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Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist *fellowship*

Reflections on The Charter for Compassion

Submitted by Julia Weiser

The Fellowship has had some interesting programs this fall and winter including some on video. The one on the Charter for Compassion really resonated with me. With all the strife in the world and all the partisan letters in the paper, I feel the principle of compassion could be the true meaning of the holiday season and the new year. The following is from the handout we received after watching the 2008 talk by Karen Armstrong on the video.

“The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect... We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. ...It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.”

The charter for compassion fits well into our UU principles, especially the first and second ones which state “We affirm and promote...The inherent worth and dignity of every person and Justice, equality and compassion in human relations.” I believe and hope that we could resolve to be more compassionate in our personal lives and in our Fellowship life.

For the whole written charter go to charterforcompassion.org. To listen to the whole talk by Karen Armstrong, go to www.ted.com/talks/karen-armstrong-makes-her-ted-prize-wish-the-charter-for-compassion.

Links to the other videos shown at services this fall:

“Faith In The Border Land”: <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2009/ga2009/144303.shtml>

“Celebrate Me Home”: <http://www.uuplanet.tv/video/Celebrate-Me-Home>

Other videos are available at the [UUA web site](http://www.uua.org).

Welcoming Congregation Update

During the past year, our fellowship has been exploring the possibility of becoming a Welcoming Congregation (<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/welcomingcongregation/index.shtml>). This has included the formation of a committee, two services based on learning about the LGBTQA community, and a Safe Zone workshop.

On January 24, we will be holding our fourth Welcoming Congregation workshop during the service. This service will be the capstone of our experiences over the year. We will be sharing a UUA campaign called "Standing on the Side of Love" (www.standingonthesideoflove.org) and brainstorming as a fellowship how we can continue to take action as individuals and as a fellowship. Following the service, members will be voting as to whether or not to officially become a Welcoming Congregation through UUA.

If you have any questions about the Welcoming Congregation initiative, please contact Shannon, Carol, Mary, Jan, Bill, or Clara.

Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On Monday, January 18, our nation will celebrate in remembrance of Martin Luther King, Jr. What does MLK, Jr. mean to you? How will you recognize the holiday?

The web site www.serve.gov encourages citizens to make MLK, Jr. day "a day on, not a day off". The holiday is now considered a national day of service and there will be service projects taking place all over the county. If you would like to volunteer on MLK, Jr. Day, check out www.volunteersrock.org for service opportunities in Portage County.

The Stevens Point interfaith community also organizes an MLK Day Celebration, of which SPUUF is a co-sponsor. This year's celebration is on Monday, January 18 at 7 p.m. in the SPASH auditorium. The keynote speaker is William Fulton, J.D. who will speak about his experiences with Dr. King and in the civil rights movement. More information can be found at www.justiceworksltd.org



But what does Dr. King mean to Unitarian Universalists? This is what www.uua.org has to say: *Our Sources of Inspiration say that we learn from words and actions of prophetic women and men. Dr. King and his colleagues were definitely prophetic. By celebrating the life of Dr. King, we continue to learn how to build the beloved community in our daily lives. Dr. King has inspired four resolutions at General Assembly; two of which surround the King Holiday. As Arizona was the last state in the Union to recognize the holiday, the UUA refused to have their General Assembly in Arizona until they adopted the holiday. After canceling the 1988 General Assembly in Phoenix, it did not return to the state until 1997.*

SPUUF will be having an intergenerational service on January 17 to celebrate MLK, Jr. Day. The service will be interactive in nature, allowing youth and adults to work together on activities focusing on Martin Luther King Jr. and his civil rights work.



Thanks!

A big thank you goes out to all who helped with SPUUF's holiday basket sponsorship. Members and friends pooled resources and gifts to make the holidays brighter for a local family.

An extra big "thank you" goes to Jodi and Amy for coordinating the holiday basket program this year!

Member News!

Nancy Stevenson was featured in the Friday, Dec. 18 edition of the Stevens Point Journal. The article included a nice photo and told of her work for many years with the Christmas bird count. Nancy said the total numbers were down this year but the number of species was about the same.

The Dec. 18 edition of the Portage County Gazette featured Erin Tschida and a friend from her Girl Scout Troop. Erin noticed last year that there was a shortage of toys for girls her age when she worked assembling gifts for families with the Holiday Basket Program. This year she decided to remedy that. In one week the troop collected more than 50 age appropriate toys for girls in upper elementary school for distribution by Operation Bootstrap.

Congratulations to Cheryl and Alfonso Cantu on the birth of their baby boy Roman!

General Assembly 2010 in Minneapolis

Join thousands of Unitarian Universalists (UUs) from across the United States for the 2010 General Assembly (GA) in Minneapolis.

You'll experience wonderful and uplifting [worship services](#)—morning and night—led by some of our best worship leaders, with glorious music and inspiring messages. Worshipping together with thousands of fellow UUs at our Sunday Worship Service is an experience that should not be missed.

General Assembly is the way that our faith does [business](#). Actions of social witness are passed at GA, elements that make up future policies are discussed... and YOU have a voice in the discussion.

You'll hear [terrific speakers](#). There will be hundreds of entertaining [programs](#) and informative workshops, offering excellent support and learning for leaders in our congregations. You'll be able to join the [witness for our faith](#) and values, in moving and exciting ways.

[Minneapolis](#) is an ideal setting for GA. It is a progressive, culturally diverse, LGBT friendly city that is rich in cultural arts and has a stunning natural environment. There are 900 lakes and 170 parks within the Twin Cities area.

[Registration](#) and [Housing](#) open March 1. [Children's Programs](#), [Financial Aid](#), and [Accessibility Services](#) are available.

For more information, follow the links within this article, or go directly to <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/>

Get Involved!



Unitarian Universalist congregations need the participation and leadership of all their members to thrive. The opportunities for your deeper involvement are limitless! Join a committee, volunteer to assist with a service, lead an RE class, lend your skills and passion!



Winter Service Schedule

STEVENS POINT
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP

Up-to-date information about
services can be found at www.spuuf.org.



January 17—MLK Intergenerational Service
January 24—Welcoming Congregation Service
January 31—*TBA*
February 7—Lawrence Leviton
February 14—Poetry Sunday
February 21—Jane Jones
February 28—Music Sunday
March 7—*Interfaith*, Rev. Lynne Oswald

Services are held at the
Stevens Point Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship,
located at 3116 Algoma
Street, Stevens Point,
54481. Services begin
at 10:00 a.m.

Child care and Religious
Exploration classes for
children are available.

Visit www.spuuf.org for
more information.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
3116 Algoma St.
P.O. Box 361
Stevens Point, WI 54481
www.spuuf.org



The Uncommon Denomination