Janelle Masters will read two of her stories about growing up in her hometown, Niobe, North Dakota, population 35. The stories are humorous, yet tackle religious and spirituality issues and conflicts. Janelle Masters is a recovering English teacher and currently the academic dean at Bismarck State College. She is a lifetime birder and star-gazer.

Sunday, February 12, 2012

“STANDING ON CEREMONY: THE GAY MARRIAGE PLAYS”
Bismarck State College Theatre Arts
Facilitator: Don Morrison

Dan Rogers, AnnMarie Kajencicki and Paul Murphy, three members of the Bismarck State College cast of “Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays,” will perform a few pieces from their November performance. Witty, warm and occasionally wacky, these plays are vows to the blessings of equality, the universal challenges of relationships, and the often hilarious power of love. BSC was one of 40 theaters throughout the country to participate in a national event coordinated by the Tectonic Theatre Project with these pieces that were written by major contemporary play writes. Dan Rogers is the director of theatre arts at BSC.

Sunday, February 19, 2012

“BISMARCK MANDAN FOOD CO-OP: FOOD AND COMMUNITY”
Tyler Demars
Facilitator: Heidi Demars

A discussion about food and community. The Demars Family, among others, have been working tirelessly to build a food co-op in our area. “Out of our valley rises a cooperative built on solid ground. Fortified with the good food our farmers provide, we nourish our children on clean air, earth, and water. The strength from the soil gives strength to our community. Our co-op is a living legacy…” Tyler graduated with a Masters in Strategic Leadership from the University of Mary and started a small business with his friend called 3 Speed Early Intervention.

Sunday, February 26, 2012

“DON’T FENCE ME IN”
Colleen Reinke
Facilitator: Mary Mitchell

Wide open spaces…we North Dakotans know the meaning of those words. Our environment and the buildings we use profoundly influence how we feel in our daily lives and in our religious practice. Think of Stonehenge vs. Notre Dame. This program will explore the concepts and the history of our building here in Bismarck along with concepts to consider for our future.

Colleen Reinke is the whip-cracking president of your UU Board. She was born and raised on the prairies of ND and has experience and interest in design and architecture. She is getting oh-so-close to opening her own design business.
**Pledges Vs Budget?**

**Dollars and Sense**

As of the end of January, the fellowship has received $30,615 in pledges for this year. Our budget is $55,960, which anticipated $45,460 in pledge dollars. Your Board was charged at the annual meeting with making the budget match the pledge dollars, and we will do so as charged beginning in February. We will keep the congregation informed of our decisions.

If you have not completed your pledge for last year and are able to do so, please feel free. If you have not completed a pledge card for this year and are able to contribute, please do so. The Board will take additional contributions received after January into account in modifying the budget. We will never, ever, ever turn down money!!!

---

**WEAVING THE GORGEOUS WEB**

(Passing of the Collection Basket)

Thank you to all of you who turned in pledge cards for 2012. Given what has been pledged so far, we have fallen short of what the Board forecasted for the coming year. This is not entirely unusual at our fellowship, but your Board is trying to think of ways to rectify this situation early rather than later in the fiscal year. This will require several different strategies. One of those strategies is the use of collection baskets.

We as a congregation are going to pass collection baskets during the service this Sunday and each Sunday in February. At that point, the Board will evaluate the practice to determine whether it should become a permanent part of our financial policy.

We realize that this is a cultural change for the church, and we ask that you approach this with an open heart and give it a bit of time to see how you feel about it. The Board wants to know your thoughts on the use of the baskets so that we can evaluate this process. You can speak to any of us at any time, and our contact information is on the last page of this newsletter. We will consider what everyone tells us before making a final decision.

The use of collection baskets does several things for us:

- Those who have pledged may use the basket to keep current on their pledges. Just be sure you put your donation envelope marked with your name so that we know it should be credited to your pledge.
- This is a convenient way for friends who have not pledged and visitors to make a contribution to our fellowship without having to track down the box in the entryway.
- Eventually the proceeds of the collection baskets can be targeted to specific projects and/or charities within the community.

The passing of the baskets will be accompanied by music, which will allow us all time to reflect or meditate on our gorgeous web and the joy that giving can bring us.
**Men’s BBQ Society**

The inaugural meeting of the UU Men’s Barbeque Society (UUMBS) will be held at Tim Hathaway’s home on Wednesday, February 15 at 5:30. This opportunity is designed for men who are interested in exploring spiritual development in a small group setting. For more information contact Tim Hathaway (426.9306) or Jim Dawson (595.2081).

---

**New Members!**

Our fellowship has welcomed the following people to new membership:

- Rick Makelky
  (children: Alex, Sarah & Rachael)
- Tyler and Heidi Demars,
  (children: Nola & Nash)
- Wayde Schafer
- Jim Dawson
- Anessa Pfeifer-Johnson
  (children: Simon & Aiden)

Please say hello to these folks! If you are interested in membership in our congregation, contact Carol Jean Larsen. Her email is listed on the last page of this newsletter.

---

**Karen Van Fossan’s Move to Seminary**

Most of you know that Karen Van Fossan is now a seminary student in Minneapolis. She has a three year road ahead of her, and we wish her the very best on this next phase of her journey. Karen will be fulfilling her term on the Board of Trustees, but the distance between us will necessitate Skype calls and doing a great deal of work by phone and email.

Karen is a long-time member of the congregation and has held leadership positions on the Program Committee and Board of Trustees. She is also an active member of the Social Justice Committee. Karen shares her musical talent with our choir and is always ready with a smile to help out where needed. We will miss her, but we are not letting go of her of easily! Karen plans to be back in May to deliver our last program. I am hopeful that our congregation will benefit from her experience at the seminary almost as much as she does!

If you have not already done so, there is a memory book to sign for Karen in the entry way of the church.
You’re in My Space

OR

Have You Noticed How Full Church Has Been Lately?

Colleen Reinke (Board President)

Last year on the Board of Trustees I accepted responsibility for the “Sacred Space” portfolio. Part of my job was to think strategically about what could be done with our existing space to meet our growing needs and to coordinate the efforts of those who keep the current building in decent repair. We accomplished many things in the current building (taking down a dying Silver Maple, improving the library space, painting the nursery, clean-up day, improving safety and space for the children in RE, and so on).

The other part of my job, and the one that occupied my heart the most, was to restart work on the issue of new space for our congregation. In 2003, this congregation investigated the possibilities of remodeling the current building. That was NINE years ago. Remodeling was an expensive proposition and was not accomplished for a variety of reasons. More recently, we have explored the idea of moving the congregation to new space, but we have not moved past the exploration stage.

To prepare for this task, I read a great deal about how churches deal with the issue of sacred space. It is incredibly complex. When visitors walk into a church that is 70 to 80% full, they perceive it IS full and that there is no room for them. They don’t feel comfortable, they don’t stay, and they don’t become members. Conversely, when a church is only half full, visitors perceive that the church is empty and not attracting a vibrant congregation. Again, they don’t feel comfortable, they don’t stay, and they don’t become members.

Why should we be concerned about this? Well, our congregation is guided by our Mission, Vision, and Welcoming Congregation statements printed on the front of each bulletin. Our Vision says that we “are a … community for all who seek an inspirational and religious home.” Our Mission statement says we “are a fellowship...welcoming all...” Our Welcoming Congregation statement says “We are a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith....” Betty Mills, in her program on the last Sunday in January, called upon us to be open and welcoming to all those who seek us.

If those who seek us walk into our church and see that it is full, they will likely not stay and make their spiritual home with us. This makes it difficult to fulfill our Mission, Vision, and Welcoming Congregation ideals. The board of trustees, with input and support of the congregation, has to figure out what to do to meet the growing needs of our congregation. We lost membership this past year. Church growth models suggest that when a church is full, it begins to shrink in membership. While the recent drop in membership may not be a trend, if it is it will hurt our church. Given the dynamics of congregational growth, we must do something or we will shrink in size, and therefore shrink in our ability to meet the goals we have set for ourselves.

As your president, my top concern for the coming year is the issue of Sacred Space to welcome all those who could make their spiritual home with us. The more I read and learn, the more concerned I become. I hope you will join me on February 26 when our program will address these issues. Let’s start to talk as a congregation about our sacred space!
SMORGAS-BOARD  
Tidbits from your UU Trustees

A retreat for the Board was held on Saturday January 14. Sadly, this did not occur in Hawaii, but at the church. Happily, Nancy Heege, Executive Director of the Prairie Star District (of which we are a part) facilitated a very productive day. Colleen wore her bejeweled tiara, to the delight of all... except Colleen, as it pinched her head. Colleen needs a new tiara, but we forgot to budget for it!

Your board has adopted a covenant to guide how we work together on behalf of the congregation in the coming year. If you would like to review the document, it is posted on the bulletin board by the office. Perhaps most notable is the president’s contribution, which is that anyone late to a meeting will be dealt with severely and harshly (and pecuniarily, if she has her way! Mwahahaha!).

Even though Karen Van Fossan will soon be a seminary student, we are not letting her out of our grubby clutches! She will remain on the board and attend meetings via Skype whenever possible. She will continue to do her board and committee work while in Minneapolis. We hope she will also study a little...

Reflections on Lyn Burton’s Time with Us  
Janis Cheney

We recently concluded a 3+ year contract between the Board and Reverend Lyn Burton for part time ministerial services. We were very fortunate to have the benefit of her professional and organizational expertise to support and enhance our growth in spirituality and service to our members and the community.

The UUA requires that a minister who has terminated a professional relationship with a congregation have no professional contact with that congregation for one year. This means we cannot call on Lyn for help with organizational structure, committee building, sermons or pastoral care and the like. We will, however, be continuing to build on the foundations she helped to develop in each of these areas.

We also want to be sure that those who were connecting with Lyn in a pastoral care relationship continue to receive appropriate support and resources. If you were receiving pastoral care from Lyn and would like a continued relationship for that purpose, please contact Pat Conrad by leaving a message at the church office (223-6788).

We are again a solely lay-led fellowship. That is a special thing, requiring the tireless energy of many volunteers to meet the needs of our growing congregation. It calls on all of us to recognize the important ways in which we minister to and support each other. Thank you to those who offer their time and talent to help meet the needs of our UU community. For those who would like to take a more active role, please visit with a board member about volunteer opportunities (board members and their contact information can be found on the last page of this newsletter).
Our congregation continues to participate in the monthly webinars sponsored by Midwest UU Leadership.
The online workshops are 75 minutes long, with a presentation and discussion time. Please feel free to join in on a subject of interest to you. Contact the church office: 701-223-6788 or office@bismanuu.org.

**Sponsored by Midwest UU Leadership**

**The Ministry of Membership/Radical Hospitality**
Thurs., Feb. 9 from 6:45-8 PM.

Learn ways you might start to engage in ideas about how to make a UU community truly, radically welcoming. Discussion questions include: How do you create a culture of inclusivity? How do you help your congregants remain truly open to newcomers? How is growing your church a spiritual practice?

*This webinar will not be repeated!* Registration is now closed as this webinar is full—but the church IS registered! If you are interested, please see Tammy, call the church office: 223-6788 or email: office@bismanuu.org. Click HERE for additional details.

**Youth Advisor Series**

Tues., Feb. 21; Thurs., March 15 and Tues., April 17 all from 6:45-8 PM

These new hour and 15 minute long evening sessions will include resource sharing and coaching for new and continuing youth advisors and youth coordinators. Again, if you are interested, please see Tammy, call the church office: 223-6788 or email: office@bismanuu.org. Click HERE for additional details.

**UU’re Home**

Meet congenial fellow UUs and raise money to help support our Fellowship at the same time! Become part of the Unitarian Universalist bed and breakfast travel network by listing your home or vacation cottage on the UU’re Home website. Do you have a spare bedroom and bath or a cottage on the Lake? The Bis-Man UU is looking for host homes for inclusion in the UU’re Home network. The church office would handle administration and screening. Please see Tammy or click HERE for further details.

**Guest at Your Table Update**

The Bis-Man UU members and friends donated $957.00 to support the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee’s mission: UUSC advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. Thank you!!

**69 Members Reported to UUA**

This year our fellowship has certified 69 members to the UUA. Last year we certified 77 members. The decrease in numbers includes members who have passed away or moved.

Our annual dues to the UUA are based upon the number of pledging members we certify. We have been a Fair Share congregation since our inception, which means we have always paid our full UUA dues. Yay for us!
Our Whole Lives (OWL) 2012

Des Moines, IA: February 24-26: Both grades K-1/4-6 & 7-9/10-12

The RE program has made a commitment to deliver the Our Whole Lives curriculum to our children and young people in the coming year. This project requires extensive training for group leaders and we are excited about the depth this will add to our teaching cadre. Our first steps in the new year will be to secure OWL trainers and solicit individuals from our congregation who would like to be trained in the curriculum. Our plan is to be prepared to begin the curriculum in the Fall of 2012. To learn more, please visit the UUA page: http://www.uua.org/re/owl/index.shtml. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, speak to Tim Hathaway (426.9306) or contact the UU office: office@bismanuu.org

Save the Date!

PSD Annual Conference 2012

Lessons from War and Peace: Stories of Hope, Faith, and Courage

April 13-15

Bloomington, MN

The PSD Annual Conference is a weekend of lectures, workshops, worship, networking, and fellowship. The conference begins at 7:00 Friday evening, but there are pre-conference activities earlier on Friday. The Conference concludes at 10:30 Sunday morning. For more information, click HERE. If you are interested in attending or would simply like to talk with someone about the possibility, please contact the church office: 223-6788 or office@bismanuu.org.

Save (another) Date!

UUA General Assembly 2012

General Assembly (GA) 2012 will be a gathering with multiple ways of engaging in justice work for people of all ages. Joining with the people of Arizona, we will worship, witness, learn and work together. We will leave General Assembly grounded in our faith, energized for justice and with resources to bring this work home to our congregations.

For more information, click HERE
Books for the Journey

*Out of the Flames: The Remarkable Story of a Fearless Scholar, A Fatal Heresy and One of the Rarest Books In the World*

by Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone

Book reviewed by: Dan Christ

I read this book more than a year ago. Upon reviewing it for this article, I found that the dust cover reflected my take-away thoughts accurately.

Out of the Flames tracks the history of Servetus’s masterpiece The Christianismi Restitutio, examines Servetus’s life and times and the politics of the first information revolution during the sixteenth century. The authors follow the clandestine journey of the three surviving copies through the subsequent centuries and explore Servetus’s legacy and influence over the thinkers who shared his spirit and genius, such as Leibniz, Voltaire, Jefferson, and William Osler.

“Out of the Flames is a fast-pasted intellectual history that not only gives a fascinating lesson on the book trade but also skillfully navigates the crosscurrents of theology, politics, and science to give a portrait of an age when battles were waged as fiercely with books as they were with swords.”

~Ross King

I found *Out of the Flames* a fascinating “page burner”.

This book is available for check-out in the Reading Room. The call number is 273 GOL.

(This is the third of hopefully many reviews for the new column, “Books for the Journey.” Please consider reviewing a book from the Reading Room. The reviews will be informal and include a quick summary of the book and what you like (or dislike) about it. If you are interested, contact Christine Kujawa and Eric Stroshane.)

Candles for the Journey

Please remember the Seth’s in your thoughts and prayers as they cope with their daughter, Sonali’s brain cancer.

Keep Ann and Mike Knudson close as Ann’s mother enters her final stage of life’s journey.

And Tom Disselhorst as his mother-in-law is very ill.

Celebrate with Don Morrison as he begins his new position as Dakota Resource Council’s Executive Director.

And Helen Hammond, after several hospital stays, she is back home and doing well.
“Let’s Talk”
Brian McGinness of Riverbound Farm is the guest on “Let’s Talk” in February. He talks about creating community around food. Hosted by Don Morrison the TV show is broadcast every Sunday at 8:00 p.m. on community access cable channel 12. Let’s Talk is produced by the North Dakota Center for the Public Good.

“Let’s Clean!” (smile)
Bonnie Olson has been diligently cleaning our building with occasional help from Carol Jean Larsen and Diane Chielens. Pat and Dean Conrad have offered their help, too! Thank you everyone! If you are interested in providing Bonnie with a respite, let Tammy know.
February Cleaning Schedule:
Pat Dean Conrad—Feb. 10
Bonnie Olson—Feb. 24

“Let’s Eat!” (so witty)
Refreshments for February:
Feb. 5—Diane Chielens
Feb. 12—Cheney/ Crane
Feb. 19—The Demars Family
Feb. 26—
Please take your turn. Sign up on the clip board hanging in the church foyer or call the church office: 223-6788. Thank you to all who have offered to feed our hungry congregation this program year!

Peace is
by Dawn Archer

peace
is a river
mid-summer
in lazy, gentle
flow again
after the torrent of
spring thaw
stirs and clouds
our view of
what is
and
what can be
peace is
the moment
cloudy clarifies
the moment that
what we have been
looking at is
reflected
back at us and
we truly
see
Vision Statement
We will be a vibrant, caring, spiritual community for all who seek an inspirational and religious home.

Mission Statement
We are a fellowship of free minds, welcoming all, a beacon of enlightenment and sanctuary, and offering a call to build a better self, community and world.

Religious Education Mission Statement
The Bismarck-Mandan Unitarian Universalist Fellowship seeks to provide a path for spiritual inquiry for people of all ages.

Welcoming Congregation
We are a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith regardless of race, color, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability.

Board of Trustees and Officers
President, Colleen Reinke
cjreinke@gmail.com
Vice President, Tim Hathaway
hathaway.timothy.l@gmail.com
Secretary, Karen Van Fossan
karenvanfossan@gmail.com
treasurer.43@bis.midco.net
Treasurer, Carol Jean Larsen
hopedlindl@yahoo.com
Director, Mary Mitchell
omlid.lisa@gmail.com
Director, Lisa Omlid
marnie.piehl@bismarckstate.edu
Director, Marnie Piehl
or piehl.patch@gmail.com

Office Administrator
Tammy Hathaway
Church phone: 701-223-6788 • Cell phone: 701-426-9307
E-mail: office@bismanuu.org

Bis-Man UU Fellowship & Church
P.O. Box 297
Bismarck, ND 58502

We are on Facebook!

Check out our Website!
www.bismanuu.org

WINTER UU OFFICE HOURS
Monday—Thursday: 9:00—2:00 PM

Vision Statement
We will be a vibrant, caring, spiritual community for all who seek an inspirational and religious home.

Mission Statement
We are a fellowship of free minds, welcoming all, a beacon of enlightenment and sanctuary, and offering a call to build a better self, community and world.

Religious Education Mission Statement
The Bismarck-Mandan Unitarian Universalist Fellowship seeks to provide a path for spiritual inquiry for people of all ages.

Welcoming Congregation
We are a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith regardless of race, color, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability.