

The Grapevine Newsletter



September 2016

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Member of *The Unitarian Universalist Association*

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Friends,

We are rapidly approaching our opening service for this year and I think that a few words on the Pullman Board summer activities would be appropriate. We have been meeting regularly over the summer to address some buildings and grounds' issues that need our attention, as well as some organizational tweaks for the various committees that are working to transition into the new year. We worked on communication and goal setting activities during the Board retreat on July 30, with Joan Van Becleare, and established a number of Board Covenant Elements. These elements include: listening and sharing our thoughts and feelings in a respectful and responsive manner, following through on promises made, asking for help, respecting roles and boundaries, and most important, keeping our sense of humor in place. To that end I offer the following (from the Prairie Home Companion):

“A Catholic Church, a synagogue and a Unitarian society all caught fire. Before the fire trucks got there, the priest dashed in and saved the consecrated Host, the rabbit dashed in to save the Torah scrolls, and the Rev. Nancy Smith dashed in to save the coffeemaker and the photocopier.”

Thanks, sort of, to Garrison.

We have much work to do this year, but the Board is unified in our desire to begin our year by communicating our commitment to welcoming back our membership and attracting new members to Pullman Memorial. Most important in achieving those goals, in my judgment, is to always help visitors as well as members feel welcome within our doors.

Rich

Service Schedule – Sunday at 11:00AM

September 11	Rev. Lori Staubitz	The Politics of Hope Jedi Academy at 12:00 after Worship Service
September 18	Susan Daiss	Topic TBA
September 25	Rev. Peggy Meeker	Topic TBA Jedi Academy at 12:00 after Worship Service
October 2	Rev. Richard Hood	Visit from our Minister Emeritus

A sign up sheet is available for anyone who wishes to bring a snack for Coffee Hour.

Coming Events

Saturday September 10 – Work bee from **9:00 to 12:00**. Lots to do including finishing of doors, organizing of office, yard work and cleaning. We plan on having a work bee on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

Sunday September 11 – "The Politics of Hope: Strength in Fearful Times" with The Reverend Lori Staubitz.

"We live in stressful times. At every turn, our planet is in crisis, racism, terrorism and hate mongering seem to have the upper hand and even the most positive people struggle to keep the faith. Let us join together this Sunday to find our way toward a sustaining hope that can nourish our lives and indeed the life we share with all others."

Rev. Lori Staubitz will be conducting a service each month at Pullman Memorial. Here's some biographical information; we look forward to getting to know her better.

Rev. Lori Staubitz's holds an undergraduate degree in Therapeutic Recreation from SUNY Brockport. She obtained her Masters of Divinity at Virginia Union University School of Theology, a traditional African American Theological School in Richmond, Virginia. As an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister she holds dual Fellowship as both a Parish Minister and Minister of Religious Education. Lori has been serving congregations professionally for over 20 years. In addition to her ministerial experience, she has a background in leadership development, social justice work and pastoral counseling.

She preaches at the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church in Albion New York. Recent ministry includes service to The Brockport Unitarian Universalist Fellowship as Parish minister and The First Universalist Church of Rochester as a Contract Minister for Lifespan Faith Development.

Rev. Staubitz is in her second year as President of the St. Lawrence Chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association and a Teaching Pastor for Meadville Lombard Theological School. In addition, her ministry extends to local Food Justice initiatives in Rochester, New York.

Also on Sunday September 11 – First Jedi Academy starts at 12:00 after regular worship service. Jedi Academy will continue on the 2nd and 4th Sunday through December.

Our "Jedi Academy" will offer padawans (students) an opportunity to develop practical spiritual skills. The curriculum is separated into five training categories:

~> Courage (physical training, including some lightsaber training, along with peacekeeping and how to make good choices despite forces pulling in other directions)

~> Insight (Exploration of big questions – good, evil, death, morality and more)

~> Skill (Mindfulness training and using that to become a positive force for change in the world, even (and especially) when the odds do not seem in their favor)

~> Senses (Connection of the body and physical experience to spirituality)

~> Spirit (Spiritual practices grounded in Unitarian Universalism which will allow them to feel connected to something larger than themselves...a larger purpose, a greater strength, a sense of lineage, etc.)

*This is made possible through a generous grant from the New York State Convention of Universalists and the wonderful curriculum from Jessica Zabrine Gray, PhD of the Imagined Collective.

Darrell needs assistants to help with the Jedi classes. A sign up sheet is available in the church hall.
Please consider helping out!

Monday September 12 – Pot-Luck at 6:30. Please join us for good food and fellowship – and some fun and games. Please bring a dish to pass and your favorite game.

Sunday September 18 – Board of Trustees meet at 9:00. (Please submit your committee reports no later than the 14th!)

Sunday September 18 – Susan Daiss

Saturday September 24 – Concert to benefit Albion High School Alumni Foundation at 7:00 PM.
Featuring *Acoustic El Dolon*

Sunday September 25 – Rev. Peggy Meeker

Wednesday September 28 – “We Who Defy Hate” At 6:30 pm we will watch this Ken Burns special on how Unitarians worked to save victims of the holocaust. Please encourage our neighbors of faith to gather with us.

Sunday October 2 – Rev. Richard Hood, our Minister Emeritus, returns to our pulpit. We don't know the topic of Dick's sermon but we can be pretty sure his service will end with *“And now may truth make us free, hope never die, and love live eternally in all our hearts.”*

Pledges

The Annual Pledge Drive, normally held in May, wasn't given as much fanfare this past year. However, pledge forms will be available at the church in the fall. Pledges are very important because they assist the Board with future planning and help the church meet their financial obligations. Pledges indicate that members are connected to the church and feel a sense of ownership. It is a healthy sign to have a good many pledges. The Board will be working hard this year to see that there are fun and educational events, as well as our regular services. So please consider picking up a form and making a pledge!

Joys and Concerns

Darrell Dyke - said his son Leland has expressed an interest in being a candy maker and has created some amazing confections in their home! He can bring some samples to the church anytime!!

Chris Loss - had been concerned over her grandson Caden's broken arm, but the doctor says that it is healing well and the cyst under his arm that caused the break is filling in. He will be checked in a few more months to make sure the cyst is dissolving.

Pat Cammarata - commented that the Board members and Officers met at the Gaines Congregational Church in Childs for a Mini-Retreat with Joan Van Becelaere, Regional Lead and Congregational Life Consultant for the Central East Region. Joan came out from Ohio to spend the day with our group and Rev. Don Algeo from Gaines Congregational warmly opened the facility for our use. It was a day of team building, goal setting, and everyone is excited to put some of the ideas in play.

Rich Della Costa - said he leases land to a farmer who has cattle, and due to the drought, the electric fence has not been as effective at keeping the cattle in their area. They have had to chase cattle back in the pen on several occasions. The cattle have been trying to find greener grass to graze on. This is a one by-product of the heat and drought we've been in. Other problems have been with the peach crop, and the apple crop. Rich noted that it is worth noting where our food comes from and that the drought has been devastating to farmers, and ultimately will affect everyone.

Chris Loss - visited Genesee Country Village during the Laura Ingalls Wilder days. Karen Grassle, who played Ma on the TV series, Little House on the Prairie, was there to give a talk. Another highlight was watching an old fashioned baseball game from the 1800's.

Pullman Plaudits

Jim Hobbs and Debby Rodrigues for putting together the plans for the Sip N Stroll held on August 14th from 4-7 pm at the church. The Autumn Moon winery was here and not only offered some lovely selections but gifted the church with a bottle of wine featuring a picture of our church! Tables were set up for the patrons, and a nice selection of snacks was available, including cheeses paired with the wines, chocolates, and a big bowl of strawberries. Our cookbooks were on display, and the gift shop was opened. Many people came through the church that day and it was a nice time. Thanks also to Monica Beck, Alan Nugent, and Chris Loss for helping out that day. And thanks to Jim Hobbs, Debby Rodrigues, Diana Dudley and Pat Cammarata for cleaning and setting up on Thursday before the event.



Darrell Dyke- for making arrangements with the Gaines Congregational Church as the location for the Board Retreat on Saturday, July 30th. He also represented our church in the Pulpit at the Patriotic Service in early July. And he made the arrangements for the chemical waste to be picked up. Darrell has just been doing amazing work for the church and his efforts are much appreciated! He has also been working on the church website, the member list, and has been working on the pulpit schedule for the year. Thanks so much for your help, Darrell!

The Board and Officers who participated in the Board Retreat on July 30th should receive special recognition for giving up an entire Saturday for the betterment of the church. It was a wonderful day of sharing, problem-solving, and learning about the challenge and responsibility of leadership. Rich Della Costa, Pat Cammarata, Liz Schaal, Darrell Dyke, Chris Loss, Diana Dudley, Alan Nugent, and Monica Beck were in attendance. Rich brought some muffins and donuts, Liz brought some candies, Monica brought a watermelon, and Alan had a cooler of drinks.

-Rev. Donald Algeo - a thank-you goes to Rev. Algeo for assisting us with the Board Retreat. He not only offered the facility free of charge, but opened the doors and made the coffee. He also came back later to lock up. He and the Gaines Congregational Church have been good friends to us – many thanks. Please note that a donation and a thank-you letter has been sent.

Tobin Moon Carson - has completed her residency and will soon be working at Rochester General hospital. Tobin has worked so hard and has overcome so many obstacles and we are all very proud of her. Her wonderful family all helped as much as they could. Tobin will be taking her Boards soon also and we know she will do well. Tobin's accomplishments were celebrated at the Church Picnic on 8/7 with a cake decorated with a stethoscope. (Could have gone with a Caduceus but who wants Snakes on a Cake?)



Rev. Joan Van Becelaere - came out from Ohio to spend the day with the Board on August 30th and helped us work through some issues and find out what our priorities are and show us how to set some goals. She gave up a Saturday to be with us and her efforts are most appreciated.

-Rich Della Costa and Pat Cammarata, Chairman and Vice-Chairman, have been working together to create a positive vision for the church and have been dealing with this difficult transition period. They have been committed to making sure ours is a church that is an open, democratic society where everyone is valued. Many thanks for their commitment.

Pat Cammarata, Jim Hobbs, Debby Rodrigues, Liz Schaal, Alan Nugent, Diana Dudley, C.W. Lattin, Rich Della Costa, Darrell Dyke, Dennis Seekins, and Chris Loss have participated in workbees over the summer. They have worked on cleaning the church, varnishing and painting the ramp, collating the cookbooks, etc. And special thanks to Jim Hobbs and his brother, Jake, Diana Dudley, Pat Cammarata, Debby Rodrigues, C.W. Lattin, and Alan Nugent who have been at the church several times to do various work. We are so lucky to have dedicated folks who care about the building.

Debby Rodrigues and Diana Dudley - have been looking into different insurance carriers and comparing the pros and cons of each. A final report will be coming soon.

Chris Loss - shopped for the supplies for the church picnic and made sure we had everything we needed for the event. Chris also worked on the majority of the scheduling for the church year.

Liz Schaal - is currently working on updating the membership list, and she also kept a tally on who would be in attendance at the church picnic.

Alan Nugent - in addition to putting the Newsletters together, managing the endowment and heading up the Finance Committee, he has also been helping with the computer and WiFi issues.

Diana Dudley - as been not only doing her job as Treasurer, but has been at the church cleaning, checking on alternative insurance companies, checking on the WiFi, helping with the church picnic, and so on. Diana has been a tremendous help!!

Proposed Book Discussion for late October

Name of the book: *A Mother's Reckoning - Living in the Aftermath of Tragedy* by Sue Klebold

This book was not written in an effort to absolve Sue Klebold and her husband from any guilt (if any) they might have had in the raising of their son, Dylan Klebold (one of the Columbine Shooters). It is only partially about what they could have done to prevent the tragedy that would unfold. It is a cautionary tale to all parents who believe they know their child well. It is also a look into the world of a family torn and ravaged by the actions of one of their own, and how society makes attempts to find easy answers and apply blame. Anyone interested in a discussion on this book is asked to contact Chris Loss for more information.



“I like the book club. I just think it was more fun when we were a coven.”

Books, Books, Books ...

Calling all creative problem solvers....we are trying to find homes for the hundreds of donated books that Dennis so graciously organized for Pullman; the path isn't as simple as we thought. The first round will be donated to BryLin Behavioral Health System on Delaware avenue, a social worker Michele Bailey contacted Debby and said they would be thrilled to have some. Donation of the first batch began July 28. Please let us know if you know of other possible organizations that need books.

“So many books, so little time.” -Frank Zappa

Down The Stairs Recycling

Return-for-deposit bottles and cans, plus assorted metals, help generate additional funds for the church. Bins for these items are at the foot of the stairs between the kitchen and dining hall doors. Clean, washed metal objects may be mixed, but please separate aluminum from the rest.

Going Green

Green cleaning refers to using cleaning methods and products with non toxic ingredients and procedures which are designed to respect human health and environmental quality. Green cleaning techniques and products avoid the use of products which contain toxic chemicals, some of which emit volatile organic compounds causing respiratory, allergy distress, endocrine and neuro toxic damage. Green cleaning excludes products that have a " fragrance" which many times includes styrene. Besides cologne and other personal care products, fragrances are also used to scent household care products such as dish, floor cleaners and laundry detergent. When you add up the number of products in your stash of cleaners under your kitchen sink that contain “fragrance” – and may contain styrene – the total could be many exposures to a substance we now know is “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen.”..Jim, Rich, Debby and Diana spent 2 hours cleaning the church with 2 substances only, white vinegar (carpets and counters, bathroom), and baking soda (sinks urinal, and drinking fountain.). Vinegar is highly acidic and kills germs. It absorbs odors also.

We care about people's health and the UUA 7th principle of "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part". One big change is to eliminate phoney chemical cocktail fragrances. Perfumes also are very suspect. They trigger allergic reactions to many, and it's a gift we can give the congregation NOT to use them for church. **Here's to our good Health!**

Electronic Donations & Automatic Pledges

Our website pullmanmemorialdonations.com offers several choices for making contributions. Drop-down menus provide a variety of monthly and weekly automatic options. Alternatively, you can make one-time donations in any amount, learn where to send a check, or inquire about planned giving. All major credit cards and PayPal are accepted.

Eye on the Board

The Board of Trustees met on August 21, 2016 with a full agenda! The Board will be working on trimming the agenda down by having committees submit a report prior to the meeting in order to have more time to discuss important issues. This is one suggestion made by Rev. Joan Van Becleare at the Retreat the Board attended in July. The Retreat was discussed and three major goals came out of the session: get more organized, seek more lay participation, and work on reconciliation and relationship building. Board members and officers spent an entire day going over the importance of leadership and what that means, how to deal with conflicts, and goal setting. It was a highly productive day! And discussion was held regarding having Joan come out again to meet with the congregation in either October or November to go over these issues.

The Finance Committee will be meeting at the end of August to review information on our Insurance Policy versus other options. A new fee schedule was agreed to. Darrell Dyke will hold the Jedi Knight program in the fall on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at noon. He will need helpers and support. He is also looking into an Adult RE program based on a true story film on Unitarians who saved Jews during the Holocaust. A member pledge drive will be held in the fall. The Pulpit Committee will be looking into fun events such as Potlucks with games or programs, poetry/music programs, book discussions, etc. And they have speakers for all of September. Our stock portfolio has gone up. Regular work bees were discussed, possibly for the 2nd Saturday of each month. The Sip N Stroll was a great event and many people came through the church and sipped wine from the Autumn Moon winery and had lovely snacks. The Board agreed that when outside work is done on the church, that at least two bids will be sought. Liz Schaal is updating the membership list.

Pullman Memorial Universalist Church

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