



**Unitarian
Universalist
Church of
Minnetonka**

Nourishing spirits. Nurturing justice.

EXPRESSION

FEBRUARY 2012

Sunday services at 9 am & 11 am with childcare available for children through Kindergarten, Religious Education Classes through 12th Grade at 11 am

UUCM Worship

February 5: "Serenity, Courage and Wisdom: Spiritual Practices in Practice"

Reverend Kent Hemmen Saleska and
Jamie Stromberg

February 12: "The Sanctity of Marriage"

Reverend Kent Hemmen Saleska and
Kate Flom

February 19: "Strong is What We Make Each Other"

Reverend Kent Hemmen Saleska,
Jessica Shogren-Carlson, and Rachel
Williams

February 26: "Spiritual Care: Humility and Hospitality"

Reverend Kent Hemmen Saleska and
the Spiritual Care Team: Sara Bidler,
Stephanie McCullough-Cain, Peg
Wilson, Maryann Wiborg, Malia Brandt

Monthly Labyrinth Walks

Looking for a chance to put down your burdens, step away from stress, and walk into a peaceful time of meditation and reflection? Take a break and come walk the labyrinth on the sanctuary floor. Used for over 4000 years as a spiritual tool for grounding and centering ourselves, the labyrinth has no dead ends, only one winding path that leads to the center; the same path will lead you out again. Come on your own time to walk in silence, or come during one of the scheduled times when music will be provided. During the weeks that the labyrinth is available, there will be candles, worry stones, prayer beads, and chimes provided. Feel free to bring your own spiritual tools as well.

The chairs will be cleared from the sanctuary so the labyrinth is available during the following weeks: Feb 19-25; Mar 12-17; Apr 8-14; May 6-12. Exact dates and details are subject to change, so please check the Friday Updates for current information.

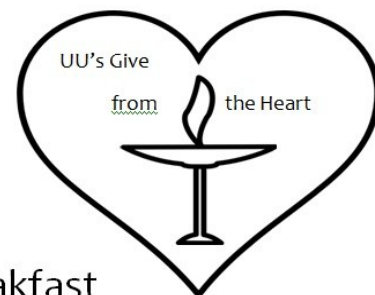
MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Stewardship Sunday Celebration

February 19th

9 & 11 am Multi-Generational Services

10 am All Congregation Continental Breakfast



*"Take the joy when it comes. It is real. And when sorrow knocks, let it enter.
This too is real. And knowing them both, know life."* Raymond John Baughan

Moving in Faith

The Reverend Kent Hemmen Saleska

I'm writing this column on the train home from Chicago after spending a week at my seminary alma mater, Meadville/Lombard Theological School, teaching a Film and Theology course I entitled "Ancient Hospitality in an Altermodern World." It was a challenging, inspiring and humbling experience.

This course was a year in the making. In January 2011, one of the Meadville/Lombard professors, Mark Hicks, sent me an email inviting me to teach a "Film and Theology" course during this January intensive term. I jumped at the chance, though I had never before taught at the graduate level. The past year involved many emails with the professors, reviewing and selecting reading materials for the course, and a series of syllabus revisions. This seminary course was similar to the film and theology classes I teach at UUCM – but on steroids!

Through watching ten different movies, we explored the two ideas described in the course title: hospitality and altermodernism.

Hospitality certainly involves "welcoming the stranger": helping a guest to feel welcome in your home or at church, or to learn where things are, or what actions are expected or acceptable. We also explored two other realms of hospitality: 1) the practice of welcoming the stranger within, those "alien" internal parts of ourselves we either don't know or want to reject; and 2) offering and creating the space for another person to discover what they need most – even if they do not know at the time what they need, and even if it is not something we need. In these two deeper realms, hospitality becomes a spiritual practice of humility and reverence.

Altermodernism, on the other hand, is a relatively recent theory from the art world, and one I did not know about until I began working on this course. It describes the process of creating images as a manifestation of how we engage the world. The theory describes the end of postmodernism (which was "merely" a reaction to modernism) as a transformation into the emerging world of the "radicant": a particularity (a person or idea) that is able to translate and flow across social and cultural boundaries. The metaphors for this theory include "connected islands" and nomads who carry their roots with them. This means we may carry our roots with us as we journey across a variety of borders, but we are not solely defined by our roots.

The ten students in the class were engaged, challenging, and gracious as well. Six years after I graduated from seminary, it was fun to meet and connect with another generation of seminary students who came from as far away as Alaska and Louisiana, California and Virginia. As I learned and grew in my role, I felt their hospitality toward me, offering and creating the space for me to be their professor. They even offered me the space to be a "radicant" in their midst, translating terms and concepts from our class readings and learnings into relevant practices for congregational life.

As I said, it was a challenging, inspiring, and humbling experience. I hope to return to teach the class again in two or three years. I already have two pages full of notes about how I'd like to improve the class for next time!

Finally, I want to offer a big "thank you" to you, the congregation, for allowing me the space for a year of preparation and a week away to expand my professional depth and practice. It was wonderful!

Moving in faith,

Kent

Board of Trustees Update

Submitted by Michael McGee, Board President

What's this, an update from the President of the Board? I am the first to admit that I have been less than diligent at assuming the responsibility of writing a monthly update for the newsletter. I could give you a hundred and one reasons why I have not done it until now, but I won't expend the time or energy. I will just commit to you to try to do better and be more focused on hitting the newsletter deadline!

Regardless of not providing updates as regularly as I should, the UUCM Board of Trustees has been busy. Hopefully this will give you some perspective on what we have been working on.

Last year the Board and the congregation voted to adopt and to move towards Policy Governance. Policy Governance, while there are many books written about it, mainly focuses on the appropriate allocation of empowerment throughout the organization. What exactly does that mean? It means that decisions are made and actions are taken by the people closest to and intimately involved with and impacted by an issue. Policy Governance clearly puts the responsibility of visioning on the board and the day to day decision making, running and responsibility of the organization in the people's hands that are best equipped and informed. The board provides the framework (called Ends Statements) while the Minister, staff, church council and others work within that framework.

During the December Board meeting, after several months of discussion, we adopted the Ends Statements for UUCM that will guide us into the future. A copy of the Ends Statements is available in the North Room on the BOT Bulletin Board.

But the transition to Policy Governance did not and does not stop there – frankly, it begins. The transition will continue to be a multi-year process which will include education (of the staff and the congregation) and writing, re-writing and reviewing every policy the church has to ensure people have the framework they need to make the decisions and take the best actions on behalf of UUCM. That part of the process is well underway.

As you can imagine, legal issues have also taken much of our time.

My mother would often use a saying when I was growing up, "Be careful what you wish for, you may get it." Never have those words seemed more appropriate than they are for UUCM.

As you all know, on December 22nd, 2010, the church agreed to settle our lawsuit with the City of Wayzata. While the city has taken a somewhat combative stance in regards to the settlement, I am very happy that we have taken the high road and continued to speak the facts without slinging any mud! While we have agreed to a settlement framework, talks continue with the city to document all of the details and parameters. Our goal is to resolve all the open issues and begin moving forward.

The announcement of the settlement drew a collective sigh of relief from many members and friends of UUCM, while at the same time raising many new questions and increasing the level of anxiety many of you felt. The most obvious question is, "What now?". Remember I mentioned my mother's saying about being careful what you wish for.

We still don't have many answers. The Board, in partnership with the Legal Task Force, is working through the framework of what the next steps will be. The most important message that everyone needs to hear and understand is that even though we have reached a settlement agreement, it does not mean we are ready to start building a new church.

(continued on page 7)

News from the Director of Religious Education

Andrea Purdy Heier

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CYRE (Children and Youth Religious Education) News

In 2007 the board of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (religious educators' professional association, also known as "LREDA") established an RE Education Futures Committee. The report from this committee, "Educating for the Future", came out in December of 2010 and has proven to be one more example of what I have been hearing, reading and perceiving of late regarding the direction of religion and RE. The executive summary begins:

Our Unitarian Universalist movement is at a critical juncture.... What sets our faith tradition apart from others is a willingness to change and grow.... Our movement as a whole has continually adapted to meet our members' spiritual needs, as well as to the needs of the society we are part of. Yet like most U.S. mainstream Protestant denominations, our numbers have been declining in recent years relative to population growth, and our religious education enrollments have fared even worse.

How can we be a vibrant liberal religious voice in our society and grow our denomination? How can we serve our longtime members, as well as those who have come to us from other backgrounds in their spiritual search, and at the same time continue to attract new seekers?

Critical to answering all these questions is the centrality of religious education in our faith. ...We see religious education as foundational for all aspects of religious life: worship, pastoral care, social justice. We also see religious education as an imperative for congregational life and future membership growth.

Interestingly, Kent and I had recently been sharing concerns over the imbalance in size of the worship services given that religious education classes for children and youth occur during only one of them. We convened meetings with WAM (Worship Arts Ministry) and LRE (Lifespan Religious Education Ministry) to jointly discuss this challenge in a larger setting and in March 2010 we began to craft a vision for becoming one whole multigenerational congregation by taking one initial step: conducting one multigenerational service each month.

UUCM is now in the second year of monthly multigenerational services which not only has succeeded in balancing out attendance between the services, but also has added fresh, meaningful dimensions to worship, increased bonds across the generations, and allowed children and youth to experience participation and inclusion in the worship practice of the entire community. Still, on the non-multigenerational Sundays, the segregated structure of CYRE (child/youth religious education) downstairs and adults worshipping upstairs, as well as the small attendance during the early worship has continued. This approach lacked focus on religious education – that which is "foundational for all aspects of religious life: worship, pastoral care, social justice" as referenced above.

As a result the next phase of our vision encompasses RE by pursuing growth and learning opportunities for all ages between worship services. This will create a common experience for all ages on Sundays, making learning opportunities for adults more accessible. Additionally, it will make worship experiences for young people more accessible as well. The LRE and WAM ministries, with the blessing and support of the Council of Ministries are moving toward accomplishment of this next phase by fall of 2012. However to truly make this successful, your input is vital!

(continued on next page)

Beginning the first Sunday in February, you are invited to attend at least one of several conversations about this potential advancement in our Sunday morning routine. Facilitated by Kent and I, with support from other ministries, these will provide the opportunity to share questions, concerns and ideas for moving forward into the future as one multigenerational community of faith. I look forward to our mutual ongoing pursuit of being “a vibrant liberal religious voice in society” – in a vibrant liberal religious facility right here in Wayzata. May it be so.

In faith —ANDREA

UUCM Committee on Ministry (COM): Do you know who we are and what we do?

Submitted by Cindy Busch

Current members of the Committee on Ministry are Bill Arnold, Cindy Busch, Susan Gower, and Barb Halsey. (Our minister, Kent Hemmen Saleska, is an ex-officio member.) COM members serve three-year overlapping terms.



This is a relatively new committee within the church. In the last several years, as the UUCM Board of Directors has been establishing Policy Governance and its End Statements, the COM has been working to define its role and purpose within the church ministries.

As we understand our general purpose, we are the agent in congregational life that represents all of its ministries. We are responsible for monitoring, evaluating, educating, and providing consultation and mediation among the ministries.

Our most current task involves formal assessment of the minister and the ministries of the church. Two members of the Board and two members of COM will be researching existing assessment tools, and developing one that fits our church structure.

As members of the UUCM Committee on Ministry, another responsibility we have is to **educate** the congregation about our role within the church. So, be looking for more newsletter articles about the different functions of the COM in the months ahead.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka Facilitators for 2011–2012

Communications: Cathy Bujold, 612.618.4891, cbujold@hobbyzone.com

Community: Open

Facilities & Operations: Mary Cotton, 763.442.5808, mary3452@hotmail.com

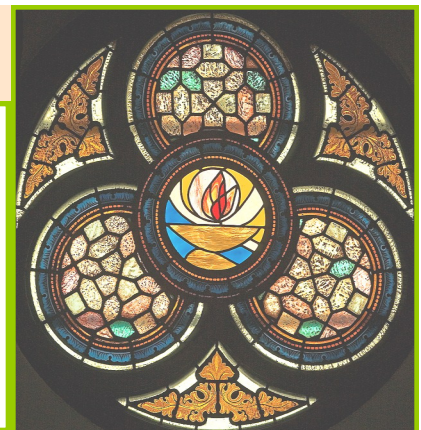
Finance: Mike Elliott, 952.906.3411, mikeelliott05@msn.com

Social Action: Stewart Hoagland, 952.238.1867, shoagland9@aol.com

Lifespan Religious Education: Julia Antonsen, 952.472.6081, janton@frontiernet.net

Membership: Janna Sundby, 952.471.7752, jannasundby@yahoo.com

Worship Arts: Kent Hemmen Saleska, revkent@mnninter.net



A Note from Your Ministerial Intern

What a year it has been so far---and we're less than a month into it! As part of my self-care practice, I take January off from school so that I can rest my brain between semesters. I'm particularly glad I did that this year, because my plate sure filled up quickly. I know many of you also found your New Year filling up unexpectedly, and I hope that you are treating yourselves gently and finding time to rest.

Last Sunday, I had the joy of sharing with you my ideas about what it means to be human, and this Sunday I will be talking about one of our famous Unitarian ancestors, James Luther Adams, in a sermon titled "The Fruits of Our Roots." I have been grateful for the encouragement you have shown me as I've presented my thoughts to you---I couldn't have asked for a more supportive internship church, and I thank you for that.

In last Sunday's sermon, I said, "Human beings are capable of perceiving the future. We don't just live in the present moment; we remember our history, and we find patterns that allow us to predict a likely future based on our present circumstances. We are able to envision a new and better reality, and then work toward achieving it."

After the service, someone pointed out that humans are also the only species that has the ability to worry. That is the other side of the gift that lets us "envision a new and better reality"---sometimes the future we perceive isn't one that brings us comfort. When we cast our visions from a place of uncertainty, not having any guarantee that things will turn out the way we want them to, we feel anxious, and we worry.

I think this is where faith comes in. We need to ask ourselves, where do we place our faith? Do we have faith in ourselves? Do we have faith in our fellow travelers? Do we place our faith in a higher power? In humanity? In the interdependent web? Where we place our faith has a significant impact on how much anxiety we feel.

I will leave you with the following food for thought:

"If you could see the journey whole, you might never undertake it; might never dare the first step that propels you from the place you have known toward the place you know not. Call it one of the mercies of the road: that we see it only by stages as it opens before us, as it comes into our keeping step by single step."

~ Jan Richardson, *The Painted Prayerbook*

Growing in Faith,
Leslie

PS: I post my sermons on my blog. I particularly had fun posting "Doing Human, Being Justice," because I was able to include links to all the various articles, books, and research I referenced in the sermon---including one on how perceiving the future gives humans the ability to worry. Happy reading! <http://leapingloon.wordpress.com>

Board Update (continued from page 3)

The Board is beginning the work of putting together a multi-year plan that will hopefully turn our goals into reality. Once the settlement is finalized and our building plans are approved, we will have SIX YEARS to complete our project. That does not mean it will take six years, but at the same time, it could take six years!

We have begun discussions as to when to actually purchase the land; how we will manage a building project; how we will pay to build our new church home; determining the resources that may be available to us through the UUA and PSD; and when we will conduct the 2nd phase of our capital campaign. There is much work to be done. We will need volunteers and we will need your help if we are to be successful in making our move.

Most importantly, for the time being, we need your patience. This has been, and continues to be a marathon, not a 5K. We are closer to being able to see the finish line, but it is not yet within our reach.

In the meantime, there are many other aspects church life we need to remain focused on - one important one is the Annual Canvas. In the coming weeks you will begin hearing about the plans for this year's campaign and some exciting changes. Remember that in order to plan our future we need to maintain our present. Give generously!

Social Justice Ministry

Stewart Hoagland

UUCM and St Edwards will be holding a joint blood drive on Sunday, February 19 from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm at St Edwards the Confessor Episcopal, 865 Ferndale Ave N, Wayzata. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the SJM bulletin board in the near future so please save the date.

Not only is this a great opportunity to help save lives, but it is a chance to visit with our friends at St Edwards. They have been wonderful partners in the Adopt a Neighborhood project and helped us expand our social justice work into our surrounding community. So please join us at St Eds on Feb 19 and experience a leisurely stroll across a large, level parking lot. Wait your turn in their warm, cozy social hall. Tour their facilities and visualize our own potential as we transition from our current facilities and into our next.

Women Who Read

The UUCM book group, Women Who Read, will be meeting on February 13 off-site. The group meets the second Monday of the month to discuss a mix of fiction, non-fiction and classics. WWR welcomes new members anytime. Please contact Christy Dachelet (czdachelet@comcast.net) for more information.

February 13 *The Sisters of Sinai: How Two Lady Adventurers Discovered the Hidden Gospels*
March 12 *The Calliffs of Baghdad*

Monday Morning Book Club

The next meeting is February 20 at 10 am in the UUCM North Room. Books for upcoming months are:

February *When God Was a Woman*
March *The Book of Ruth*

Anyone who loves to read is welcome to join! Email [BevMontgomery](mailto:BevMontgomery@comcast.net) with questions at bevmontgomery@comcast.net.

New Newsletter Editor

Cathy Bujold

This is my last Expression as editor as Judy Regan will be the editor going forward. I stepped in last spring when there was talk of reducing the frequency of the Expression newsletter or possibly eliminating it entirely. Judy has been with us less than four months but she is rapidly taking on greater and greater responsibility. As a graphic designer, the newsletter is a natural for her, and I know she has ideas about how to make it better. Thank you Judy!

Music CD Donations Requested

The Religious Education Program for Children and Youth is looking for a variety of music on CDs for use in the younger children's classrooms. If you have some functional CDs you no longer need and are willing to donate to the program, please contact Andrea Heier.

The next meeting of **Venerable Women** is on Friday, Feb 3 at noon at The Country Cake Cupboard, 491 Willow Drive, Long Lake, MN. We will have quiche and salad for lunch as as beverage and a cookie. Cost will be \$8.00.

RSVP by Jan. 31st to tell us that you will attend: Martha Huhta at 952-473-9477 or hcros-son@comcast.net.

Directions to The Country Cake Cupboard: Long Lake is 3 miles west of Wayzata on Highway 12. (Take the Long Lake exit.) Continue through town until you see the Otten Bros. Nursery on the right. At the stop light (Willow), turn left. The Country Cake Cupboard is a red building on the west side of Willow, about 1/2 block after the turn. 952-476-0222. There is parking in front of and on the north side of the building. The dining room is cute with a fireplace to keep us warm. It also is fun to browse the variety of items in the gift shop.

In The Life of Our Congregation

Editor's Note: The intent of this section of the newsletter is to encourage communication within the congregation. To allow for more personal and protected communication, this section will not be included in the version of the newsletter that is posted on our website. The regular features we plan to include are: joys and concerns, notes of gratitude, pictures to highlight an event or two that happened in the congregation in the past month, and an interview of a member of the congregation. Each month, an interviewee will be selected randomly from the membership list. If you are selected, we hope you will agree to be interviewed so we can get to know you better!

Joys and Concerns

Our sympathy goes out to Phil Dahlen on the death of his mother, Sylvia Dahlen Snow. She passed away January 6th, 2012 just shy of her 100th birthday.



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**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 office@uucmtka.org . If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter electronically or in paper form, please contact office@uucmtka.org or 952.473.5900, to remove your name.

March Newsletter Deadline Monday, February 20 at 5 pm.

All submissions should be sent to the newsletter editor Judy Regan at office@uucmtka.org.

Please include name and phone for editor verification purposes. Expression is published once a month and will be in homes the last week of the month with news for the upcoming month.

Staff

Reverend Kent Hemmen Saleska, Minister
Andrea Purdy Heier, Director of Religious Education
Greg Membrez, Music Director
Mark Brekke, Choir Director
Cathy Bujold, Administrator (volunteer)
Judy Regan, Office Assistant
Rita Jelinek, Bookkeeper

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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.