



THE CHALICE NEWS

Unitarian Society of Menomonie
A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

November 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)**

Nov 5 - Samhein (pron. Sah-when) at Jack and Sherry Hagen's House, Mathews Street, Menomonie.

More below in this newsletter. Bring a lawn chair and dress warmly for it will be held outside by a fire.

Nov 1 - Service with Dennis Peters, "It's My Turn"

I have a sense of agency in my life! It is time to take control. Self-empowerment is what it's all about, right? It is enactment of the entrepreneurial spirit in my day-to-day existence. Well, that's one way of looking at it. Another way might be to think about the empowerment of others.

Nov 19 – Lynn Buske, Executive Director of JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope), will be speaking to us about the organization. USM is a member of JONAH.

Nov 26 - Service with Dennis Peters, "Practical Giving of Thanks"

We look at our worlds. Many of us live in comfort, at least relative to the lives of many others. We have a warm house, plenty of good food, transportation, things that we take for granted. So do we feel... thankful? Grateful? To whom? In this fellowship many of us are atheists, or agnostics. Or do we tell ourselves: I've worked hard and deserve this bounty. Let's talk about that inner feeling and how we express that gratitude.



DAVE WILLIAMS, A Gift I Could Give



I learned recently that a friend has gone into hospice. I've known my friend for about a dozen years, starting when we both showed up as new members of the city's bike and pedestrian advisory committee. We shared a love of bicycling, and as the two senior members (age-wise) of the committee, had a lifetime of experience on two wheels to share.

Through our years on the committee, we came together for meetings to improve the bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure of Menomonie. We advocated for bike lanes on Highway 12 out to Fleet Farm, lanes from Broadway down along Highway 29 to the Red Cedar River and Trail, lanes along a rebuilt 13th Avenue, and our crowning effort was the Lake Menomin Loop trail around the lake. We worked to get Bronze status for Menomonie as a Bike-Friendly Community through the League of American Cyclists. We weren't just focused on bikes—getting reasonable pedestrian crossings at the Hwy 25 and Cedar Falls Road corner near Walmart and new flashing beacons on Stout Road make it safer for pedestrians.

And I would see my friend around town on his bicycle—he road it everywhere, did many of his errands and shopping from his bike seat. He survived being hit by a car, with some injuries, but came back to ride again. So it was a jolt to learn of his health challenges and the move into hospice. I began to wonder what I could say to this friend, what I might give him that would be meaningful for him in his time of challenge. “Thoughts and prayers” are so de rigueur these days, and feel almost trite to express.

I finally decided to take a risk and share a narrative of one of my recent bike rides. I wasn't sure if he would find it enjoyable, or if it would simply emphasize how he could no longer ride. But it was something I could offer, something I know we both would have enjoyed talking about before his illness robbed him of the ability to ride.

I described in some detail one of my recent morning rides and emailed it off to my friend. His daughter is now handling his email for him, but I hoped she might read it to him. I didn't have long to wait for a response. His daughter described how much he had enjoyed “riding along with me” and shared a message he dictated, that he would welcome more rides, and more information about the ongoing work of our city committee. I felt a tingle along my spine when I read his words.

The message here isn't very profound. I gave my friend the one thing I could give that had some meaning for both of us and gave him some joy in a difficult time. May I be so lucky in other such times of need.



Circle Suppers

Circle Suppers will return in January. The way it works: hosts agree to hold it at his/her home, supply beverage, and contact participants to bring entrée, bread, salad, vegetable, appetizer or dessert. There should be no more than 5 participants/guests for each host. Hosts will receive the emails of participants to further coordinate food/beverage selections. Two hosts are signed up and will host in January. More to come in the next newsletter.

JONAH

The induction of USM into JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope), a community action agency based in Eau Claire occurred on October 8 at the Brewing Projekt in Eau Claire. (The Unitarian church in Eau Claire is also a member.) JONAH is celebrating 16 years of community activism with a focus on social justice issues. Juliana Schmidt and Annette Taylor (USM's representative to JONAH) attended the induction, and met with Executive Director, Lynn Buske, who will be speaking to us in November. They also met other members and listened to an inspiring presentation by Ricardo Levins-Morales, community organizer from the Twin Cities. The next step for USM is to decide which of the five JONAH initiatives (affordable housing, mental illness, child poverty, transportation, immigration) will focus on.

REMINDER:

There is still time to fill out Christmas cards for the Dunn County veterans. All you need to do is write a personal greeting and sign your name. You may want to thank the veteran for his/her service. The cards will be collected from church until November 19th. You do not need to put anything on the envelope. They will be addressed and stamped at the Dunn County Veterans Service Office.

UU/SweetWood Circle Samhain Sunday Nov 5th

10-11am at Jack and Sherry Hagen's (4 blocks from the UU near Elmwood Park).

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. 4th. Email: Sherry Hagen sherryhagen0115@gmail.com

Creative Time for adults and young adults

Starting on Thursday Nov. 2 6-8 pm

Bring your own supplies.

Tiny Seeds Academy

1315 Broadway

QUESTION?

text Sherry 715-587-9757

Quilts and Blankets for the Homeless

The Menomonie Police Department continues to collect quilts and blankets for unsheltered folks in Menomonie. Please leave your donations in our office or at Stepping Stones in Menomonie.

Book Discussion: Happiness is a Choice You Make by John Leland

The book discussion returns January 7 at 10 am with Happiness Is A Choice You Make by John Leland. We will meet at our church meeting space. Paul Helgeson will lead the discussion by Zoom.

Literacy Chippewa Valley

Literacy Chippewa Valley is looking for volunteers to work as tutors. We have students needing help with GED prep and English Language Learners who are taking classes at CVTC and would like additional help from a tutor. We provide services in Dunn, Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties. If interested, please contact Cindy Bullock 715.834.0222.