



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.

September 2017

Next Issue, December 2017

September Ingathering

In September, our BHUU Fellowship returns to our "church year" schedule, presenting two hours of programming each Sunday morning. We will gather at 9:15 am for Forum discussion and at 10:30 am for Worship Service. Our September 2017 schedule includes several guest speakers in both Forum and Worship formats.

Our Sept 10 service will be led by Rev. Phil Lund, one of our resource staff members from the MidAmerica Region of the UUA. We have rescheduled our customary Rock Altar Ingathering for September 24 in order to give Rev Lund more time for his presentation. To commemorate the beginning of the "church year", though, we will have a brief flower communion on Sept. 10. All members and friends are invited to bring flowers to contribute to this ceremony.

If you have a rock or similar object, symbolic of your summer travels, please bring it on September 24 to add to the Rock Altar in our Sanctuary. Our Worship hour on Sept 24 will include time for sharing our summer stories.

The Declaration of Peace

17 May, 2016 at Tomidhu Cottage,
Crathie, Scotland,
Kent Drummond Shifferd.

These are self-evident truths.

That all humans are a single family living on a fragile and endangered planet whose life support systems must remain intact if we are to survive;

That the well-being of the planet and the well-being of humanity are one and the same;

That the well-being of each requires the well-being of all - security is common;

That all humans have a natural right to peace and a healthy planet;

That all war is a crime against humanity and nature;

That any war anywhere degrades the quality of life for all of us everywhere;

That we live at the decisive moment in history when we will choose between breakdown or breakthrough on a planetary scale;

That we here now dedicate our intellectual, spiritual and material resources to the establishment of permanent peace and the conservation of nature, and,

That we are fully endowed by our creator with the wisdom and the ability to achieve these ends.

Apparently, this fund is supported by the local churches. Perhaps there are other sources. This is also a cooperative effort with St. Vincent's De Paul and Salvation Army.

Those requesting assistance for electric bills can also call the Barron County Health Service: Energy Assistance Program, 537-5691, or for a housing need: WEST Cap.

It would seem that the best way to respond to any requests for aid would be to refer them to these services. As a Fellowship, we are making a financial contribution of \$100 to ACEO.

How Do We Respond To Requests For Help?

By Linda Thompson

Our Fellowship has a BHUUF phone which is currently housed with Brian and Valerie Rude. They answer any inquiries about our Fellowship. Occasionally, we also receive phone calls from individuals who request financial assistance for various needs. As a small group with limited resources, how can we respond to these requests?

Rice Lake Area Churches have organized a response group for Rice Lake area residents. It is called ACEO or Association of Churches for Emergency Outreach. Their phone number is 715-434-2336. When someone calls this number, a voice message will ask for first and last names and their request/need. Someone will call them back within a day.

This organization has a process for responding to requests and determining the need and the support. Approximately 15 churches take turns "volunteering" to listen to the callers and determine how best to help. For example, ACEO vouches might be provided for food, clothing, or energy assistance. The callers are screened to determine if they have requested multiple times and accessed all other available help. There is a cap on financial requests in specified time periods.

A SECULAR JEW BECOMES A UU

By Judy Barisonzi

Being a Jew isn't like being a Lutheran, or a Methodist. You don't have a choice. I'm a Jew because my mother was Jewish, and her mother before her. (Fathers don't count in this determination.)

Being a Jew is based on more than 5,000 years of history, much of which involved exile and suffering. Some of it, long ago, involved empire and war, and some of it—the best part—still involves a deep devotion to scholarship and the arts. I'm proud of this history and try to live up to my ancestors.

My secular family tradition goes back several generations. My great grandfather, who migrated to Palestine to die, was the last observant Jew. My mother remembered him chanting his morning prayer, which included thanking God that he had not been made a woman. Then and there, at a young age, she vowed never to have anything to do with such a religion. And she never did. No religious wedding. No Sabbath candles. No bar mitzvah for my brother.

My father was more tolerant in these matters, but he was also a rebel. He made it a

point to occasionally bring home pork chops or oysters—both forbidden foods for observant Jews-- for dinner. Oddly enough, my mother would not touch those foods, so he cooked them for us himself.

Both parents, though, agreed that it was important for my brother and me to know where we came from. Occasionally there would be a Passover seder—"so the kids will know." What I remember most is the freshly grated horseradish. "Here, Judy," an uncle would say, "have some of this on a piece of matzoh, it's so good." Innocently I would taste, then cough and sputter.

There was no Jewish school for my brother David or myself—after all, he was not preparing for bar mitzvah—but one summer we attended a left-wing Jewish day camp, where we watched movies about kibbutz life in Israel, learned songs and a few prayers in Hebrew—which I can still, imperfectly, recite—and where I even embroidered a cloth to cover the Sabbath challah, the traditional egg bread eaten on Friday nights--blue stitching on white, the colors of the Israeli flag.

I don't bake challah, and I've never been tempted to keep a kosher home, but I believe in a little bit of tradition. My son and I try to observe the holidays with my granddaughter. We put on little plays for Purim, and I gave them a menorah that looks something like a Chagall painting for lighting the Hannukah candles. Little Hannah's face as she lights a candle brings tears to my eyes. Pass it on.

My two daughters are less traditional, and determinedly anti-religious. Yet the younger daughter was indignant when my sister-in-law, child of Holocaust survivors, once told her that she is not a Jew. "What does she mean?" Laura demanded heatedly. "Of course I'm a Jew!"

Even though I was not brought up to practice the religion of Judaism, I'm fascinated by its development, from the worship of Yahweh as a tribal god to whom one sacrificed sheep to an understanding of one's relationship to God as a devotion to righteousness. What does God ask of us? Tikkun olam: to be a good person, to repair the world.

In many ways I find Judaism and Unitarian – Universalism not that different. What appeals to me about both is the circle of community and the emphasis on ethical action. I think that God, if He or She exists, is present at the lighting of our chalice as well as at the Sabbath table.

Shalom.

"Recreational development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind."

Aldo Leopold

Poetry

Black Lives Matter

Consider

the black gentleman of the road
cleaning up for humans
on the human landscape--

road kill

doing the needed work
doing the "dirty" work

Consider

the scavenger
the crow.

Bob Hasman

Helping Community

Gerri Nedland

I believe that there are basic needs everyone must have in order to achieve self-sufficiency. These needs are shelter, food, and clothing.

Benjamin's House is a residence facility in Rice Lake which provided assistance when people are experiencing difficulty having these needs met. The staff assists residents in developing an individualized plan in which, with the help of community resources, the residents can achieve self-sufficiency.

One of the ways the community helps is by providing food and meals. In this way the residents can save some of their income from employment or other revenue source for rent or other needs.

After our BHUUF congregation provided a meal in which I helped, and after hearing residents tell of their finding jobs, housing, and moving on, I made a commitment to provide one meal a month (every fourth Monday).

That is it in a nutshell as they say. It has become a social action commitment we have undertaken, and I want to thank the congregation for doing so. There was a statistic out at one time stating how one unplanned event such as a job loss or acute illness could put an average person in poverty and needing assistance. That is something to think about for sure.

A Defense Of Individualism

Brian Rude

All my life I have heard the rhetoric of teamwork. And most of my life have found it a little bit irritating. Occasionally, I suppose, I must have heard some rhetoric of individualism, but no examples come to mind. I'm not against teamwork. I engage in it often, everyday in fact, but somehow the rhetoric of teamwork often rubs me the wrong way. And the reason, I think, is not hard to find.

The rhetoric of teamwork very often is not respectful of individualism, and sometimes downright disparaging. I think that is a mistake. I think individualism should be respected. I will try to explain why. I will also argue that UU's, especially, should respect individualism. It is written in our principles.

Our first principle is "the worth and dignity of every person". How can that not refer to individuals? Can we say we respect every group, but not every individual within a group? The principle does not say the worth and dignity of every individual who agrees with us.

Also in our principles is the "right of conscience". That is hard to define. Sometimes it seems to be the idea that you have a right to disobey laws you disagree with. I have problems with that formulation. Another interpretation, which makes a lot more sense to me, is that every individual has the right to believe as they choose. Again, if the "right of conscience" is to have any meaning, does it not require a respect for individualism?

If you're not an individualist, then what are you? A grouper? The word "grouper" has been important to me all my life. I figured out rather early in life that I am not a grouper. I'll have to admit to not being able to define very well just what I mean by "grouper". Perhaps a grouper is best defined as one who wants to join groups. Of course, we all want to join groups, though to widely varying degrees. Perhaps an individualist can be defined as one for whom individual goals and values are more important than group goals and values. With that definition, do our principles not require that we respect such individuals?

I can't define my terms very well at all, but I can trace my aversion to the rhetoric of teamwork. "Group project" is a term I learned to dislike from my elementary school years. I generally don't like group projects in school. I learned that early, though fortunately I was exposed to very few of them as a child in school. My earliest memory of not liking group work must have been in about third grade. I was in a group, probably of about three or four kids, who were supposed to be working on a poster. I'm not a leader. I was well aware that if I take any initiative in designing, or drawing, or coloring, the poster, I risked criticism from the other

kids. So, of course, I just held back and waited for some more assertive kid to tell me what to do. I was uncomfortable in that situation. I don't think I thought about it at the time, but aren't the kids who like group projects the more assertive, even aggressive, kids who can run the show?

A few similar situations like that arose over the years, very few, fortunately, but enough to give working in groups a bad name for me.

The human animal has extensive social instincts. We are sociable, and we do like working in groups, but some like it a lot more than others. We also have extensive exploratory drives, and what have been called "self actualization" drives. I'm pretty good at that. All my life my individual efforts have often led to satisfying results. My efforts in a group usually have not, but as I say, group projects were fortunately a rarity in my growing up years.

Until the last couple of decades I never gave much thought to why I dislike group effort, but at some point it became crystal clear. Group effort, with few exceptions, dilutes individual effort. Let me repeat that. Group effort dilutes individual effort. Groupers may raise a storm of protest about that statement. They'll say, no, you can do more in a group than you can as an individual. Well, sometimes. But in my life the opposite has been much more true. When allowed to work as an individual, I accomplish things. When forced to work as a member of a group, I don't accomplish much, or the group doesn't accomplish much, or what is accomplished doesn't seem worthwhile, or the process is tedious. The group accomplishment, the poster in my third grade example, is bound to be inferior to what I feel I could accomplish alone.

Why disparage the person who doesn't want to do things your way?

I have realized in recent years that in one area of life I do want to work in a group. That area is making music. That helps me understand the desire of others to work in groups. It remains true in music that group effort often dilutes or subverts individual effort, but somehow I still want to make music in a group effort.

Perhaps comments that I hear as disparaging of individualism are not meant to be. Perhaps I am too sensitive. In the future I will attempt to do a better

job of listening, and try to remember verbatim the comments that irritate me. Maybe someone who understands these things can interpret them for me in a better way.

Public Service Announcement

When you see shopping carts abandoned in the handicap parking spaces of a parking lot, please take one into the store with you. Better yet, take the time to roll the remaining carts to the cart corral. There is no thanks for doing this, but you will know you did the right thing.

Summer's End

Anthony Friess Perrino

The Numbering Of Our Days , 1988

One day a little boy was playing in front of his house, when it occurred to him that he had never seen an adult playing with a red wagon like his. And he burst into tears.

When his mother asked why he was crying, the boy said he was afraid that when he grew up he wouldn't be able to play with his red wagon anymore.

The mother assured the child that when he grew up he could play with his red wagon if he wanted to. That quieted him for a moment. Then he burst into even greater sobs.

The mother asked, "What's the matter now?" The boy replied, "I'm afraid that when I grow up, I won't want to play with my red wagon anymore."

Thus many of us in more sophisticated ways borrow trouble from tomorrow and let today, the only time we have to live, be consumed by the interest we pay on the loan.

P.O. Box 614
 Rice Lake, WI 54868
 715-234-6337
 Meeting at 230 W. Messenger Street
 Rice Lake, WI



September Calendar

September 3	10:30	Final Summer Program: open discussion	Pat Shifferd
September 10	9:15	Forum: Home Funerals	Lucy Basler
	10:30	Service:	Rev. Phil Lund
September 17:	9:15	Forum: Midwife in Haiti	Leah Hatcher
	10:30	Service: Universalism: Past, Present, Powerful	Rev. Kalen Fristad
	11:30	Third Sunday Potluck: all invited	
	12:00	Board Meeting: all invited	
September 24	9:15	Forum: Herbs	Sheila Manor
	10:30	Service: Rock Altar In-gathering	April Nielsen

Oct 1 Forum, Linda Thompson; Service, Dennis Peters from Menomonie UU
 Oct 8 Forum, Valerie; Rude Service, Jacob Greutzman, "That's the Power of Love."
 Oct. 15 Forum, Judy Barisonzi, "Wednesday Nights at BHUU";
 Service, Brian Rude, "How We Keep the Peace."
 Oct. 22 Forum, Shifferds, "Ecovillages Point a Way Into a Sustainable Future"; "
 Service, Suzanne Wasiliak, Duluth UU,
 Oct. 29 Forum, Karina Kuhrt, "Immigration Update";
 Service, Judy, "Witches & the UU 5th Principle."
 Nov. 5 Forum, Nadine & Rena, "Birding"; Service, Linda Thompson,
 Nov. 12 Forum, Colton, "How To Talk to People You Disagree With, Part 3";
 Service, Geri Nedland,
 Nov. 19 Forum, Joe Plouff, "Standing Rock"; Service, Jude Generaux, .
 Nov. 26 Forum, David Hart), "North Korea and Us"; Service, Pat Shifferd,