



Blue Hills Bulletin

The Blue Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is a multigenerational congregation, guided by the principles and liberal traditions of Unitarian Universalism, that promotes an environment of acceptance, inspiration, and action in order to create a sense of greater community.

December 2016

Next issue March 2017

UU Common Read for this year

The board and program committee have decided to participate in this year's common read. This book, *The Third Reconstruction*, is described on the UUA website as follows:

"The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is overcoming the politics of Division and Hate by The Rev. Dr. William Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove (Beacon, 2016), has been chosen as the 2016-17 Unitarian Universalist Common Read. Unitarian Universalists were electrified at General Assembly 2016 by Rev Barber's call for building and sustaining a movement for justice for all people. The Common Read selection committee believes that now is a moment for Unitarian Universalists to answer that call. *The Third Reconstruction* offers helpful, practical guidance for engaging with justice movements born in response to local experiences of larger injustices. Drawing on the prophetic traditions of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, while making room for other sources of truth, the book challenges us to ground our justice work in moral dissent, even when there is no reasonable expectation of political success, and to

do the hard work of coalition building in a society that is fractured and polarized."

Eight copies are now available in the BHUUF library. Speak to Librarian Bob Hasman to check out a copy.

Two forums in March will be dedicated to a discussion of this important book.

Guest At Your Table

Submitted by Linda Thompson

This past Sunday, our church service focused on the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. This year marks the 75th year of the organization. Each year our members have participated in giving to UUSC through the Guest At Your Table program.

This year's theme is "Defying Hate" and stories focused on individuals around the world who have been affected by war, poverty, climate changes, intolerance, and hate.

We encourage members to select a box and brochure at church - take it home through December 18 - drop some coins or more into your box until then. We will collect the boxes on December 13th and send our congregational donations to the UUSC. Donations of any size are appreciated and effectively distributed by the UUSC to their projects in many countries.

Thanks for your support, Linda Thompson

Our Whole Lives

Nadine Wetzel-Curtis

Our Whole Lives, or "OWL" is a comprehensive, values based sexuality education curriculum. It was developed by and is continually being updated by the UUA and United Church of Christ. Blue Hills UU sponsored our (Nadine and Bryan's) facilitators training this last June in Wausau. We're currently seeking another person who is trained or is willing to be trained as a facilitator.

This class does an excellent job of addressing all aspects of sexuality: sexual identity and orientation, intimacy, sensuality, sexual health and reproduction, and sexualization in an effort to provide accurate, up-to-date information so young people can make informed decisions and feel more comfortable as they grow and mature.

We've set a goal to offer an OWL class for 7th and 8th graders or 8th and 9th graders during the 2017-2018 school year. A class would meet for the equivalent of 25 ninety minute sessions either one evening a week for approximately 20 times and two longer retreats. An alternative would be to have 4 or 5 longer retreats spread over the school year.

Please help by spreading the word to parents and young people you may know who would like to

participate in this extraordinary class.

If you are a trained OWL facilitator or are interested in becoming trained, please contact us at nwetzselcurtis@gmail.com or 715 637-0153.

Poetry

Submitted by Judy Barisonzi

The Draft Horse

by Robert Frost

With a lantern that wouldn't burn
In too frail a buggy we drove
Behind too heavy a horse
Through a pitch-dark limitless grove.

And a man came out of the trees
And took our horse by the head
And reaching back to his ribs
Deliberately stabbed him dead.

The ponderous beast went down
With a crack of a broken shaft.
And the night drew through the trees
In one long invidious draft.

The most unquestioning pair
That ever accepted fate
And the least disposed to ascribe
Any more than we had to to hate,

We assumed that the man himself
Or someone he had to obey
Wanted us to get down
And walk the rest of the way.

by Robert Frost

Quote

submitted by Jude Genereaux

"It is difficult to get the news from poems yet (people) die miserably every day for lack of what is found there."

Wm Carlos Williams

A Severe Setback For Creation Care (and) the Way forward

Kent Shifferd

There is no sugar coating the truth that the new administration in Washington including the President and Vice President and the Congressional leadership are not only climate deniers, but have stated that they intend to attack regulations that defend and preserve the environment at every level. They intend to turn away from our commitments on the Paris climate accords, to dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency, abort the Clear Power Plan that would have shuttered the dirtiest coal plants, renege on emissions standards for vehicles, abolish the Endangered Species Act, bring back the heavy extractive industries like steel and mining, revive the Keystone Xcel Pipeline, and these are just for starters.

The Reverend Canon Sally Bingham of Interfaith Power and Light, a faith based organization focusing on climate change, exhorts us to stand up and fight back, not against party or individuals, but against ignorance and greed. Here is some of her text. I have highlighted a few lines in red.

We can't afford to backslid on our hard won victories: the Clean Power Plan, the Paris climate agreement, cleaner automobiles. Our work may have just gotten harder, but we are not giving up. There is far too much at stake.

Interfaith Power and Light is rooted in theology - answering God's call to be the stewards of Creation and to love each other. Our focus for 16 years has been protecting the climate while recognizing the injustice and inequality of who and where harm is experienced. We believe that climate change is a critical global challenge and we are committed to meeting that challenge by advocating to limit carbon emissions, energy efficiency and transitioning to a clean energy economy. We believe that fossil fuels belong in the ground.

The IPL campaign is not politically motivated, but, rather, motivated by moral responsibility. Therefore we will continue to work for the things we believe will protect the climate and the future of the planet.

In these times of doubt and confusion, we can draw on the strength of our spiritual traditions and our communities, our ongoing efforts to care for Creation, and on our long history of "bending the arc toward justice." **We encourage you to talk with each other, be with each other, and above all, do not despair. Let any despair quickly turn to positive action.**

Our job is to make sure that the new Congress and new administration understand that people of faith care deeply about being good stewards of Creation. We all breathe the same air. We all want a better world for our children and future generations. We all want to revitalize our communities.

The faith community and IPL will have a critical role to play. We will continue to build bridges, and speak to people of all political persuasions from the perspective of shared values. We will act locally, and continue to win local victories. We will find ways to cut pollution and protect the health of our communities. as we always have. The transition to a clean energy economy has begun, and it won't be stopped by an election.

Working together with faith, we will succeed.

I choose to believe in a redemptive future and to work for it. We humans possess all we need to know in order to get under way. We know the terrible price of doing nothing, of letting Hypercivilization drift on. Will we make it? I choose to side with Lester Brown, the President of World Watch Institute, who observed: "First we need to decide what needs to be done. Then

we do it. Then we ask if it is possible."

Furthermore, not all is dictated from Washington. We must seek to influence our national legislators and corporations, preferably by supporting organizations that mobilize people and expertise - such as the Sierra Club, Earth Justice, Friends of the Earth, and a host of others named recently in our polling of organizations our members support. Also, we can act regionally and locally. State and local communities can and are having positive impacts and there are many things each of us can do in our daily lives to reduce our carbon footprint and there is much we can do at Blue Hills for the same end. We can also plant gardens, drive less and more slowly, turn down our thermostats and put on a sweater.

November 19th Meeting

by Linda Tollefsrud

Several board members and Linda Thompson, along with members of the Menomonie congregation, met for a mini-conference with Phil Lund from Mid-America on Saturday, November 19th. The conference was divided into several sessions. The first was "The Changing Religious Landscape" and we discussed changing demographics in the U.S., the changing numbers of persons who have a religious affiliation, etc. The second session asked us to consider who we are as a congregation, what we do, and why it matters. The third session was entitled "The Sweet Spot and Entry Points." In sum, the goal was to discover how we, as a particular congregation, might best reach out to our communities. The Board looks forward to sharing information and exercises from this event with congregational members in two discussion forums scheduled for January 22nd and January 29th. If you are unable to attend either or both of these forums, check out the "Love Reaches Out" materials on the UUA's outreach page:
<http://www.uua.org/growth/outreach>.

A good book to Recommend.

by Brian Rude

The Rightous Mind, by Johathan Heidt

This book was a gift from Bob Hasman, a birthday gift actually, though I don't normally admit to having birthdays. Bob said he knew I would be interested, as the author writes about things that I have been talking about for years. Bob was right. It's a very good book.

It's a book about morality, the psychology of morality, and the evolutionary heritage of the human species that is behind morality in humans. The author, Jonathan Haidt, is a psychologist, but he often sounds like a philosopher as much as a psychologist. He presents six different bases on which ideas of morality can be built. Each basis appeals more to some groups of people than to others. Indeed some of these six bases seem almost invisible to some groups of people. When that is the case, it is quite understandable that the morality of one group of people can be very hard to understand by other groups of people.

The first third of the book develops a metaphor, that of reason as a rider sitting atop an elephant. The elephant is our natural inborn reflexes, drives, tendencies, and reflexes elicited by moral questions that arise in everyday life. The elephant does not think. It reacts emotionally. It reacts immediately, and by intuition, not thought. The rider sitting atop the elephant is reason. The function of the rider, reason, is to serve the elephant. Reason is used to rationalize what the elephant does immediately by intuition. That seems backwards to many people. It seems like reason should be in charge of our moral judgements, not intuition. It seems like moral judgements should be the result of careful thought, not immediate intuition.

But it doesn't seem backwards to me. For decades I have said reason is in the service of emotion, not the other way around. The reason I have said this for decades is simple observation. It's what I have observed everyday for decades. It's also something Ben Franklin also observed and said. A quote of his has stuck in my mind for decades. "So convenient a thing it is to be a

reasonable creature, since it enables one to find or make a reason for every thing one has a mind to do." No argument there.

The elephant judges and reacts by intuition in the blink of an eye. The rider sitting atop the elephant serves the elephant with whatever rationalization is needed, no matter how awkward and unconvincing such rationalization seems to others.

The first basis of morality is care. That is easy for most anyone to understand, and is found in some form in all religions. The idea of not harming others is easy to understand, even for children. But, it turns out, care is not the only basis for morality. It is perhaps a dominant basis for morality in western civilization, but careful investigation of other cultures show there to be other bases of morality. Ultimately Haidt identifies six foundations of morality. They are:

1. care / harm
2. Fairness / cheating
3. Loyalty / betrayal
4. Authority/subversion
5. Sanctity/degradation
6. Liberty / oppression

Haidt explains those concepts with lots of examples from other cultures.

Of special interest to me is the phenomenon that Haidt

calls "groupishness". I've called it "groupiness" all my life, and have always felt it is a very important concept, one of the more important concepts of human life. I'm very glad that Haidt brings in this concept, but I'm not entirely happy what he does with it. But that's another story.

I'll be reading and rereading this book for a long time. I see we have a copy in our church library. I hope a lot of people borrow it give it some serious thought. .

Warming Center

By Valerie Grant Rude

We at BHUUF have volunteered the use of our building as an emergency temporary warming center through the Barron County Emergency Services, located in Barron, WI. When extremely low temperatures are coupled with power outages, our temporary warming center will be used to provide local residents a safe place to stay warm until the power can be restored. Providing water and coffee, the warming center can be opened within a few hours from time of request and will be typically open less than 8 hours. A small number of staff (one or two) is needed to open and manage the shelter. Currently there are five persons who have volunteered to be available to staff our building as a temporary warming center.

Bring the hymnals back

Brian Rude

I count only twenty-two hymnals at church. I don't know how many we should have, but probably a few more. If you have taken a hymnal home for some reason, maybe when preparing a service, then perhaps it's time to bring it back. Some of us, like myself, keep a hymnal at home because we need it often. But there might be some hymnals in homes just because people forget about them. If you have one at home and don't really need it, please bring it back.

Blue Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
P.O. Box 614
Rice Lake, WI 54868
715-234-6337

Meeting at 230 W. Messenger Street
Rice Lake, WI



December, January schedule

Dec 4 Forum: Transcendentalism series, Part 5,
Mark Van Etten
Service: The Adventure of Growing
up UU, Valerie Rude

Dec 11 Forum: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,
Judy Barisonzi
Service: Trilogy of Prehistoric Gifts,
Waldo Asp / Ken Hood

Dec 18 Forum: Transcendentalism series, Part 6
Service: Winter Solstice Stories,
Pat Shifferd

Dec 25 No Forum
Service: Christmas Celebration

January 1, 2017, No forum
New Year's celebration,

Jan 8 Forum: Transcendentalism, Part 7
Service: Invisible Refugees, Bob Hasman

Jan 15 Forum: The War That Saved My Life,
Rena Wetzel-Curtis
Service: Music & Poetry Sunday

Jan 22 Forum, Board Forum (Renewing Love?)
Service: Norsk Myths & Predictions Of
the Future, Waldo Asp

Jan 29 Forum: Board Forum, Part 2
Service: Friendship, Pat Barry