

*Blue Hills UU Newsletter*  
*June 2016 – August 2016*

We have come to the end of another church year. The services have been enlightening and hopefully have helped with the spiritual growth of everyone. Thanks to everyone who have gotten the guest speakers and to the members who have done forums and services. Have a great summer and will see you at the summer discussion services.

*2016 Regional Assembly: Linda's perspective*

Recently, I attended the Regional Assembly in St. Paul, MN. Ken Hood and Gerri Nedland also attended. All UU's in this area were fortunate to have the opportunity to attend this Assembly although the cost probably was one factor in determining attendance. The Assembly was held at a large hotel situated overlooking the beautiful Mississippi River. The schedule was full and participants could attend the sessions, services, or workshops Friday evening through Sunday morning. I heard the conference attendance was about 400 although sessions varied in number.

Gerri, Ken and I probably each had different expectations and experiences. I have been a UU member since 1976 and have been involved at the district level. I have also attended General and Regional Assemblies so I expected certain organizational activities at the conference. My personal need and objective was to **be** with other UU's, to have conversations, to learn from their congregational experiences and, perhaps, to come away with some specific ideas.

The lvery dynamic and, yes, spiritual worship services were most special for me. UU ministers with stimulating messages, fine music and musicians, familiar hymns, special readings shared with 200 or more UU's was good for my soul. The conversations with a few former friends and

many new contacts were interesting and reassuring: “yes, we are all in this together/keep it going/etc.” One workshop that I attended will be offered as a forum some time next year: “Global Interfaith Connection: The Parliament of the World's Religions”. The keynote sessions included a panel of speakers who held discussion with the attendees: “Who do we want to be as faith communities in the coming years? Who will be UU's need to be, to be relevant? Who will be joining us on this journey?”

I came home with some notes, a few new books, some ideas for our congregation, respect for UU leadership -**ministers** and (very active) **members** (having heard their stories), and a bit more determination to keep engaged in our own little group (yes, we are little)---or as a supportive UU member for other very active groups around the country. They are doing so much good work, acting on their beliefs-on our shared principles. *Linda*

### Minutes of 2016 Annual meeting

The annual meeting of the Blue Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship convened at 10:30 a.m. on May 15, 2016.

After lighting the chalice and announcements/welcomes, the business of the Fellowship was begun.

A quorum of 18 voting members was established. Pat Shifferd agreed to take notes. Mark Van Etten's proxy to Pat Shifferd was noted.

The minutes of the 2015 annual meeting had been distributed. Pat Shifferd moved, JJ Gephardt seconded to dispense with the reading of these minutes and approve them. Motion carried.

The hymn “Come and Go With Me” was sung with accompaniment from Brian Rude, Rob Jensen, and Judy Barisonzi. The congregation assisted with rhythm.

**Board President report:** Judy Barisonzi reported that the board had been very busy during the year in the process of planning for the transition required by the wish of April Nielsen to “retire” as Covenanted Lay Leader. Judy noted that numerous board meetings and e-mail exchanges had been necessary to develop a transition process and elicit input from the congregation. The board was thanked for doing this with little/no complaint.

Judy then thanked April for her service as CLL and announced that a tree, a ninebark, had been planted in her honor. Some discussion followed about why it's called that.

**Lay Leader report:** April noted that this year is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BHUUF. Since its founding in 1981, an annual meeting has been held every year in May. The founders did what the members of the Fellowship continue to do through their volunteer participation: re-create the vision (“who we are”) and life of the group. This has been true during her 6 years as CLL. Volunteer groups, like BHUUF, tend to operate by a paradox: doing things as they have always been done and being creative with new ways of doing things. BHUUF’s tradition is to embrace this creativity to grow and embrace new people and ideas. She notes that her intention when she became CLL was to do this work for only a few years. There have been extensive conversations about how we want to move forward. She encourages everyone to continue to encourage the growth of each other and the group. There are many opportunities for each person to help expand the vision. She thanked everyone who has worked to make BHUUF a loving community.

**Committee reports:** Geri Nedland noted that she has been providing a meal at Benjamin House each month and hopes this will continue, as well as other projects such as the lunch box meal. Ideas for effective social action are always welcome. In addition, Geri was thanked for taking on the newsletter this year.

Linda Thompson, a founding member, lit a candle of thanks for 35 years of BHUUF; Carlin Stelzer noted he was one of the founding kids. She pointed out that the 2 fund-raising events (harvest sale, silent auction at Christmas) did not raise a lot of money, but that was ok this year, since everyone was so busy with planning and there was sufficient funds. The suggestion was made to start the harvest sale earlier, perhaps late summer.

Linda Tollefsrud pointed out that while we only have a few children, we try to have something available for them when they are able to attend. Thanks to Bob Hasman and Irene Asp for helping with this. Nadine Wetzel-Curtis noted that Rena thinks of the members of the congregation as something like grandparents; Nadine thanked the group for this.

**Restucturing Resolution:** The resolution printed on the agenda was moved (Pat Shifferd moved, Linda Tollefsrud second) for discussion:

Be it resolved that for the fiscal year 2016-2017, Blue Hills UU Fellowship will hire guest speakers to offer at least nine services during the year, and will hire a Fellowship Coordinator to work four hours per week at tasks necessary for the smooth functioning and growth of the Fellowship.

An amendment to drop the words “at least nine” from the resolution was offered. The reason was to allow for greater flexibility in programming. Discussion followed on this amendment. The amendment failed (in favor = 2, opposed = 11, abstain = 1).

Then the original motion was approved (in favor – 16, opposed = 0, abstain = 1).

**Budget Proposal:** Treasurer Pat Shifferd moved the adoption of the proposed budget, copies of which had been distributed. The budget reflects the restructuring just adopted and is based on the wonderful input received from the congregation on priorities. In addition to altering the employee compensation and program lines to accommodate the new structure, the budget reflects the desire of the group to strengthen the Fellowship fiscally by establishing a reserve fund equal to 10% of the budget (this will take place over 2 years) and to pay extra toward the principal of the mortgage. Small increases in maintenance and social action were provided for. The other major change was money to provide for wi-fi access in the building. Total expense and income = \$23,500 (pledges = \$22,000, non-pledge

income = \$750, fund-raising = \$750). The budget passed unanimously.

She encouraged people to renew or increase their pledges for next year. In addition, the pledge sheet, now available, asks people to indicate their time commitments to various Fellowship functions as well as their monetary commitment to the operations budget or additional funds for the mortgage.

**Board Election:** Ken Hood reported from the nominating committee. Linda Tollesrud is proposed as Board Chair and Pat Shifferd is proposed to continue as Treasurer. Ken put his own name forward for the board and Linda Tollesrud suggested he be elected as Vice-Chair. Nominations from the floor for the remaining board seats: Valerie Rude, Geri Nedland, and Nadine Wetzel-Curtis. Motion made by Linda Tollesrud, second Christin Gay, to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot in favor. Motion passed.

**Nominating Committee:** The following nominations for next year's nominating committee were made: April Nielsen, Mark Van Etten, Linda Thompson. Linda Tollesrud moved, Christine Gay seconded to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot if favor. Motion passed.

Judy Barisonzi noted that newsletter articles should go to Geri Nedland and that the summer schedule, beginning June 5, will soon be available. The annual meeting was adjourned.

The chalice was extinguished and the Fellowship Friendship Circle was recited. Attendees continued the gathering with a potluck meal in the downstairs hall.

## **Meet new board members: Linda Tollesrud, Valerie Rude, Ken Hood, Pat Shifford, Nadine Wetzel-Curtis, Gerri Nedland**

### **• AS A CHRISTIAN**

**As a Christian, I say  
To my friends the Buddhists,  
"Perfect your Buddhism. Walk with reverence.  
Be merciful and do peace for you are  
True servants of God."  
To my friends the Muslims I say,  
"Perfect Islam. Walk with reverence.  
Be merciful and do peace for you are  
True servants of God."  
To my friends the Jews I say,  
"Perfect your Judaism. Walk with reverence.  
Be merciful and do peace for you are  
True servants of God."  
To my friends the Hindus I say,  
"Perfect your worship. Walk with reverence.  
Be merciful and do peace for you are**



**True servants of God."**  
**To my friends who follow the old way of the Indians I say,**  
**"Walk reverently in the moccasins of the Great Spirit.**  
**To my friends the pagans I say**  
**"Follow the Great Mother in all Her ways.**  
**Walk with reverence.**  
**Be merciful and do peace" for you are**  
**True servants of God."**  
**Even to the atheist I say,**  
**"Walk with reverence. Be merciful and do peace**  
**And you will be serving God."**  
**And to my friends the Christians, fervently I say,**  
**"Walk with reverence, love mercy, do peace,**  
**For this is the only test of our faith.**  
**'By their fruits Ye shall know them,'"**  
**He said.**

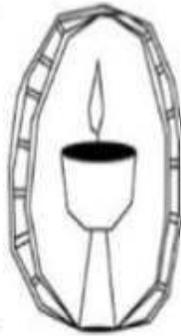
• **WATER INTO WINE? WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE KIDDING?**

**The writers of the four gospels say that Jesus turned water into wine at a marriage feast. Doesn't sound very likely to me. But, you know, it could have happened. Certainly the God Who made the universe could do a small trick like that. But the story is not about a Galilean chemistry demonstration and those who read the Bible literally are likely to miss what it is really about. The message here is about Christ's power to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary, to take the commonplace soul, the ordinary self-seeking spirit of a person, and call her to a wholly transformed life of service to others in God's name and for love of Him even when this requires great sacrifice. The Gospels are not about cheap tricks. They are about costly transformations.**

BHUUF Summer Schedule

June 5	Service: This I Believe	Ken Hood
June 12	Service: Worship—Creating Our Future	April Nielsen
June 19	Service: A Vision of the Future	Linda Tollefsrud
June 26	Forum: Update on Citizens United	Irene Asp
July 3	Open Forum	
July 10		Brian Rude
July 17	Forum: Loons	Rick & MaryAnn
July 24	Service:	Rev. Julianne Lepp
July 31	potluck with St. Croix?	
August 7		Pat Shifferd
August 14	Service: Unconventional Thoughts About God	Kent Shifferd

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Summer Sunday schedule  
Discussion services 10:30  
Potluck every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday

## Summer schedule, continued

August 21	meeting with Menomonie?	
August 28	Service: Lessons from the Heart	Judy B
September 4	Open Forum	
September 11	Ingathering	Phil Lund
September 18		Waldo & Jim