

▶ MORE ON WELCOMING CONGREGATION NEWS, FINANCIAL UPDATE ..... 2

▶ CANVASS NEWS, I HAVE A DREAM PLEDGES, JEWISH SABBATH SERVICE ..... 3

▶ SPRING SERVICE SCHEDULE.....4

Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist

# *fellowship*

## It's Official! UUA Recognizes SPUUF as a Welcoming Congregation

The Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist Fellowship received word from the Unitarian Universalist Association that SPUUF has officially been recognized as a Welcoming Congregation.

The news came on Friday, February 26, about two weeks after the Welcoming Congregation Committee submitted a report to the UUA outlining SPUUF's efforts over the past year to meet the Welcoming Congregation recognition requirements.

The report, written by Carol Weston, included the results of our two membership votes—the first in January 2009 to begin the process of working towards Welcoming Congregation status, and the second vote in January 2010 when the membership voted to become a Welcoming Congregation. The report also outlined all of the efforts the fellowship has made over the past year, including workshops, education, services, and outreach efforts.

SPUUF will now be identified as a Welcoming Congregation, as denoted by an icon, when anyone searches for a congregation through the UUA web site. SPUUF can also use the logo in advertising and promotion in our community.

**Become a**

**Welcoming Congregation**



So what's next? As part of the report to the UUA, we also included the many ways our fellowship can continue to promote inclusiveness and our Welcoming Congregation status. While the ideas we brainstormed are not "required" in order to keep our status, it's a way for us to "walk the talk" and keep our commitment at the forefront.

*(continued on page 2)*

# Living the Welcoming Congregation

(Continued from the front page)

Here is the list of ideas that the fellowship brainstormed for continuing our commitment to being an active Welcoming Congregation:

## Action Ideas for Fellowship:

1. Include we are a welcoming congregation on outdoor signage and other fellowship materials.
2. Look into offering OWL program or combine with another UU church in area.
3. Central WI Pride event - have a table about SPUUF
4. Take a public position on LGBT issues in the community.
5. Continue to reach out to PFLAG.
6. Stay connected with Jr. high, high school, and university GSA organizations.
7. Throw a celebration event in light of becoming a welcoming congregation; invite public.
8. Send out a press release about becoming a welcoming congregation.
9. Put a rainbow on SPUUF things - newsletter, web site, etc.
10. Have an annual re-affirmation celebration or service on the anniversary of becoming a welcoming congregation.
11. Regularly evaluate our progress and actions as a welcoming congregation.
12. Organize one or two services per year on LGBT issues.
13. Encourage members' and leaders' attendance and participation at trainings or workshops in order to continue to learn how to be more welcoming/better allies

## Action Ideas for Individuals:

1. Use "I" statements.
2. Show compassion
3. Wear buttons that state your ideas/position/acceptance
4. Be willing to have conversations with our children
5. Confront/intervene on negative comments
6. Work on how to have "casual" conversations with people who are interested/curious
7. Vote
8. Take personal responsibility for your words, actions, and behaviors and role model

As you can see from the list, some of the listed action steps include celebrating and promoting our new Welcoming Congregation status! The Welcoming Congregation Committee will be meeting soon to plan. If you are interested in joining the Welcoming Congregation committee or would like to be involved in any of the listed action steps, please contact Shannon Williams at [swilliam@uwsp.edu](mailto:swilliam@uwsp.edu), or any member of the committee.

THANK YOU to members and friends for your enthusiasm, open hearts and minds, and willingness to make this a part of our fellowship's values.

An additional thank you to the members of the Welcoming Congregation committee for planning services and workshops and ensuring that we met the guidelines and requirements for Welcoming Congregation status: Carol Weston, Bill Hettler, Clara Cleve, Mary Arnold, and Jan Nitz.

To learn more, visit <http://www.uua.org/leaders/idbm/bglt/index.shtml>

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## Financial Update



At the end of February 2010 we are more than one half way through our fiscal year. At this point our expenses have exceeded our income by \$2000. Fortunately we have had some generous donors from both members and non members. However we also have a number of members who have not made payments on the pledges made last year or who did not pledge at all. Our budget was written based on our expected income. Some of our recurring expenses are rent, utilities, speakers, postage, child care, and maintenance. We realize the economy is in a downturn and that it may be difficult to fulfill your pledge. If you are able we would appreciate it if you would make a donation. If you need to readjust your pledge, please contact Ron Chapman. Thank you from the SPUUF Board of Directors

# I Have a Dream....

At the January 17 intergenerational service in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., several people in attendance created a "pledge card" in honor of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech. The purpose of the pledge cards was for individuals to think about how they would carry out the message of the speech in today's context and in a way that is personal to the individual. Here are the pledges made by members and friends of the fellowship:

- I have a dream that all countries would make any child born in their country a citizen.
- I have a dream that we will learn to live in harmony with the earth.
- I have a dream that I will support a cause.
- I have a dream that I can be color-blind in my speech and associations with people of the world.
- I have a dream that I can have the resolve to keep working in community with others, not letting our small differences matter.
- I have a dream that a Muslim woman, a bisexual man, a wheelchair bound girl, and a Hispanic boy can come to or return to our country, see our laws and our ideals, and think "I'm Home".
- I have a dream that we will all learn to love each other as our neighbors.
- I have a dream that we will live in harmony with all living things, including the planet.
- I have a dream that my children's children will marvel that we came so far and that racism is a thing of the past.
- I have a dream that we can act out of love instead of fear.
- I have a dream that we will share the courage to and comfort of respecting and loving the earth.

## March Means the Annual Canvass!

As I write this it is nearly March which means the beginning of the annual canvass of members for the Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. The canvass is **your** opportunity to comment on the activities of the past year and to make suggestions for the future. The results will help us determine where to place emphasis for services, budgeting, and other events in the coming year.

All members will receive a packet and/or an electronic attachment containing a brochure containing information, canvass questions, a sheet for gifts and talents, and a pledge sheet for your financial support of the Fellowship. Please read the newly designed information brochure prepared by Carol Weston and then fill out the forms. The canvass form itself is anonymous, and you do not need to sign it. The gifts and talents sheet and pledge form need your name so we know whom to contact for volunteering. The deadline for completing and submitting the forms is March 28. At the building we will have collection boxes into which to put the completed forms starting March 14.

Because we are a Fellowship we count on our members for services, financial support, social action activities, building maintenance, snacks, greeting to name a few. We all need to volunteer in some fashion so consider what you can and are willing to do. We are hoping for **100% participation on the canvass** and in **making a pledge of financial support**. The information and suggestions we receive will be used to do planning for next year's budget and services.

At present the canvass is for members only. Some have asked how does one become a member? You state your intent to a Board member, pledge your support to the activities of the Fellowship, and sign the membership book. That is all there is to it. We usually have a brief ceremony welcoming you when you join. As a member you are eligible to participate in all votes on issues and to be on the governing board. If there are some non-members who are considering joining, please contact Carol Weston or Mary Arnold. If you do not wish to join, you are still welcome to attend all services and to participate in any and all of the committees and activities of the Fellowship.

Results of the canvass will be available at the Annual Meeting in May. If anyone would like to help collating the results, contact Julia Weiser.



There will be a **Jewish Sabbath Service** on Friday, March 5 at 7:30 pm at 1475 Water Street in Stevens Point. This is the site of the historic Temple Beth Israel which is now owned and maintained by the Portage County Historical Society as a museum. <http://www.pchswi.org/museums/synagogue/synagogue.htm>. The building is on the National Register of Historic Places; however it is not handicapped accessible due to stairs at the entrance of the building. If you plan to attend this Service or need additional information, contact Larry Weiser at [lweiser@uwsp.edu](mailto:lweiser@uwsp.edu).

# Spring Service Schedule

Up-to-date information about services can be found at [www.spuuf.org](http://www.spuuf.org).

**March 7**—*Interfaith*, Rev. Lynne Oswald

**March 14**—*"Spinoza's Critique of Scripture"*, David Williams

**March 21**—*"Farming"*, Michele Bjella

**March 28**—*Justice Sunday*

**April 4**—*Easter and Spring Rebirth*, Julia Wesier

**April 11**—TBA

**April 18**—*Earth Day Intergenerational*

**April 25**—TBA, James Sage

**May 2**—Annual Meeting

**May 9**—TBA, Rev. Don Wheat

**May 16**—Flower Communion and Recognitions



STEVENS POINT  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
FELLOWSHIP



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](http://www.spuuf.org) for more information.

## Opportunity for SPUUF Youth

Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church has invited SPUUF's youth to attend their weekly youth group meetings and activities. The youth group meets each Wednesday during the school year. The program runs between 5:45 and 7:00 p.m. and includes: games and activities, guest speakers, service projects, and discussions. The youth group also takes service trips and is inviting SPUUF youth to participate.

Clara Cleve, Carol Weston, and Shannon Williams have more detailed information if you are interested. Also, feel free to contact Susan Barrett, Coordinator of Youth and Christian Education at Frame, at [moonlightpaddler@hotmail.com](mailto:moonlightpaddler@hotmail.com) or 344-4826.

### Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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# The Uncommon Denomination