Tuesday, February 5 is Caucus Night
Perform your Civic Duty and Participate!**

Women Who Read Contact Christy Dachelet for information at 952-933-2787

The Women Who Read Group always welcomes new members. Join them Monday, February 11 as they discuss *Misquoting Jesus* by Brad Ehrman at Lois Edwards' home. For directions call Lois at 952-942-7232.

FACILITIES & OPERATIONS MINISTRY

Facilitator: Lee Kaster, 952-935-3873,

leekaster@comcast.net

Mission: *To enhance our church environment*

FINANCE MINISTRY

Facilitator: Fred Hulting, 763-553-9514,

fhulting@comcast.net

Mission: *To ensure financial support of the church*

SOCIAL ACTION MINISTRY

Facilitator: John Crosson, 763-473-0945, crosson-johnt@aol.com

Mission: *To develop and support programs identified by Social Action and the congregation, which provide opportunities to live our UUA principles*

Congratulations and Welcome to John Crosson, our new Facilitator of Social Action Ministry! John is looking forward to the challenge and plans to have fun. He's also looking for a co-facilitator, so if you have the heart for social action issues and the desire to take a leadership role, contact John ASAP!



Social Action Ministry Sets Meeting Time

Have a heart for Social Action? You will want to attend the Social Action Ministry meeting on Wednesday, February 20 at 7 pm in Room 5. This is the first gathering in many months so come, be part of the planning group. Soup Supper is served at 6 pm!

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY

Facilitator: Michelle Maxwell, 763-550-2982,

mmaxw1016@msn.com

Mission: *to help each individual develop a personal religious identity and a sense of belonging to our UUCM community through worship, religious growth and learning, social action, service and fellowship*

WORSHIP ARTS MINISTRY

Facilitator: Weld Ransom, 952-828-5593

Mission: *To encourage individuals to act in accordance with their beliefs & values; to nurture our quest for 5 knowledge, truth & spiritual growth at every stage of life.*

January 15, 2008

Treasurer's Report for the 2nd Quarter of the 07/08 Fiscal Year

October, November, and December 2007

The fiscal year 2007/2008 anticipates income totaling \$233,144. The amount actually received through the end of the second quarter is \$150,641, or 65% of the anticipated income.

The expenses that have been included in this year's budget are as follows:

	Budget Amount	Actual through December 31
Personnel	\$178,030	\$81,768
Core Ministries		
Community	\$ 2,000	\$ 864
Religious Education	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,007
Social Action	\$ 500	\$ 700
Worship Arts	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,396
Communications	\$ 1,700	\$ 778
Facilities	\$24,744	\$ 9,600
Finance	\$ 950	\$ 232
Administrative	\$ 7,230	\$ 3,069
UUA and PSD Dues	\$ 8,490	\$13,484
Leadership Training	\$ 500	\$ 148
Technology and Computers	\$ 0	\$ 1,335
Board Discretion	\$ 0	\$ 49
	\$233,144	\$114,430

The expenses through the first half of the fiscal year represent 49% of the anticipated costs for the year.

Workshop Scheduled for February 23 from 9 to Noon What is the purpose of worship and the church?

After working through many changes in ministers and organizational structure over the past several years, and as we look to toward constructing a new church building in the future, this is a good time to revisit some big questions about our faith and why we do what we do together.

The Worship Arts Ministry and the Committee on Ministry are jointly sponsoring a workshop on **February 23 from 9 am to Noon at the church** to explore these and other questions about what we do and where we are headed. Four members of our congregation, Michael Holt and Pat Kridler (who represent the Worship Arts Ministry) and Mary Loberg and Mary Cotton Levin (who represent the Committee on Ministry), and our minister, Kent Hemmen Saleska, will organize and facilitate this event. The workshop will include both small group and large group discussions, and will end with developing ideas and creating actions for ways to continue this congregation-wide conversation.

Members, friends, and new visitors are invited and encouraged to attend! Childcare will be provided. For more information, contact our minister, Kent Hemmen Saleska at 952-473-5900 or at revkent@mninter.net, or Mary Cotton Levin (763-420-3636).

Thoughts of the President (Con't.)

On 17 January 2008, I signed an initial letter of agreement with LOCUS Inc, after receiving legal advice from a local (Wayzata) attorney – Christopher J. Pierson. This initial letter of agreement includes Locus conducting informational and participatory meetings at UUCM for design ideas and helping us getting the land rezoned so a church can built by working with the City of Wayzata and neighbors of the surrounding property.

This brings us to the vote on Sunday 27 January 2008 at 10:15 am. Our bylaws require that two thirds (2/3) of the members present at a duly called congregational meeting vote in the affirmative to approve the buying of any assets by UUCM. On 1 January we had 189 members. Only members may vote.

After numerous meetings both with the friends and members of UUCM and the Relocation Task Force to address concerns and answer questions, the Board is recommending that the Congregation approve the purchase of the property, with contingencies located at 2030 Wayzata Boulevard, Wayzata for the new home of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka.

Democracy is not only messy but it requires participation. I feel that numerous avenues have been available to encourage this. There have been articles in the Expression, Work of the Church, Friday updates, forums and invitations to join the Relocation Task Force. There is still quite a bit of work involved before the first sermon is given in our new home, but I know that this community is up to the challenge!

Sincerely,
Mike



UU 101 Class Coming Soon!

This is the class formerly known as the "New Member" class. We've changed the name because people are invited, and may want to attend, for many reasons. It may be that you are a new visitor or friend and want to know more about who we are and what we believe; it may be that you have been here a while and want to brush up on your knowledge of Unitarian Universalism while getting to know some new people at the same time; it may be that you are ready to meet with the minister and join the church as a committed new member!

If you fit any of these categories, or are simply curious about what we have to share in a class on Unitarian Universalism 101, please sign up and attend! The class will be facilitated by Kent Hemmen Saleska, our minister, and by long-time member Mary Opheim (and other members of the Community Ministry). The class will be held as a two-part series:

Part I – Saturday, March 15, from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm.

This class will cover introductions, personal journeys, a brief history of the UU faith, and other topics inspired by the questions of those who attend.

Part II – Saturday, March 29, from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

This class will cover information about the history of this congregation, the modern history and structure of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and other topics inspired by the questions of those who attend.

Finally, for those visitors and friends who take the class and are ready to commit to this congregation with membership, the next New Member Sunday will be held on Sunday, April 6.

To register for the class, please contact Kent Hemmen Saleska, our minister, at (church number) or at revkent@mninter.net, or call Mary Opheim at 952-472-4610.

The UUCM Auction is coming on January 26th! Island Getaway



Venerable Women

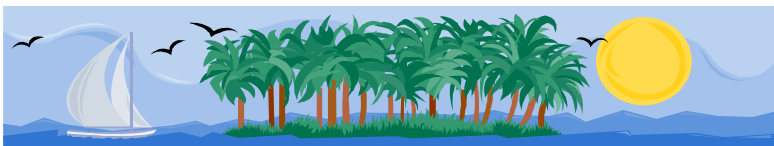
Come join us for great fun and a good cause! On Saturday, January 26, 2008 you can help us raise money for UUCM and IOCP at the annual **UUCM Auction**. This year our theme is "Island Getaway" – so plan to escape the January weather and enjoy our largest single fundraiser, and the premier social event on the UUCM calendar. **The Silent Auction starts at 5:30pm, and closes by 7:30pm, which is when our Live Auction kicks-off.** Childcare will be provided, and food, drink, and live music will be available throughout the evening. Check out www.uucmauction.org or email us at info@uucmauction.org for the latest information.

We hope to see you at the auction! In the meantime, you can find the latest auction information at www.uucmauction.org. Alternately, you can email us at info@uucmauction.org or fhulting@comcast.net, or call Fred Hulting at 763-764-6460 with your questions, comments, or requests.

Venerable Women is a fellowship group for women 60 and better! We invite all to join us as we meet the first Friday of every month. Please join us, **Friday, February 1 at 12 noon at St. Therese SW in Hopkins - 5th Floor Classroom** - for lunch and discussion. Hostesses: Bobbi Held - 763-546-2071
e mail: smithheld@yahoo.com
Shirley Wilson - 952-931-1201
email: swilsonzz@comcast.net

Please **RSVP** to Bobbi or Shirley by **Wednesday, January 30**, giving your sandwich preference of **roast beef** or **egg salad**. If you need directions, call Shirley.

Since Tuesday, February 5, is Minnesota Precinct Caucus night, our discussion will center on politics and political responsibility.





Artwork by Marc Johnson, 1995

**Unitarian Universalist
Church of Minnetonka**

**605 Rice Street
Wayzata, MN 55391**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Mission Statement

We are an open and caring religious community on a quest to live with purpose and meaning while inspiring all people to act ethically and with social conscience for the betterment of the world.

Adopted 2007

Newsletter: Working to be Green

In order to protect our environment and save our

natural resources, we encourage all who can, to receive this newsletter via email. If you want to be added to our email mailing list, please contact the church at officeadmin@mtn.org.

Also, if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter electronically or in paper form, please contact officeadmin@mtn.org or 952-473-5900, to remove your name from the newsletter list.



Staff

Kent Hemmen Saleska, Minister
Andrea Purdy Heier, Director of Religious Education
April Kaisen, Youth Advisor
Greg Membrez, Music Director
Mark Brekke, Choir Director
Emilie Fitch, Office Administrator
Rita Jelinek, Bookkeeper

Board of Trustees

Mike Elliott, President; Steve Sundby, Vice President;
Chris Hermann, Treasurer; Alison Albrecht,
Margot Barry, Bob Dachelet, Karen Hoagland,
Ward Montgomery, Jackie Smolen
Ex-Officio: Christy Dachelet, Relocation Task Force Chair

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Expression, a publication of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka, is published once a month. The purpose of the newsletter is to communicate to members and friends about the UUCM ministry, business and activities.