



THE CHALICE NEWS

Unitarian Society of Menomonie

A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

January 2023 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)

Jan 1 – No Service - Happy Holidays!

Jan 8 – Service with Dennis Peters, “In the Bleak Midwinter”

Let’s start here, in January, perhaps the “bleakest” part of the winter. The sun has made no appreciable return. Even if it had, the clouds seem determined to hide it. The temperatures are... ungodly cold? We struggle to walk through the days with some semblance of a positive attitude, when all we really want is to burrow under the covers—perhaps after eating overly large quantities of comfort food. What do we do? How do we counter this drive toward hibernation and depression?!

Jan 15 – Book Discussion *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Discussion led by Sherry Hagen and Juliana Schmidt.

Jan 15 – USM Board Meeting 11:30

Jan 22 – Service with Dennis Peters, “Tomorrow’s Child”

I have a vague memory of a simple little poem, from my childhood, titled “Tomorrow’s Child.” As is often the case, my memory appears to be wrong. “Tomorrow’s Child” is: a science fiction short story by Ray Bradbury; an Epcot (Disney) theme song; a line of stores of children’s clothing; preschool and learning centers; a music album by Jonathan Edwards; and the most important for my purposes here, a poem written in 1996 by Glenn Thomas and shared by Ray C. Anderson. Let’s look at the world that tomorrow’s children will see, and what we’re doing to fashion that world.

Jan 29 – Recorded Sermon: “This Time When We Might Be Flying” with Rev. Dr. Megan Foley

This is a regular service.

DAVE WILLIAMS



The following is a copy of a letter from the Secular Coalition for America to Senator Mitch McConnell, R-KY:

Dear Senator McConnell,

As organizations that represent secular Americans, we noted your acknowledgement of us in the conclusion of your recent floor statement: “Americans of any faith and no faith at all can celebrate that we have a brilliant majority of originalist, textualist justices who will defend all of our constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and apply what the Bill of Rights actually says.” We disagree with every word in that sentence.

We are not celebrating a “brilliant majority of originalist, textualist justices” who appear to believe that the Establishment Clause violates the Free Exercise Clause.

We are not celebrating that states are mandated to provide taxpayer dollars to discriminatory religious schools providing religious instruction in programs meant to provide a public education to rural students.

We are not celebrating a decision that blatantly misrepresented the facts of the case to allow a school employee who publicly led a majority of his football team in prayer to continue this coercive practice on the 50-yard line. Your statement that “[a] man was fired by government bureaucrats for praying” is so misleading that it does not deserve inclusion in a speech on the Senate floor.

Even your summary of the church-state separation issues leading up to this court term is exaggerated and alarmist. You described our efforts to ensure that faith-based organizations that receive federal funds to provide childcare will not discriminate against participants of different faiths and nonreligious people as “a sweeping ‘Toddler Takeover’ that was written to squeeze out faith-based childcare providers and secularize early childhood in this country.” Ideally these issues would be considered too important to be mischaracterized in such disparaging terms.

The number of Americans you could fairly categorize as nonreligious is significant and growing. According to a June Gallup poll, nineteen percent of adults do not believe in God, a new high, and the numbers are highest among young people. Speaking for many of those 49 million Americans, we are not celebrating the ideologically biased decisions of a Supreme Court majority that, quoting Justice Sotomayor, “elevates one individual’s interest in personal religious exercise...over society’s interest in protecting the separation of church and state, eroding the protections for religious liberty for all.”

While we thank you for finally acknowledging the existence of such a large and rapidly growing segment of the American people, such gratitude is tinged with extreme regret to see you do it in a way that so blatantly misrepresents the facts of the Supreme Court cases, the fundamental meaning of the Bill of Rights and the Establishment Clause, and the critical interests of the nonreligious in secular government and education.

Sincerely

The Secular Coalition for America

American Atheists
American Humanist Association
Black Nonbelievers
Center for Inquiry and the Richard Dawkins
Cultural and Secular Jewish Organization
Foundation Beyond Belief
Freethought Society
Military Assoc. of Atheists & Freethinkers
Secular Student Alliance
Society for Humanistic Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Humanist Association

American Ethical Union
Atheist Alliance of America
Camp Quest
Foundation for Reason & Science
Ex-Muslims of North America
Freedom From Religion Foundation
Hispanic American Freethinkers
Recovery From Religion
Secular Woman
The Clergy Project

In Thanks

Members and friends of the Unitarian Society of Menomonie were generous and caring in their support of this year's Holiday Family. Our "family" was actually a number of families at the Bridge to Hope. We collected gifts, gift cards, some food items and wrapping paper and tape, and delivered it to the Bridge on December 5. On that date, the Bridge had 13 children and 8 adults in residence. We provided some brightness and holiday joy to some people very much in need of same. Thank you to all who helped with this year's Holiday Family.

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.

January Book discussion: "Braiding Sweetgrass"

Our next book focus begins on January 15. The book is Braiding Sweetgrass (indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants) by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Kimmerer is a botanist and American Distinguished Teaching Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology, Director, Center for Native Peoples and the Environment, at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. She is the author of numerous scientific articles, and the books Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses. As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In Braiding Sweetgrass, Kimmerer brings these lenses of knowledge together to show that the awakening of a wider ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings are we capable of understanding the generosity of the earth and learning to give our own gifts in return.



THE RAW DEAL GALLERY
presents

SHERRY HAGEN

Solo Art Exhibit

January 3-31, 2023

Opening Reception

3pm-5pm • January 7, 2023

Art Talk & Refreshments

The Raw Deal • 603 Broadway St. • Menomonie, WI 54571
YT: Sherry Hagen IG: sherry.hagen.5

New Year Blessings

**Here comes a brand new year,
Lots of new things to explore,
A clean, blank slate to write on,
Fun happenings galore.**

**To you we wish the best of things,
All the blessings a new year brings.**

By Joanna Fuchs
Poemsource.com