



The News

Volume 29 Issue 2

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

October 2009 CALENDAR

Sunday October 4:

9:15 Adult Discussion:

Islam Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

This is the first in a series of Teaching Company DVDs on the World's Great Religions that will be presented on the 1st and 3rd Sundays in the 9:15 discussion time slot. Each lecture is 30 minutes in length allowing plenty of time for discussion of what was presented.

10:30 Worship Service--Bob Hasman:

Annie Dillard and the 7th Principle

Sunday October 11:

9:15 Adult Discussion -- Bob Hasman:

Annie Dillard and the 7th Principle Discussion

10:30 Worship Service—April Nielsen

Sunday October 18:

9:15 Adult Discussion

The Five Pillars of Islam: Teaching Company DVD

10:30 Worship Service--Darr Schreurs--

Universalist History: Hosea Ballou

Darr Schreurs, a born and raised Unitarian, lives in St. Paul, MN where he attends Groveland U.U. Fellowship, and is a student at United Theological Seminary of New Brighton, MN

In his presentation about Hosea Ballou, often called the Father of Universalism, Darr will discuss Ballou's life, theology and surprising connections with Unitarianism. The presentation will include some history of Universalism, "ultra universalism", and the "restorationist controversy".

Sunday October 25:

9:15 Adult Discussion--Sondra Lewis

"Life as a Garden: Thoughts Are It's Seeds."

10:30 Worship Service--April Nielsen

Unitarian Universalism as a "Covenantal Faith"

Coming in November:

November 1:

9:15 Adult Discussion – Pat Shifferd

Creating a new Covenant at BHUUF

10:30 Worship Service—Bob Hasman

November 8:

9:15 Adult Discussion-- Bob Hasman

10:30 Worship Service—April Nielsen

November 15:

9:15 Adult Discussion-- Muhammad-Prophet and

Statesman: Teaching Company DVD

10:30 Worship Service— Judy Barisonzi

Religious education activities for young people are offered each Sunday, 9:15-10:15, in the lower level of the church. Parents are invited to participate in the lessons or to attend the adult forum, which takes place at the same time in the upper level. October's Youth RE will focus on -Understanding the 7 Principles

Notes from April's Garden

Most Sunday mornings at BHUU Fellowship we read the Seven Principles of the UUA. These begin with the statement "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association **covenant** to affirm and promote" ... (the seven principles). These principles are stated in ideal forms. We aspire to live our lives in ways that affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person. And yet we know that we will sometimes fall short of that ideal. Sometimes we will speak and behave in ways that discriminate against people who seem less dignified and worthy than we would like them to be. Our spiritual practice of reading the principles on Sunday mornings is intended to remind us to catch ourselves when we fail to live up to our promises, to begin again in love, repair our relationships with others, and recommit to the promises we have made. This is the essence of a behavioral covenant.

During my week at Midwest Leadership School, I had the opportunity to explore the meaning and purpose of behavioral covenants within our UU faith. Unitarian Universalism is considered a covenantal faith, not a creedal faith. That means we share a covenant of how we try to be together, not a creed of what we must all believe together.

A covenant is a set of enduring but evolving deeply held promises made between people about ways of being together. And while the covenant is taken seriously, the promises are often so intense that it is impossible to always live up to them. We will never exactly live up to the covenants into which we enter. So, we will always admit a falling short – and respond by re-covenanting, recommitting to those promises.

Many UU congregations have a behavioral covenant that has been developed by the members of that congregation to put into words their expectations of themselves regarding how they want to be together. This covenant may be printed and posted in a prominent spot in their building and it may be frequently revisited and revised to include language that reflects the current thinking and intentions of the membership.

A behavioral covenant may include a long detailed list of all the behaviors a congregation thinks are important such as "listening attentively when others are speaking" and "volunteering time and talents to create a rich intergenerational community." It may be a short, philosophical statement such as: "I am called to love not only my friends, not only my peers, not only those of my demography, not only the ones that I am easily inclined to like. But to be perfect, my covenant is to love everybody."

A covenant is different than a contract. When one party breaks a contract, the contract can be voided. Both sides are released from obligations and sometimes the offending party is penalized. But covenants go on. It is almost expected that they will not be perfectly fulfilled, but still they are re-entered with hope, re-entered with the intention of living up to them.

I want to invite all the members and friends of BHUUF to think about and participate in discussion of this question: How do we at BHUU Fellowship want to be together? My worship service on October 25th will focus on the role of covenants in our UU faith and the process of covenanting. Our adult discussion the following Sunday, November 1st, will invite participation in the process of creating a new covenant for our Fellowship. I hope to see you there.

-April Nielsen, Lay Leader BHUUF

Dear Friends/Members of Blue Hills UU Fellowship,

This summer I had the privilege of attending the Midwest Leadership School, a yearly gathering of UU's from all over the central part of our country. I met UU's from Kansas and Kentucky, from Illinois and Iowa. The week was full of both serious learning and silly fun. Like being back at summer camp, but for grown-ups.

The week was a strong affirmation of the welcoming character of our denomination. Like our own fellowship, there was space there for many kinds of belief: Christians through nature mystics and pagans to humanists and skeptics. Yet all were joined in the understanding that we need a community of acceptance as we seek our own sources of spiritual growth and meaning.

Just like Blue Hills UU.

But there was a difference which makes our own community all the more precious: everyone I met came from much larger cities and towns. I came away with deep gratitude for those who created this haven of spirituality and reason for us over a quarter century ago now.

The last couple of years have been ones of transition and they have not been without times of stress and uncertainty. But we are now moving forward with a new spiritual anchor as April prepares to take over the role of our lay leader. The other members of the board and I hope that you, like we, see this coming year as a period of renewal and growth in our community. There are both challenges and opportunities ahead and we invite you to embrace these, sharing our optimism that the essential character of our fellowship will remain strong and uplifting.

As I begin my year as Board Chair, I ask your help in making sure that Blue Hills UU remains the precious community of friends and fellow seekers after "truth and meaning." You have my commitment to the continued strength of our church. I ask yours in return. Please feel free to share with me both your joys and concerns as we move into a new year of interesting and spiritually gratifying time together.

Best, Pat Shifferd
BHUF Board Chair

The committee chairs are always glad to have additional people participate in their work. The more the merrier, or, at least, the more democratic. So don't hesitate to contact anyone of the following with ideas, opinions, issues, wishes:

- Cora Ayers - Membership
- Dick Ayers & Jay Bergstrand - Buildings and Grounds
- Linda Thompson - Social Action
- Sondra Lewis & Mark Van Etten - Program and Worship
- Cora Ayers & Pat Shifferd - Youth Religious Education
- Judy Barisonzi - Fund Raising
- Randy Mattison - Finance & Budget

Finally, do not hesitate to contact me, Pat Shifferd, BHUF Board Chair with general concerns, questions, or ideas. I'm at shifferd@centurytel.net or 715-466-5867.

COLLECTION FOR THE TIME-OUT SHELTER

We will be collecting donations for the Time-Out Family Abuse shelter again this year. A bin will be placed in the church basement, and we will collect over the next few months for delivery to the shelter in December. The shelter has an on-going need for the following items:

- Travel-size shampoo and other toiletries
- Toothbrushes
- Children's underwear and socks
- School supplies
- Phone cards
- Gas cards
- Printer paper

They also have an on-going need to help clients set up new housekeeping, so donations are needed of cleaning supplies of all kinds (hand soap, dish soap, laundry soap, brooms, mops, etc.) as well as dishes, pots and pans, and the like.

Lisa Erspamer is coordinating this social action effort for BHUUF and can answer any questions you may have.

ADDITIONAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR WOJB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Funding for our announcements on WOJB radio has expired. In order to continue this valuable public awareness campaign, some additional contributions will be needed. We are asking that anyone who normally makes a contribution to WOJB direct that contribution through BHUU. 100% of your contribution goes to WOJB, and Blue Hills UU gets program underwriting announcements.

Make your check payable to BHUUF with the notation "WOJB" in the memo field and either deposit it in the Sunday collection box or mail it to BHUUF, PO Box 614, Rice Lake, WI 54868.

Thanks are in order to Judy Ferber and Willie Williams who have taken on the task of public relations for us, from updating the website to sending out press releases.

Minnesota State University Mankato will be the site of the 28th Annual Women & Spirituality Conference, Oct. 31 and Nov. 1. The keynote address this year will be given by the internationally-known advocate for sustainable agriculture, Dr. Vandana Shiva. Her topic is "Women and the Gendered Politics of Food." But there are a diverse set of workshop topics planned. The full program is on-line at <http://sbs.mnsu.edu/women/>.

Notice: Those of you who have provided us with an email address will receive notice of publication and a link to our website www.bluehillsuu.org where the newsletter may be viewed and downloaded. If you wish to request a mailed copy, please contact us by phone or email to express your preference. Phone at Church - 715-234-6337. April Nielsen 715-790-2243 april@chibardun.net, or Pat Shifferd 715-466-5867 shifferd@centurytel.net

Harvest Table

A note from the Fundraising Committee: We have decided not to have a large October/Harvest Fest due to the amount of work involved and the small number of people available to do the work. Instead, we have chosen to do a small scale produce sale each Sunday through the harvest season as you have items to donate. If you do not have produce and wish to make a cash donation to the Fundraiser, your contributions will also be greatly appreciated. A table has been set up in the lower level to display produce for sale. Tables for “Next to New” and “Grandma and Grandpa’s Kitchen” will also be set up as people bring in donated items. We are hoping to sponsor a larger more arts focused event (concert and/or dance) in the spring. If you would like to participate in planning fundraising events, please contact Judy Barisonzi --
judith.barisonzi@uwc.edu

Song for Autumn

by
Mary Oliver

In the deep fall
 don't you imagine the leaves think how
comfortable it will be to touch
 the earth instead of the
nothingness of air and the endless
 freshets of wind? And don't you think
the trees themselves, especially those with mossy,
 warm caves, begin to think

of the birds that will come—six, a dozen—to sleep
 inside their bodies? And don't you hear
the goldenrod whispering goodbye,
 the everlasting being crowned with the first
tuffets of snow? The pond
 vanishes, and the white field over which
the fox runs so quickly brings out
 its blue shadows. And the wind pumps its
bellows. And at evening especially,
 the piled firewood shifts a little,
longing to be on its way.

From *New and Selected Poems: Volume Two*.
Boston: Beacon Press, 2005

NEW ROOF

People driving by the church may have noticed the roofing project underway (or recently finished). The board accepted a bid for a new steel roof, one which is guaranteed to last for a long time. So the worry about leaks which has plagued us the last couple of winters can be laid aside.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO PLEDGE

If you haven't done so already, it's not too late to make your pledge of financial support for Blue Hills UU Fellowship for the 2009/2010 fiscal year. Don't have a pen or pencil or pledge form? No problem. Just e-mail your pledge amount to the BHUU Treasurer, Randy Mattison:

randmatt@charter.net



**P.O. Box 614
RICE LAKE WI 54868**

**MEETING AT 230 WEST MESSENGER
RICE LAKE, WISCONSIN**

WORSHIP GATHERING EVERY SUNDAY	10:30AM
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SEPTEMBER-MAY	9:15AM
ADULT FORUM AND DISCUSSION SEPTEMBER-MAY	9:15AM

BLUE HILLS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

Meeting at 230 West Messenger Street, Rice Lake, Wisconsin

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 614, Rice Lake WI 54868

Phone at church: 715 234 6337

For information: www.bluehillsuu.org

Lay Leader: **April Nielsen**

Chairperson: **Pat Shifferd**

Treasurer: **Randy Mattison**

Building and Grounds: **Dick Ayers & Jay Bergstrand**

Members and Stewardship: **Cora Ayres**

Social Action: **Linda Thompson**

Programs/Worship: **Mark Van Etten & Sondra Lewis**

Fundraising: **Judy Barisonzi**

Religious Education: **Cora Ayers & Pat Shifferd**