



THE CHALICE NEWS

Unitarian Society of Menomonie
A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

July 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)

July 2 – Happy 4th of July! No service, go forth and do good work!

July 9 – Service with Dennis Peters, “Who Is God?”

Let’s go back in time a bit and explore this question. We’ve talked about this before, or at least something a bit like it. How we answer the question will depend a lot on *us*, on *our* religious backgrounds. Does this sound like an impossible task? Yes, of course: it is. Yet at the same time it is extremely important to most of us. Let’s begin.

July 16 – No Service - Ice Cream Social at Annette Taylor's

1202 North Shore Drive, Menomonie, at 6:30 pm. Bring toppings.

July 23 – Service with Dennis Peters, “The Call to Death”

When does the call come for us, and what do we do when it happens? I will eventually be focusing on a very specific kind of call, one that has become very important to me in the last couple of months. But I will be touching on a number of different “calls.” Please join me in this strange quest.

July 30 – No Service - Pool Party at Lynn Shaw's 2 pm

If you're interested, email Lynn for directions:
shawlynn38@yahoo.com Bring a snack to share.



DAVE WILLIAMS, Reflections & Remembrance



Jay Ivens is a member of the Unitarian Society of Menomonie, and was asked to provide remarks for Menomonie's Memorial Day commemoration at Evergreen Cemetery. I went to listen to his talk and was struck by his characterization of soldiers and veterans, as a mirror image of America at large. Soldiers and vets come in all colors, sexual orientations, gender preferences, he noted, and that's not often how veterans are described.

*Evergreen Cemetery, Menomonie WI - Memorial Day 2023 –
By: James Ivens*

Honored guests, local government officials, and especially the friends and families of our Veterans, I would like to thank you for inviting me to join you today as we remember and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our great nation.

To some people, Memorial Day is just another holiday, or to others it is the unofficial start of the summer season, but to me, Memorial Day is personal, it is a day of remembrance. Not a day to remember battles or wars, but a day to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

The service members who died for our freedom represent the diverse patchwork that is the United States of America. They came from every background; every gender; every sexual orientation, every ethnicity, and every political preference. In short, they looked like anyone of us. Their one common characteristic is that they all took an oath to die for America if called upon.

Memorial Day is a time that many wear or proudly display poppies, not as symbols of what was lost, but as reminders of the living legacies. Another tradition dictates that the Stars and Striped are raised briskly to the top of the staff and then solemnly lowered to the position of half-staff where it remains only till noon. It is then raised to full-staff for the remainder of the day. The half-staff position remembers the more than one million military members who gave their lives in service of their Nation. At noon, their memory is raised by the living who resolve not to let their sacrifice be in vain, but to rise up and continue the fight for liberty.

Today at events like the one here at Evergreen Cemetery, as well as cemeteries across the nation, communities come together to remember and to reflect on the service and sacrifice of those who paid the true cost of freedom, so as we walk past the monuments and headstones, reading the names of our Nation's fallen heroes, ranging from as far back as the Civil War to those lost in the World Wars, and those from the wars in Korea and Viet Nam to our most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is important to take time to reflect and honor them all, recognizing that our liberties as Americans come at a price.

On Memorial Day we need to remember that not only did our service members make the ultimate sacrifice, but so did their families and friends. They carry on each day with pictures on mantels and mementos of a life not fully lived. They carry on understanding that their Soldier chose this life of service and thus they understood this possible sacrifice for the sake of freedom. These individuals left behind, carry on in their Soldier's absence and today we honor them as well, for you bear a burden that only you can comprehend.

It is our responsibility as citizens to remember the Nation's brave fallen veterans - whether they died on foreign lands in the heat of battle or after a lifetime in the uniform of one of our military branches. We must never forget the heroes who know all too much the cost of our freedom, for their service to this country is the greatest gift of all.

Of course, one day is simply not enough to honor these veterans, so it is on this day of remembrance and respect, we must ensure that the memories of these service members and their sacrifices are not in vain.

Williams, continued

We must ensure that future generations understand the importance of these gifts given and use them to create a better world, and a kinder community.

I want to thank you again for having me here today. I would ask you to not only remember those we honor today at this ceremony, but to keep our Soldiers who are deployed defending our freedom, and their families, in your thoughts and prayers. As we conclude I wish you all a meaningful and memorable Memorial Day.

The Board has voted to join JONAH

The USM Board has voted to join JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope) effective July 1. JONAH, a community action group based in Eau Claire, works on issues such as the environment, homelessness, mental illness, social justice, and immigration. It is the hope of the board that USM elevates social action through its connection to JONAH. JONAH's mission statement: "JONAH exists to deepen relationships within and among faith communities and partner organizations to empower people in addressing the root causes of social injustice in the greater community."

Summer Benefit for Homeless Kids Project

The summer benefit for our homeless kids project is most likely Saturday, August 12. The programming committee is awaiting confirmation from a band as to their availability that day. More info coming at future services and in the next newsletter.

Programming Committee is Back!

The program committee is back and working on future services and activities. They have had 2 meetings already this summer. The program committee is Juliana Schmidt, Mary Beth Lvoncek, and Karen Williams. Next meeting: July 13 at Golden Leaf Cafe at 9 am. If you have ideas for future programs, please contact any of the committee members.

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.



UU does a cleaning Day at the Alano Club on June 10, 2023



Praise the sun, the moon, the stars

By Kathy A Huff

Praise the sun, the moon, the stars,
Praise the ant, the tree, the shining leaf.
Praise every child large and small,
Praise the one within us all.
Praise the swimmers, crawlers, and creepers.
Praise the flower and the winding weed,
Praise each blade of grass and every dewdrop.
Praise dark moist earth.
Praise rock, sand, and shoal.
Praise wind -- nature's breath.
Praise those with fin, fur, and finger,
Praise the winged ones, the tiny ones,
and all the ones that live unseen.
Praise brightest morning and darkest night.
Praise the prickly and the unpopular.
Praise the crow's cry and the beggar's sigh.
Praise the dancers, the doers and the dreamers.
Praise those that give, those who love, and
those who heal.
Praise to wanderers, weavers and seekers.
Praise sounds of thunder, crashing waves,
and shouts for justice.
Praise silence.
Praise spirit.
Praise all colors.
Praise all acts of compassion.
Praise all. Praise all. Praise all.

[The 2023 General Assembly of the UUA, by Paul Helgeson](#)

The annual gathering of Unitarian-universalist can be inspiring, frustrating, uplifting, tedious, informative by turns. I was honored to represent USM as one of 2593 credentialed delegates representing 715 North American congregations. About one half of the delegates attended virtually.

My impression looking at the assembly: Everyone was masked (unless speaking), more people of color, more women, more youth. Incidentally, there are 2 young folks on the board of directors, both young women. Fewer old white men at the podium.

The main items of business this year were:

1. Election and installation of new UUA president
2. Extensive discussion of proposed revision of Article 2 of the UUA Bylaws
3. Affirmation and approve of three Actions of Immediate Witness (AIWs)
4. Consideration of a business resolution to divest all UUA funds from fossil fuel companies.
5. Farewell address by outgoing president, Rev. Dr Susan Frederick-Gray.

The search committee came up with one candidate for president. It was The Rev Dr Sofia Betancoort. No one was nominated by petition. Dr. Betancoort was elected by the body with a 95.5% affirmation.

Article 2 of UUA bylaws, adopted in 1984, took up the most time in general sessions of the meeting. Although there has been a previous effort to change it, it has been unchanged for nearly 40 years. This bylaw contains our seven principles and our theological sources. The proposed new bylaw 2 was developed and promoted by a special commission. The change process is a multi-year process. The final vote on the change will take place at GA next year and will require a 2/3 approval by delegates.

Three AIWs were affirmed by the GA delegates. They are:

1. Opposition to construction of “Cop City”, a national military-style police training facility being proposed south of Atlanta, Georgia.
2. Health Equity — everyone in the country should have equal access to adequate health care.
3. DACA, pathway to citizenship for Dreamers. Dreamers are children of immigrants who were brought here as infants and have lived here all their lives, but are subject to possible deportation to their countries of origin.

All three AIWs were overwhelmingly affirmed by the body.

The UUA board policy opposes any fossil fuel investment; however, there are a number of endowment funds within the UUA that include fossil fuel investments. The board position is that immediate divestiture of all these funds would have a drastic effect on the UUA’s ability to fund all current projects. The proposed business resolution would also support payment for reparations for damage done by fossil fuels. The GA supported the board’s position and voted this proposal down.

I will be giving a more detailed report and discussion on the 2023 General Assembly later this summer — watch for an announcement.