

the Flame and the Chalice

January 2012

*We are welcoming
people of diverse
beliefs who honor
spiritual inquiry
and the dignity of all.*

Services are held every Sunday at 10:30am. Children join the first part of the service and then continue their Religious Education downstairs. Childcare is available before and during the services. Coffee and fellowship follow the service in the Fellowship Hall.

[937 Charles Avenue](#)
[Mankato MN 56001](#)

44.1536° N
94.0317° W

The UUFM is served by:

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Upcoming Sunday Services

February—Recognizing the Gifts of Life

At times we struggle just to survive and sustain. And yet, it is often difficult to see the duality of suffering. Can we name the gifts of life, even in hard times?

Perspective and Communication (February 5)

Nita Gilbert—Ever left saddened by how your intention was misconstrued, your words mistaken? In the process of trying to communicate, to work together, we miss each other. Why are we too often left with frustration and hurt, needing to vent, sometimes causing more harm in the process? Nita Gilbert, singer-songwriter and member of Nora UU Church, will remind us of the role perspective plays in what we say and do, and how, with conscious compassion, we can learn to honor and love everyone within the Whole.

The Gift of Suffering (February 12)

Kim Banz—Why do we suffer? Is suffering always bad? We'll 'unpack' the Book of Job and explore its relevance for modern readers and UUs. Kim Banz is a first year student at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. She has been involved in sustainable agriculture for over a decade, as a Peace Corps Volunteer and Eco-Director in Central America and the owner/operator of EarthQuest Farm in south-east Minnesota.

Life in the Faith of Death (February 19)

Laura Smidzik—Many faiths have prescribed doctrine-based funeral and burial rituals. Clear theological issues are addressed throughout the process of dying and death ranging from last rites and sacraments through the burial. What do Unitarian Universalists believe about death and what are the rituals for death and mourning that are most common within the faith? Laura Smidzik is a second year student at United Theological Seminary.

Jubilee Sunday (February 26) Intergenerational Worship

Transition Update

Our current budget cannot support a full-time minister at UUA fair-compensation levels, so settled and interim ministry are eliminated, and at this time no nearby congregation has offered to explore yoked ministry. There appears to be substantial support for at least some level of professional ministry, so we will likely be looking for part-time contract or consulting ministry (the difference between the two is whether the contract is time-limited with clearly delineated objectives to be accomplished, or is more open-ended). It also appears that most members feel we should give ourselves a "longer" time for the transition (don't rush into the next phase, but be mindful about it). This transition is an opportunity to engage each other and the larger community to build our vision of who we are becoming, and we should take advantage of it.

Social Action Connection

Energy Conservation Group — February 6

Anita Doyle, a Green Irene eco-consultant, gave us some practical suggestions for making the UUFM more environmentally responsible. On Monday, February 6, we will meet at 10:00am to review this report and strategize on how to get the most out of our \$500 budget.

Some of those ideas include:

- Installing a dishwasher to save water and energy
- Installing low-flow faucet aerators. The kitchen faucets currently flow at almost 3 gallons per minute; a \$2 aerator would reduce that to 1gpm.
- Clean the motor and coils on the refrigerators
- Remove the debris from the kitchen exhaust fan.
- Insulate the pipes that transport hot water from the water heater to the kitchen.
- Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs or LED lighting
- Start replacing the fluorescent lights in the Fellowship Hall with T8 bulbs that use electronic instead of magnetic ballast. This would also reduce the humming and flickering.
- Use the ceiling fans in the winter as well as the summer
- Weather-strip the outside doors and consider replacing the door by the sound booth.



Organizing to Defeat Marriage-Ban Amendment

Marianne Johnson and Nancy Cramblit would like to invite anyone interested in defeating the 'anti-marriage amendment' to attend the first organizing meeting of the UUFM Marriage Equality Action Group (UUFMO4M — a subset of the Social Action Committee) on **Tuesday, January 31, 7:00pm** at the church.

We will work with Minnesotans United for All Families (the group that facilitated a community action training here on October 1) and with the MN UUO4M group: UUs Out for Marriage Equality! They have lots of resources and ideas regarding speakers, phone banking, the 515 MN laws about marriage that committed same-sex couples right now have no access to, having our youth make posters, holding interfaith meetings/worship services and more.

In November, the goal will be to get 1,450,000 anti-amendment supporters to the polls to vote "NO!!"

Eco-Event: Toothbrush Rug Making

Join us after the service on February 19 to explore the art of making rugs from rags and scrap fabric. We will be learning to make "toothbrush" rugs. All you need is a couple of yards of fabric scraps at least 2" wide and 18" long. Old shirts, other cotton clothing, or even old sheets will work as well. The "toothbrush" needle will be available at the workshop (cost is \$1 for each new needle) and there will be plenty of fabric scraps if you don't have any of your own. A sampling of rugs will be on display in the Fellowship Hall in the weeks prior. This workshop is great for all skill levels - no previous rug-making experience required. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Ganske at 385-0176 or ganske@aol.com. Come to learn a new skill, use up some scraps, or just for the fun of crafting with friends - new and old.



Committee News

Circle of the Oak and Raven

The Circle of the Oak and Raven, the UUFM's very own Earth-based Spirituality group, is changing. Like a caterpillar transforming into a beautiful butterfly, these changes will allow the group to soar and we invite any and all to join us! The Circle will meet in the UUFM Planet Room or the Black/White Room for tea, meditation and discussion each second Wednesday of the month from 7:00-9:00pm. Discussion topic will be posted ahead of time and could include divination, cooking as a spiritual practice, book discussion, etc.

In addition to the monthly teas, the Circle will host four public Rituals, tied to the four seasons or fire festivals. Rituals will be weekend events, organized by those who attend the monthly teas. A Ritual will last about an hour and a collection will be taken to benefit the UUFM.

Another significant change will be the closing of the yahoo group (in the near future) and the creation of a new facebook group or page linked to the Fellowship page; we want to make it easier for all interested to connect.



Volunteer Opportunity at Lincoln

Are you looking for a rewarding volunteer opportunity? Consider helping the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program at Lincoln Community Center. As an ABE volunteer, you may help in the English Language Learner program or tutor those who are interested in earning their GED. ABE is offered Monday through Friday, 8am-4pm during the day and 5:30-8:30pm at night. Volunteers are allowed to set their own hours and to keep a flexible schedule, so if you can only commit to once a week or once a month, the help is appreciated. For more information or to sign up for an orientation, please contact the volunteer coordinator at (507) 345-5222 and ask for Teri Fink or email her at tpeter2@isd77.k12.mn.us

Newcomers, This Is for You!

We invite you to become acquainted with two of our members who will answer any questions you have about this Fellowship. These short, informal sessions are offered the first Sunday in February, March or April, after the service. Pick up refreshments downstairs, enjoy about 10 minutes of conversation with others, and listen for the call for "Newcomers." We'll meet downstairs, and children are welcome.

Book Discussion: Acts of Faith

Join us in the Planet Room on Wednesday, February 8 at 6:30pm to discuss the UUA's Common Read for this year: Eboo Patel's *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation*. That very long title and unusual author's name take us into, in the words of Beacon Press, "a remarkable account of growing up Muslim in America and coming to believe in religious pluralism." You may recognize Patel as a regular contributor to the Washington Post, National Public Radio and CNN. Written in an easy, engaging style, this book presents not only the struggle but one solution for keeping young people from extremism masquerading as religion. Patel serves on President Obama's Advisory Council of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Copies of the book are available from Karen Knox at 387-6599 or kareneknox@gmail.com.

2nd Connection: Project Read

Donate new and gently used books for Project Read through February 5. Let's fill the specially marked bookcase at the back of the sanctuary! Mankato's Project Read promotes early literacy and distributes books to families in need in the community.

COMMITTEES

Adult Programming

Tricia Nienow
Dani Kroon

Building/Grounds

Dave Schostag

Fellowship

Jane Schostag

Membership

Karen Knox

Finance

Dave Rice

Fundraising

Michelle Sturm

Library

Becky Rossow

Ministry

Gail Finley

Music

Barbara Brindle

Pastoral Care

Kay VanBuskirk

Personnel

Kay VanBuskirk

Publicity

Jim Rovney

Lifespan Faith

Lee Ganske

Social Action

Diane Dobitz

Becky Rossow

Technology

Joe Anderson

Transition Options

Tony Filipovitch

Worship

Carrie Rice

Board Notes

2011-2012 Board of Directors

President
Jane Schostag

Vice President
Marty Costine

Secretary
Barbara Brindle

Treasurer
Jeanne Myron

Member
Karen Knox

Member
Mike Powell

Member
Kay VanBuskirk

Past President
Laura Bealey

Transition – When they passed the 2011-12 budget, the Board made a commitment to provide additional funding to the worship committee to pay guest ministers during this transition period.

UU Office: The Board will be looking for volunteers to help answer the phones during office hours in order to free up Joe's time for the many tasks that she is expected to perform.

Pastoral Care Team: Kay VanBuskirk will be the initial contact for pastoral care needs. Members of the Care Team will have a chalice and red heart on their name tags for easy recognition.

Odds and Ends: We discussed how to keep members informed about the progress on hiring a new minister, how to move forward on installing a lift, how to make our building and entry more welcoming to individuals from diverse faith traditions, coordination of our many committees, renewing the vision of our fellowship, and effective/appropriate use of social media in outreach.

Respectfully Submitted, Barbara Brindle

From your congregational president

As I write, I am reflecting on the beautiful farewell service for Rev. Lisa followed by the well timed, spirit-lifting Peter Mayer performances and the energy expressed at the semi-annual meeting. January 2012 was a month for celebrating our blessings as a UU congregation as we move into the new year. We are blessed with leadership from a talented and hardworking Transition Options team and a new ministerial Search team; these teams are supported by a congregation rich in vision for the future and the skills to make that vision a reality.

The Transition team advised us on ministry options, the Search team will begin soon to pursue those options and seek candidates. At the same time, we will review our vision and our strategic plan to help us focus on the qualities and talents of candidates that are most important to us. We will begin a new Stewardship process that determines the financial pledge needs for the upcoming year. We want to maintain our valued personnel and make sure we generate the funds necessary to support new ministry. Our Finance, Personnel, and Stewardship committees will collaborate to advise us on targeting financial goals for the upcoming year. At the same time our Building and Grounds committee will advise us on needed building improvements in the future, such as a much wanted and needed lift. (Be sure to take a look at Tommy Cramblit's exciting vision of possible building upgrades!)

Watch for opportunities to be involved in the discussions. The Transition Options team got some great feedback during table topics on 1/15; expect ongoing conversation as we move forward.

Thank you for sharing your ideas, your talents, and your energy, Jane S.

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

www.psdoua.org/AnnualConference2012

UUFM Financial Snapshot for July-December 2011

<i>We received</i>	Pledges	\$ 52,170
	Other Income (Offerings, Rummage Sale, Parsonage)	15,103
<i>We spent or incurred</i>	Administration, Operations, Utilities, Mortgage	17,009
	Outreach & Denomination Support	5,922
	Staffing	40,718
Five Month Net Gain/Net Loss		\$ 3,624

febrero

2012

February

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
			8:30am Office Hours 5:45pm Choir Practice 6:00pm LFD Committee 7:00pm Worship Committee 7:00pm Care Committee	Groundhog Day		Prophet Mohammed's Birthday
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Last day for Project Read donations 9:00 AM Membership Committee 10:30am Worship 11:40am Getting Acquainted	8:30am Office Hours 10:00am SA Energy Conservation 6:00pm Adult Programming Committee	3:54pm Full Moon	8:30am Office Hours 5:30pm Finance Committee 5:45pm Choir Practice 6:30pm Book Discussion (Planet Room) 7:00pm COR Tea (Black/ White Room)			Silent Auction & Social Revelry— 5:00pm Chili Supper
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Lincoln's Birthday 9:00am Social Action Committee 10:30am Worship	8:30am Office Hours 1:00pm Staff Meeting	Valentine's Day	8:30am Office Hours 5:45pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary) 6:00pm UUFM Board Meeting		5:00pm Facility Rental	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:30am Worship Noonish Eco-Event: Toothbrush rugs	Presidents' Day 8:30am Office Hours 6:15pm Bldg & Grounds Committee	Newsletter Deadline 7:00pm Personnel Committee	Ash Wednesday 8:30am Office Hours 5:45pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)			
26	27	28	29	1	2	3
10:30am Worship	8:30am Office Hours		8:30am Office Hours 5:45pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)			

Thank you from Rev. Lisa Friedman

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for such a wonderful celebration of our ministry together and the warm send-off on January 8! My house is still filled with flowers and I am savoring the cards. The signed picture of the banner and the beautiful stole are hanging in my study, and the stained glass replica of the church windows is sparkling in the sun. I can still hear the choir singing and feel blessed by the tears, laughter, and mutual affection that were with us that day. You are, as I have always known, an amazing congregation.

I will keep you updated on what lies ahead for me and look forward to watching your new adventures from afar! This spring we will be using part of your generous gift to go to New York City to celebrate Ben's 10th birthday. Thank you for being a part of our family's growth and journey. Blessings to you, now and always.

Lisa

Lifespan Faith Development Wish List

- Book Shelves
- File Cabinets
- Website updating assistance
- Multi Generational Service planning/ideas/assistance
- LFD Committee members
- Assistance with our UUFM Youth Group
- Family Fun event planners/organizers
- LFD Teachers
- Service Project ideas and planning



Silent Auction Items

Be prepared to bid on:

- Fine wine
- Handcrafted beer
- Homemade pies
- Housekeeping services
- And much more



Donations and Volunteers Needed for Silent Auction

Thanks to those of you who have already given me a description of your auction donation. If you haven't yet, please take a minute right now.

Volunteer to help arrange the Fellowship Hall and get a first look at the incredible items available! No experience necessary, brawn and agility required. You'll be replacing an aged and arthritic crew who asked to be replaced. If you can give us a couple of hours to help with this task, your time would be greatly appreciated.

Kay VanBuskirk ckvanb@hickorytech.net

Silent Auction & Social Revelry

Sat, February 11

UUFM Fellowship Hall

Chili Supper
5:00-6:30pm

Silent auction **bidding** will close in 30-minute intervals beginning at 7:00pm
(each bid sheet will indicate the closing time for that item)