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# Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist *fellowship*

## Pardon Our Mess....

We had a very busy summer making energy saving improvements to our building on Algoma Street and yet there are things that remain to be done so pardon our mess when you come for fellowship meetings this fall. We owe a big thank you to Carol Weston and Bill Hettler for all the work they did as project coordinators and construction bosses.

Two accomplishments were the Focus on Energy (FOE) grant and the renegotiation of our lease with Community Industries Corporation (CIC). The incentive we will receive from the FOE grant was a bit disappointing in that we will only get \$1,381 but still the money is much appreciated. The renegotiation of our lease with CIC took all summer but in the end we have an agreement that is very beneficial to all parties. The lease gives us a place to grow for the next nine years and gives us rent credit for all our improvements.

We all have a better appreciation of the cost of labor with the work done on the northwest room, both inside and out. I still cannot believe we dug down three feet on one outside wall to put in sheets of foam insulation. And more amazing is Vince did the other wall all by himself. A short list of other jobs includes: removing and replacing siding on the outside; hiring a mason to block in the window and fix the foundation block; caulking holes in the roof; gutting the inside of the room; hiring a contractor to put in spray foam insulation; dry walling, removing the ceiling tiles in the fellowship room and two smaller room, and cleaning and painting all the tiles. The list seems short but the work was long and hard. I cannot thank enough all the people who helped: Rae Canfield, Ron Chapman, Clara Cleve, Jackie Dlask-Hickman, Vince Heig, Jenny Howard, Lisa Koob, Amy Kurka, Ron Tschida, Jan Nitz, Kelly Mortenson, Joey & Erin Tschida, Chuck Rumsey, Carolyn & Danielle Greenlee, Rob Clint, Julia and Larry Weiser and again Carol Weston and Bill Hettler. There is still work to be done but there seems to be a little light at the end of the tunnel.

All the while that the construction work was being done we had three wonderful pot lucks thanks to the Welcoming Committee, Clara Cleve, Michele and Steve Bjella, and Kelly Mortenson and Ron Tschida.

The service committee also met several time this summer and I think you will truly enjoy the Sunday fellowship meeting this coming year. Thanks to Steve Bjella for all his work as committee chair.

This is going to be an exciting year with the services we have planned, our ongoing energy improvements and work toward becoming a Welcoming Congregation.

Mary Arnold,  
President of the Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

# Save the Date for the Prairie Retreat!

The 2009 Prairie Retreat will take place the weekend of October 23 at Pine Lake, in Westfield, Wisconsin.

Here are a few things you could do on retreat:

- Learn how to play a recorder
- Take a lesson in Spanish
- Make Ukrainian Easter eggs
- Go on a nature hike
- Sing rounds and hymns
- Brush up on your folk dancing
- Restorative Yoga

Members of our fellowship have been invited to participate in this retreat. If you would like more information, please contact Rachel Long at raarlong@gmail.com or Mary Arnold.

## A Stepping-Stone Year

This year, the SPUUF Religious Exploration (R.E.) program is based on the curriculum, "A Stepping-Stone Year". It is a yearlong curriculum developed for elementary school-aged children. The program is based on two premises: 1) that religion helps people find answers to important life questions; and 2) that Unitarian Universalists find these answers for themselves. "A Stepping-Stone Year" focuses on these important questions:

- How did the world begin?
- How did life begin?
- How did I begin?
- How can I live so as to make my life worthwhile?
- Why do people die?
- What is right and wrong?
- How can I make decisions?



"A Stepping-Stone Year" draws upon science, myth, Unitarian and Universalist traditions, and other secular and spiritual resources to support children in their inquiry. We've selected lessons we hope blend nicely with the themes presented throughout the fellowship service year, as well.

"A Stepping-Stone Year" expresses the principles and purposes of the UU Association, including:

- a free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- the inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- the goal of world community, with peace, liberty and justice for all;
- respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part;
- acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregations.

Most children want three things from an R.E. program: to be with friends, to learn, and to have fun. Add to these motives a wish to grow in their sense of wonder and desire to find opportunities for its celebration! We'll keep these in mind throughout the R.E. program year!

Amy Kurka and Kelly Mortenson  
2009-2010 R.E. Program Coordinators



## Thanks!

**A big thank you** goes out to all who helped with SPUUF's House of Peace meal. We had lovely salads and mac n cheese, homemade bread, meaty main courses, fruit and delicious desserts from Joanie, Rae, Clara, Carol, Steve, Kelly and Jodi. Joanie, Kelly, Erin, Joey and Rae stayed to serve the meal and Michele and Julia made the contacts. The meal was a hit and we hope to get on the schedule again for this coming year. Thanks, Everyone!

# Our Unique Holidays

There are two holidays that many Unitarian Universalist congregations celebrate that are unique to our faith: the Water Communion and the Flower Communion. Both holidays are ceremonies that celebrate our Unitarian Universalist community and the importance of each individual's unique contributions to that community.

**The Water Communion**, also sometimes called Water Ceremony, was first used at a Unitarian Universalist worship service in the 1980s. Many UU congregations now hold a Water Communion once a year, often at the beginning of the new church year (September).

Members bring to the service a small amount of water from a place that is special to them. During the appointed time in the service, people one by one pour their water together into a large bowl. As the water is added, the person who brought it tells why this water is special to them. The combined water is symbolic of our shared faith coming from many different sources. It is often then blessed by the congregation, and sometimes is later boiled and used as the congregation's "holy water" in child dedication ceremonies and similar events.

The Stevens Point Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will be holding our Water Communion ceremony at our first service of the year, September 13. We look forward to celebrating our unique UU holiday with you!

## Green Sanctuary Happenings

The summer affords such wonderful aspects of the natural world and time to savor them.

Our SPUUF visit to Ron Tschida's Bee hive was surely a highlight. Ron offered an up close and personal look at our bee friends, followed by a visit to Mary and Henry Arnold's place, complete with Henry's cattle barn and Mary's mega garden. Some of us returned home with enormous cabbages that evening and no bee stings!

On the local food scene—the Stevens Point Farmer's Market and the Artisan and Food Market at Emy J's have brought smiles and wonderful sights and tastes to us. SPUUF's Bobby Gifford has been at the markets with his vegetable offerings and Steve Bjella will be doing some story telling with violin accompaniment on the Farmer's Market Square, Sat., Sept 12 starting around 10:00 am.

I.C.E. (Interfaith Community for the Earth) invites all to join in their open meetings/potlucks, the next scheduled for Sept 10 from 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM, at Frame Presbyterian Church, Main St. Stevens Point (across from Shopko). I.C.E. is planning its next Saturday community event to take place on Oct. 24, "350 degrees: An International Day of Climate Action". Details of this event will be announced soon; for info go to [350.org](http://350.org).

And, speaking of aspects of Climate Change and our world, an upcoming conference entitled: "Greening Our Faith Communities and Our Lives" is scheduled for Oct. 11 and Oct. 12 at the Ramada Inn in Stevens Point. Featured will be the keynote: "Global Warming: Our Greatest Moral Challenge" and "Living Responsibly in the Web of Life". It is sponsored by Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign and details and registration can be found at: [www.wicec.org](http://www.wicec.org).

The Plastic Bag Reduction Campaign is a community awareness effort to reduce single-use plastic bags by 50% in our area, particularly in stores that sell groceries. The campaign is seeking additional volunteers to man their "Event Tent" in local stores beginning Sept. 19th. If interested, people may contact Bjellas at 345-9779 for more info.

Our community is truly brimming with both informational and hands-on opportunities this fall for all of us. Let's help each other take advantage of them through SPUUF's calendar and connections.

-Michele Bjella

*SPUUF's Green Sanctuary Committee resumes soon at the start of the fellowship year. The committee seeks to support SPUUF in its sustainability efforts and to participate in our local community. Look for meeting announcements at upcoming services. You are welcome to email Michele at [michelebjella@yahoo.com](mailto:michelebjella@yahoo.com) to get on the e-list for meeting announcements.*

## 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!





# Fall Service Schedule

STEVENS POINT  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
FELLOWSHIP

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



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.

- September 13**—Work Day—8:30—11:30 a.m. at fellowship Potluck/Water Communion, 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m., Iverson Park
- September 20**—Work Day at the fellowship
- September 27**—Rev. Scott Prinster at **Iverson Park**
- October 4**—*Environmental theme/potluck*
- October 11**—“*Tolerance, Equity, & Compassion*” - Rev. Abhi Janamanchi (DVD)
- October 18**—TBA, Rev. Glenda Walker
- October 25**—*Day of the Dead*, Intergenerational
- November 1**—*Welcoming Congregation*
- November 8**—TBA, John Blakeman
- November 15**—TBA, Rev. Karen Gustafson
- November 22**—*Guest at Your Table*, Intergenerational
- November 29**—*Turning Inside Out*, Rev. Martin Levanhar (DVD)
- December 6**—TBA, Richard Olson
- December 13**—*Golden Rule*, TBA
- December 20**—*Winter Holidays*, Intergenerational
- December 27**—No Service

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**  
3116 Algoma St.  
P.O. Box 361  
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[www.spuuf.org](http://www.spuuf.org)



## The Uncommon Denomination