



THE CHALICE NEWS

Unitarian Society of Menomonie
A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

August 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)**

Aug 6 – The Devil’s Punchbowl

Meet at the Devil’s Punchbowl at 10 am to take a short walk into this incredibly beautiful geological wonder located in our community. There have been recent improvements to the access stairs to the grounds below. Bring a chair and a reading about nature. There will be a potluck picnic at Riverside Park following our little foray into the Punchbowl.

Aug 12 –Benefit Concert for Homeless Kids Project,

1-4 pm, Wilson Park, Menomonie. There will be a benefit concert for our homeless children project at the bandshell featuring Bryce Black and his Sliced Bread Jug Band, Ric Angus, Nora Jean, and more! Burrito California will provide the food. The Bubble Guy will be back with his mesmerizing bubbles for the kids. Bring your friends to listen to great music and donate to a worthy cause! We also need USM members to be at the event to man (or woman) the USM info table, do set-up, cleanup, make change at the Burrito California tent, and other things. Please sign up! Juliana will have a sign up sheet at our next gathering.

Aug 13 Service with Dennis Peters “Interfaith and UU”

Is Unitarian Universalism a proponent of interfaith relations? Is pluralism something near and dear to our hearts? Do we believe that all paths lead upward? Not so fast! It is kind of a trick question. Perhaps we need to reevaluate who we are, in light of our own beliefs and stance in this world.

Aug 13 - USM Board Meeting after the service

Aug 20- Informal gathering at our meeting space

We will watch a small congregation film and engage in discussion about the film after the viewing.

Aug 27 - Service with Dennis Peters “The End of All Wars”

Once upon a time humanity considered Peace—and found we were lacking in the ability to make it so. Even though we thought we knew it to be right, for some reason, no matter what we tried, it just wouldn’t work. Why not? What have we been doing wrong?

DAVE WILLIAMS, Happiness, a Reprise



**“Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”
Abraham Lincoln**

In the April version of this essay, I wrote about “Happiness,” as described in the research of two University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty members. Noteworthy in that essay was the observation of Pelin Kesebir, who suggests that through mindfulness, gratitude, practiced positivity, and the cultivation of healthy relationships, individuals can reclaim control of their perception of and response to their circumstances, even when they can’t control the circumstances themselves. That control, she argues, leads to happiness.

Thinking about those steps that can lead to happiness sparked the thought: what do members and friends of the Unitarian Society of Menomonie believe makes them happy. Here’s some of what I’ve learned:

Sherry Hagen finds happiness in creating art, being outdoors and spending time with loved ones.

Lynn Hausman noted that visiting her grandchildren, having a busy calendar, and eating ice cream provide happy moments.

Juliana Schmidt had a long list of things which make her happy, including beauty, the arts, nature and being in it, order, her piano, her friends (most times), connecting to people via performance, a classic movie, sitting on her patio listening to the birds or reading or doing needlework, finishing a good book, when students “get it,” singing in the choir, and eating popcorn.

Paul Helgeson reports that walking in the woods makes him happy. “Every time that I do it I see different things—it changes from day to day during the growing season.” He also lists working in his garden, for the joy of tending new little plants in the spring on through harvesting the bounty of nature. Losing himself in a good book, as long as the writing is good, and spending time with friends and family round out his happiness list.

Annette Taylor listed reading a good book, having a glass of wine and talking with her brother Paul, a casual lunch or dinner with friends, morning walks with her neighbor ladies, balancing her checkbook with little effort, and getting Wordle in two or three tries.

Dennis Peters said that talking with critters (birds, deer, a woodchuck, skunk, dogs, cats) provides happiness, and that most actually seem to listen and some appreciate it; playing music and having it appreciated by others; writing messages and leading services since it feels like something he should be doing; and recording reading material for Communication Center (Minnesota State Services for the Blind), which he’s been doing for 39 years. “Of all the activities in my life it’s the one that has done the most good for others.”

As author, I get to add some happiness drivers too. One would be working on projects **together** with my wife Karen (wallpapering, putting together a photo display wall, etc.) and having them turn out; early morning bike rides when it’s cool, quiet and wildlife hasn’t withdrawn into the woods yet; reading to my grandchildren—see the attached photo—and making that photo the wallpaper on my laptop so I’m reminded every time I open up

Williams, continued



I'll conclude this revisiting of happiness with two additional quotes, which it appears those listed above have internalized:

“Be happy for this moment. This moment is life.” Omar Khayyam

“Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.” Oscar Wilde

JONAH Events

We are now members of JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope). JONAH is a social action organization based in Eau Claire. There will be an induction ceremony Sunday, October 8 from 4-5 pm in Eau Claire for members and volunteers at the Brewery Projekt. Juliana will be attending if you would like to carpool.

Other JONAH Events

Multi-Cultural Festival, Sunday, August 20, 1-6 pm at Phoenix Park. Mexican Consulate Mobile Visit, Saturday, August 26, 9 am to 2:30 pm, Immanuel Lutheran Church on Golf Road, Eau Claire.

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.

Members of the USM Board

The USM Board as of July 1 is Paul Helgeson and Jill Smith as co-presidents, Dave Williams, Treasurer, Lynn Shaw, Secretary, Board Members at large are Mary Beth Lvoncek (Homeless Kids Project), Lynne Hausman (JONAH rep), Annette Taylor (JONAH rep), Sherry Hagen (Alano Liaison and Social Action), Juliana Schmidt (Program Chair).

You are welcome to attend:

- New Moon Ritual and Tarot Reading Sun. Aug. 13 at 6 pm
- Full Moon Ritual and Drumming Sun. Aug, 27 6 pm

At Jack and Sherry Hagen's in Menomonie
RSVP sherryhagen0115@gmail.com

