



THE CHALICE NEWS

Unitarian Society of Menomonie
A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

November 2022 Newsletter

SEVEN PRINCIPLES

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations
3. Acceptance to one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregations
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

CALENDAR

**10 AM IN OUR MEETING ROOM
(ZOOM CONNECTIONS WILL BE PROVIDED)**

Nov 6 – Samhein (pron. Sahwhen)

Service at the home of Jack and Sherry Hagen, 1613 Mathews Street, Menomonie at 10 am.

Remember to vote on November 8!

Nov 13 – Service with Dennis Peters, “Henry Doty Maxson”

We often give credit to him, and rightly so, for the Unitarian Society of Menomonie, and for pushing the Tainters to build the Mabel Tainter as our church and a community meeting place. But I’ve been thinking about the man. What was he like? What did he believe? What kinds of services did he give, here, and in Eau Claire? Let’s find out.

Nov 20 – Mini-Concert with Harpist, Sarah Ohr.

Sarah, presented a mini-concert for us last spring. She will again bring her beautiful electric harp and play wonderful music for us. Please bring a reading to share. It can be something with a gratitude or Thanksgiving theme, or something that moves you.

Nov 27 – Service with Dennis Peters, “Clarissa “Clara” Harlowe Barton”

I realized this was an impossible task, talking about Clara Barton. This topic has probably been beaten to death, and I doubt there’s much at all for me to add to it. Then again, there’s a lot I haven’t known about her, so maybe I’ll pursue this for my own entertainment! So here goes: Clara Barton, originator of the U.S. Red Cross, nurse, schoolteacher, patent office worker... and Universalist.



DAVE WILLIAMS, FWIW



We seem sometimes to have become a society of abbreviations—shortening phrases or concepts to a few letters, I suppose, for the convenience of communicating. All of which is fine, as long as our readers know what those abbreviations, those initials, stand for. Texting has exacerbated this shortening of language. How often do our texting correspondents LOL, or tell us TMI?

So this brief essay will try to tell you FWIW. I'll give away the key right up front—For What It's Worth. And I'm referring to this small fellowship we call home most Sunday mornings. What do I think the Unitarian Society of Menomonie is worth to me. And maybe to you?

Our Unitarian Society of Menomonie isn't the largest religious group in Menomonie—we're nearer the other end of the spectrum, so size and popularity are hardly the reason to value our fellowship. There's some irony that in the 1890s when Henry Doty Maxson was holding forth as our forebears' minister, the Unitarian Society was one of the largest in town.

We don't have the glitziest building for a church group. The sweeping ski-jump roof of St. Joseph's Catholic Church would win some sort of award in this category. Or the historic pertinence of the Congregational church building is historic and lovely. But a building alone doesn't make for a valued place of worship.

Our "praise band" as some contemporary churches now showcase, is really the gentler tones of Juliana Schmidt on piano or Dennis Peters on trumpet or fluegelhorn. FWIW, I much prefer our music and am grateful each week for the performance of these two talented musicians.

So what is it that makes the Unitarian Society of Menomonie a place I prefer to spend time on a Sunday morning? For starters, there's a truly important acceptance of wide-ranging beliefs. I feel comfortable expressing a thought or opinion, and I'm grateful others feel equally comfortable expressing theirs. Our speakers make us think—they're not passing along doctrine we're expected to believe. I see them as helping each of us on our journey in search of beliefs we find true and valued.

I value the casual atmosphere of our services—responding to our speaker, usually in the discussion time, but also occasionally in the middle of their discourse, is welcomed. We can skew a bit political at times, and have to work hard to remember we're not the arm of some political party. Finding moments of spirituality is possible if we as participants will try, either during the prelude, musical numbers, or meditation. And there are moments of humanity as we share those joys and concerns affecting our lives.

So, FWIW, for me, the Unitarian Society of Menomonie is a place of comfort, where I feel welcome, and where I believe I am valued. It's also a place of discomfort at times, as we confront the issues of the day from our religious perspectives. I hope this is also true for others.

Now if all that is TMI for you, hie yourself to some other place of worship ASAP.

[UU/SweetWood Circle - Samhain Ritual/Celebration Sunday Nov. 6th](#)

10-11am at Jack and Sherry Hagen's (Near Wakanda Park) 1613 Mathews St. A time to remember those that have passed this last year. A time to look to the future as well, with babies that have been recently born.

Feel free to send me names of those to remember in the service and/or those whose arrival we celebrate by Sat. Nov. 5th. Email: Sherry Hagen sherryhagen0115@gmail.com

[Family Gifts for the Holidays](#)

For a number of years, our Unitarian Society of Menomonie has adopted one or more local families in need providing holiday gifts, food, wrapping materials and other items to make the holidays happen for people who might otherwise not have one. For the past two years we supported the same family. Our contact for that family reports that the family is now doing well and does not need our help.

Our board has made the decision to work with the Bridge to Hope this year to help families in crisis maybe experience some normalcy with a nice Holiday celebration. The Bridge to Hope provides shelter, support, information and referrals to those affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other related traumas.

But it's a little more difficult to single out a family as we have done in the past. Families transition into and through the Bridge to Hope. Rather than assign a specific family for us to shop for, the Bridge to Hope asks that we provide our support in a more general way, with gifts for various ages of children, and thoughtful options for their parent(s). Then families who find themselves at the Bridge to Hope during the holidays can "shop" for their children.

Here are some suggestions from the Bridge to Hope staff based on ages of kids (Please note that new items are preferred): (See next column)

[Have content for the next newsletter?](#)

Please email events, news, poems, stories by the 25th of the month to be included in the next newsletter to kwiersgalla@gmail.com.

Infant to age 2: Blocks, kids books, toys that make noise, learning toys

Ages 2 to 4: Tunnels, or things to climb, books, toy musical instruments, learning toys

Ages 5 to 6: Coloring books, cars, dolls, Barbies

Ages 7 to 10: Craft or other fun kits to build things, games

Ages 11 to 13: Slime making kits, fidgets (pop its, squishy toys)

Ages 13+: Gift cards, nail art, or other fun kits

For all in the family: Games to play as a family

If considering age-appropriate clothing for kids, gift cards are best so parents can choose based on sizes and interests.

Food items like popcorn tins, hot chocolate, holiday plates and napkins so families can celebrate are great. Food gift cards are also appreciated. Please also consider giving wrapping paper, tape, ribbons and to/from tags.

And gift cards so parents can buy something nice for themselves for the holidays are a great option too.

We are planning to use Sunday, December 4 as the date to bring together the gifts our fellowship is donating, and enjoy a potluck together. Please bring your gift(s) to that Sunday morning unwrapped, but identified with the appropriate age group. I'll then deliver the gifts and other items to the Bridge to Hope the following morning.

Thanks for supporting families in crisis this way, and thanks for being adaptive to our new way of "adopting" people in need for the Holidays.

"Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it."

— Buddha Siddhartha Guatama Shakyamuni

Thanks for participating in Adopt a Highway!

We had a great number of wonder folks come a do our fall highway cleanup. Thanks so much! See you in the Spring when we do it again!

