

BISMARCK - MANDAN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
FELLOWSHIP & CHURCH

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Sunday Services & Children's Programs: 10:30 AM  
Fellowship & Refreshments: Following Service

# The Beacon

*The BisMan UU Monthly Newsletter—Sharing Unitarian  
Universalist Values in the Capital City Area*

**Sunday, December 1**  
**BUILDING THE FUTURE**  
Sacred Space

As we begin this month's exploration of the spirituality of change, we'll consider our process for addressing change by growing a building that meets the needs of our current and future church community, including its metaphorical and literal significance, and its impact on our daily lives.

*Today also begins our UU tradition of participating in Guest At Your Table. See inside article for details.*

**Sunday, December 8**  
**NORWEGIAN INSPIRATION FOR LIFE ON THE PRAIRIE**  
Ryan Taylor

Recipient of a Bush Fellowship, Ryan Taylor is finding lessons for North Dakota in Norway's oil policy that aims to "ensure a qualitatively better society." The conversation about our current oil boom includes pausing and thinking about family, what it means to live here, the land and people, how we live together and why striving to do better at it is so important

Taylor is a fourth-generation rancher, motivational speaker, North Dakota political leader, and author whose "Cowboy Logic" column appears in newspapers across the region.

*Today is also our Annual Business Meeting. See inside for details.*

**Sunday, December 15**  
**TRUTH AND TRANSFORMATION**  
Paul Breiner

Inspired by Gotthold Lessing's quote, "The aspiration to truth is more precious than its assured possession," we will explore what is Truth, why should we seek it, and how it can transform us.

Paul is a member of the UU congregation whose journey has led him to a broader, more holistic view of the universe.

**Sunday, December 22**  
**SACRED DARKNESS**  
Andrea Grigsby

Though Sacred Darkness provides a valuable opportunity for mystery, reflection, and growth, most of us do not willingly seek it. As UU's on a "free and responsible search for truth and meaning," we can learn to allow the darkness to show us the light, individually and collectively.

Andrea, a member of our congregation, currently assists in facilitating Women's Sacred Circle. Her search for truth has led her to Unitarian Universalism principles.

**December 24 Christmas Eve Gathering**  
**GROUNDING IN TRADITION**  
Jean King and Carol Jean Larsen

The evening of seasonal songs and readings by firelight offers grounding in the midst of our ever-changing lives. There will be warm beverages. Feel free to share of plate of holiday treats.

**Sunday, December 29**  
**RESOLUTIONS, UU STYLE**  
Colleen Reinke

As we conclude our month of exploring change on the verge of a New Year, we will discuss together, assessing the desire to change, the need to change, the fear of change, and whether resolutions might capture our hopes for the New Year.

Colleen is a UU member who serves on our Board of Trustees.

**Church Calendar**  
An asterisk (\*) indicates related article

Sun Dec 1	10:30 am	* Guest At Your Table Begins
Thurs Dec 5	7:00 pm	Meditating with the Body
Sun Dec 8	12:30 pm	* BisMan UU Annual Meeting
Tues Dec 10	7:00 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting
Thurs Dec 12	7:00 pm	Meditating with the Body
Fri Dec 13	12:00 N	UU Women's Lunch @ Minerva's
Wed Dec 18	5:30-8:30	* People Place Program Meeting
Thurs Dec 19	7:00 pm	Meditating with the Body
Fri Dec 20	9:00 am	January Newsletter Deadline!!
Dec 23-Jan 2		UU Office Closed—Happy Holidays!!
Tues Dec 24	9:00 pm	Christmas Eve Gathering
Wed Dec 25	3:00 pm	* Christmas Dinner
Thurs Dec 26		There will be NO Meditation



## Reflections & Thank You

I have found 2013 to be an exciting and eventful year in our congregation. I am grateful for your confidence in electing me as president. My Board term ends December 31.

Thank YOU for embracing our grand experiment with a new model for Leadership Development & Congregational Engagement. Yes, it's really working! And yes, this model will continue to need tweaking by creative new leaders.

Good News: We have engaged Volunteer Coordinators for each Area: People, Place, and Program.

Good News: We have engaged Volunteer Team Leaders in each Area who in turn are inviting other folks to sign-up for activities.

Good News: We are blessed to have talented, part-time staff who provide consistent support for volunteers.

Good News: The 3rd Wednesday evening of the month has offered volunteers fellowship time over a light supper together, have safe childcare for their children, and engage in planning as well as taking assignments. If YOU are not yet involved, please join us.

Thank YOU, Members and Friends, for helping fund this new model and the necessary staff. The 2014 budget will ask each of you to fund one more part-time person to enhance Outreach & Communication.

Thank you to the Sacred Space Task Force for its diligence and professionalism in tackling a challenging assignment. See report on page 4.

Thank you to the Social Action Committee for its extraordinary work in preparing the congregation for the Standing on the Side of Love Justice work in our congregation and community.

Thank you to the Nominating Committee for its care and thoroughness exhibited in its search for qualified candidates. See report on page 5. My Annual Meeting report will contain many more highlights from this year. Happy Holidays.

Carol Jean Larsen  
Board President

## Annual Business Meeting Agenda December 8, 2013

11:30: Fellowship  
12:00 Light Lunch and Childcare  
12:30 Business Meeting

*Call to Order*

*Chalice Lighting & Opening Words*

*Credentials Report*

*Approval of Tentative Agenda*

*Reports:*

*Secretary's Report*

*Treasurer's Report*

*"Welcoming Congregation" Recommendation*

*Sacred Space Task Force Recommendation*

*Presentation of 2014 Budget*

*By-Law Change Recommendation*

*Nominating Committee Recommendation*

*Closing Words*

*Adjourn*

## Bylaw Change: to be Recommended at Annual Business Meeting

At its October 2013 meeting, the Board of Trustees voted to propose a bylaw change to the Congregation regarding number of Trustees-at-large .

Current Bylaws Read:

ARTICE VII-OFFICERS and TRUSTEES

Section 1. a. The Trustees of this Fellowship shall be a president, a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer, and three trustees-at-large.

**Proposed change to one Trustee-at-large.**

This will be an agenda item at the December 8, 2013 Annual Business Meeting to begin at 12:30 pm.



## Welcome New Staff Person—Dustin White!

Dustin began working for the church in November of 2013 serving part-time as the Coordinator of Life-Span Religious Education.

Dustin is a native of North Dakota, and has an associates in Criminal Justice, as well as a BA in Religious Studies and is pursuing a Masters in Theological Studies. He has worked with various non-profits in North Dakota in order to further both social and religious tolerance. Dustin is happily married, and has one wonderful boy.

"I am excited for this path in life, and look forward to helping all the members of the congregation grow, as well as growing with them, in their religious education. "



## Guest At Your Table

**Begins at the Bis-Man UU on December 1!**

By celebrating Guest at Your Table in our congregation, we are helping nurture a spirit of gratitude and "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations."

Guest at Your Table fosters understanding and awareness of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) human-rights work.

Guest at Your Table is an annual tradition in which congregation members learn about people with whom UUSC is working. These people are your "guests," and you are asked to share your blessings with them to support our shared mission by making a regular practice of dropping a contributions in your Guest At Your Table Box which will be given out during the Dec. 1 service. Place your box in a prominent location in your home. Perhaps at mealtimes or family gatherings, set an extra place setting as a symbol of welcoming your "guest" at your table and donate the cost of their meal to your box. Boxes will be collected during service on Jan. 12.

The UUSC is guided by the values of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights and the principles of Unitarian Universalism, which uphold the inherent worth and dignity of all people. UUSC strengthens workers' rights; protects the right to safe, affordable water; defends civil liberties and democratic processes; and preserves the rights of people overlooked in times of disaster and armed conflict. UUSC is an independent human rights organization and receives no financial support from the UUA or the federal government.

For more information click [HERE](#).

## Christmas Dinner

There will be a Potluck, carol-singing Christmas meal at our church on Christmas Day at 3:00 pm.

Those interested **please sign up** with Martha Straw following Sunday service or email her: [mkstraw@live.com](mailto:mkstraw@live.com). Stay tuned throughout the month for additional details.

## People, Place & Program

Our congregation is well underway with our new PPP (People, Place, Program) model for engaging volunteers in our community of action both within and beyond our church walls.

You may have noticed in your "pledge packet" that our new bright orange pledge cards include areas in which you are invited to share your time and talent toward the work of our church. Each of those selection boxes matches up with a "P" Area.

We have developed a new time schedule for our monthly Wednesday evening PPP meetings that will offer a way for folks to engage in more than one area of interest. The new schedule went into effect in November.

5:30-6:15 People & Place Areas meet  
6:15-6:30 Dinner will be served  
6:30-8:00 Program Area meets  
8:00 Staff & Leadership meets

Our next "PPP" Meeting is Dec. 18—won't YOU join us?

If you have any questions about "PPP", please contact Carol Jean Larsen: [cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net](mailto:cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net) or 701.516.7848

## Our Sacred Space

The Sacred Space Task Force has been hard at work for the past couple of years on behalf of all of you – our UU congregation. The Board tasked us with examining options for expanding our sacred space, and that is what we have done. In our first year we had about a dozen people working on ideas for a new building and renovations. We thank them for their support, input, and service. I am afraid that if I tried to list them all, I would forget someone, so let's just say YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

After the first year we presented two possible remodeling projects and one new building project to the congregation. After last year's annual meeting, the Board felt our work was not complete, and asked us to look further into other options. To do this work, we pared down the task force to four: Paul Breiner, Janis Cheney, Jim Lennington, and Colleen Reinke.

This year the SSTF presents our final recommendations to the congregation at the annual meeting. We have examined all of the *practical* options that involve building or expanding space and analyzed them in terms of how well each option would help us move our mission forward. We recommend that we all work together to create a new building for our community, either in our current location or elsewhere. If the option arises to buy a different building and remodel, we feel we should also remain open to consider that idea.

At the annual meeting we will recommend that the congregation pass a motion of INTENT as follows:

We declare that this congregation will provide itself the sacred space needed to fulfill our vision to be a vibrant, caring, spiritual community for all who seek an inspirational and religious home.

We feel that in the coming year, the best way for the congregation to move forward is to work on strengthening our financial base and growing our programs to meet the needs of more congregants. A capital campaign is in the distance, and we must be prepared to make that a success in order to move us forward to better meet our mission. Please join us in the next phase of the journey.

## Church Mitten Tree

Our Children's Religious Education (RE) program is assuming responsibility for the Mitten Tree this year, as it dovetails nicely with their interest in homelessness.

The following information was dictated by our young people:

The Mitten Tree is being hung up on Sunday, December 1, 2013. Please donate new or gently used caps, scarves, mittens, or hats. Everything received will be donated to a charity to be chosen by the children in our Sunday School.

## Denominational Affairs

### MidAmerica Region

BisMan UU is a member of the 12 state UUA's MidAmerica Region that provides helpful resources and services to our congregation. Carol Jean Larsen is serving a one year term on its Nominating Committee which meets monthly by conference call. Currently the group is working to identify strong candidates to serve on MidAmerica's Board of Trustees, its Nominating Committee, and its UU Conference (investments). If YOU are interested in being considered, visit with Carol Jean soon. [<cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net>](mailto:cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net)

### Spring Regional Conference

"Hunger for Justice"

April 11-13, 2014 in Topeka, KS

Let's Go!

Join the BisMan Car Pool

[<cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net>](mailto:cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net)

## Nominating Committee Report

The following individuals are being nominated to serve new terms or in new roles on the BisMan UU 2014 Board of Trustees.

**COLLEEN REINKE- PRESIDENT:** Colleen is a current Board Member, and services a Board Liaison to the Sacred Space Task Force. She was congregational president in 2012. Colleen grew up in Bismarck, went to college and law school, lived in Wisconsin for 16 years and came back to Bismarck. Colleen owns a small business as well as being a public information officer for the ND Department of Health in Emergency Preparedness and Response. She also enjoys her cats and watercolor painting.

**MARNIE PIEHL – SECRETARY:** Marnie is nominated for another 2-year term as the board's secretary. She works as the Public Relations and Communications Manager for Bismarck State College. Marnie and her husband Shadd have 3 active boys in our RE program - Owen, Ryder and Wyatt. Marnie also serves in the congregation's nursery on Sundays and is on the Sunday Services planning team.

**LISA OMLID – TREASURER:** Lisa is nominated for another 2-year term as the board's treasurer. She has a law degree and lived in France for 12 years, where she was an ESL (English as a Second Language) tutor. She returned to Bismarck to help her late mother, Phyllis Omlid. Lisa is Board Liaison to the People Area and serves on the Covenant of Right Relations Task Force. She helps record our weekly services for broadcast via the church web site.

**NOTE:** The Board of Trustees recommends that the congregation, at its Annual Business Meeting, December 8, 2013, approve a Bylaw change that would reduce the Board from seven to five people. This recommendation will be voted on prior to the election of Board members. In order to be in compliance with the current Bylaws, the following are nominated in the event that the amendment fails:

**CAROL JEAN LARSEN:** Carol Jean joined our UU in 1986 and has been actively engaged since. Her current Board term ends on December 31.

**DON MORRISON:** Don became a member in 1988 and has been actively engaged ever since. He is the co-chair of the Program Area. He and his wife, Karen have two grown children.

### 2014 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The following individuals are nominated to serve as the Nominating Committee for 2014.

**LIZ ANDERSON:** Liz works at Juniper, an archeological and environmental services company and is founding member of the BisMan Women's Roller Derby League. After several years as a UU Sunday school teacher and Satay sale griller, Liz officially became a member in 2012. She currently sings in the choir and is Membership Team Leader. She and husband Don have a 9 year old daughter, Jean.

**ANDREA GRIGSBY:** Andrea moved to ND in 1993 from Portland, OR. She is a massage therapist, owner of 1 Massage, and will soon start working for the state in the IT Department. Andrea is married to Ken, and between them, they have six children, ages 9-19. Andrea has been attending our church for three years and officially joined in June 2013. She currently serves in the Program Area and is assisting in facilitating Women's Sacred Circle.

**KAREN MORRISON:** Karen is a Speech-Language Pathologist for Mandan Public Schools. She and her husband Don have two children in their 20's who grew up in our RE program. As a long-time active member, Karen currently serves in the People Area and chairs the Nominating Committee. Karen's current term has expired. She is willing to complete the second year of Jean Rolandelli's term.

Respectfully submitted by the 2013 Nominating Committee: Karen Morrison, Mike Knudson, Jean Rolandelli.

# Standing on the Side of Love—Social Action Topic Selection

One of our Board Members, Marnie Piehl, described how “Standing on the Side of Love” is a lens through which we can view many social justice issues. Standing on the Side of Love serves as the foundation on which to build faith- and values-based positions and actions. Our congregation's Social Action Committee is preparing to develop a "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign for at least two topics. We have funding for developing faith and community based partnerships, publishing a blog, branding our social media, engaging in advocacy work, and implementing direct service projects. Now we just need your help and input!

We are hoping that at least one or two of the topics below will spark your interest to help you realize the potential difference we can make together in our congregation and beyond. Please consider how you might be willing to devote your time and energy to these topics and return your selections and contact information to the church office: [office@bismanuu.org](mailto:office@bismanuu.org).

## **Reproductive Justice:**

Fifty years ago, our UU faith was the first religious body to take a national position in support of the right of all women to have children, not to have children, and to raise children in safe, healthy environments. North Dakotans will vote in November 2014 on a "Personhood Amendment" to our state constitution. It reads: *"The inalienable right to life of every human being at any stage of development must be recognized and protected"*. Our proposed Reproductive Justice Action: Develop partnerships with other faith groups and non-profits; focus on public awareness and education activities related to the potential wide ranging and egregious impact of such an amendment.

## **Green Sanctuary:**

The Green Sanctuary Program sets forth a comprehensive series of actions that integrate an Earth-oriented spirituality into congregational worship and communal gatherings. In December, 2011, the Congregation voted to move forward with seeking certification as a Green Sanctuary and developed a list of projects. Projects that will lead to certification are in four areas: 1) Worship and Celebration; 2) Religious Education—adult and children's; 3) Environmental Justice; 4) Sustainable Living. These are areas we can be working on now, as well as incorporate into any new space.

## **GLBTQ Welcome & Equality:**

On the 10 year anniversary of our congregation becoming a UUA certified Welcoming Congregation, we will actively engage in our community to promote safety and support of GLBTQ people. We will re-visit and renew our commitment by reaching out to teen groups, Dakota Outright, PRIDE, and others. Potential actions include supporting networks for youth, increasing understanding and breaking down barriers, and supporting local and state efforts to add protections to human rights laws. While many parts of our nation are moving forward, North Dakota continues to resist simple protections and rights for GLBTQ people.

## **Social impact/responsibility of energy development:**

We will look for opportunities to partner with groups and individuals to increase understanding and solutions to the social, economic and environmental impacts of energy development in North Dakota. Our participation is based on the Seventh UU Principle of respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Potential actions include protecting cultural and environmentally important places, and supporting those already working to ensure the health, safety and livelihoods of people living there.

## **Leith, Diversity and Race Issues:**

The situation of potential white supremacist takeover in Leith, ND provides an opportunity to look deeper at underlying racial tension, lack of understanding, and human rights issues in our community. Reaching out to other groups and individuals, we will initiate hosting a deeper public dialogue and developing actions to break down barriers. Examples of potential actions are: support for Cheryl Kary's Urban Indian project, symposiums in schools and churches, public events, moving the issue forward through social media and film, or increasing the power and effectiveness of the City of Bismarck's Human Relations Committee, as well as supportive actions for the people of Leith.

## **Strengthening Families/Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect:**

Strengthening families, strengthens communities. By supporting families at risk for child abuse & neglect, we ultimately relieve pressure from the foster care system, prison system, court system, medical system and improve public health and the standard of living in our area. All it might take is a simple gesture of understanding and care. By reducing stress on families, the risk to their children is greatly lessened. Some ways to make this difference are partnering with area agencies working to provide direct support to at risk families, provide community awareness and information to help, or strengthening laws and policies to ensure child safety.

## December Refreshments

Thank you to those who provided treats for our fellowship time following November services:

### December Refreshments:

- 1 Molly Brooks & Carol Jean Larsen
- 8 Marnie Piehl & Liz Anderson
- 15 Beth Markhart & Jim Dawson
- 22 Janet Lucas & \_\_\_\_\_
- 29 Ronya Hoblit & \_\_\_\_\_

Treats are a wonderful way of sharing in community. If you are interested in volunteering to provide simple refreshments, please contact coordinator, Janet Lucas: janetlucas317@gmail.com.

## December Greeters

Thank you to those volunteers who have been greeting and welcoming folks into our church on Sunday mornings!

The following volunteers have agreed to be greeters:

- Dec. 1 Pat Conrad & Angie Harmon
- Dec. 8 Pat Conrad & Lois Nodland
- Dec. 15 Angie Harmon & Molly Brooks

If Sunday morning greeting sounds interesting to you, please have a conversation with our coordinator, Martha Straw: mkstraw@live.com.



## Candles for the Journey

We light a candle for Janis Cheney who is home recuperating from a mastectomy. Janis says that she feels good, but plans to take it easy for a while. If she needs to go through chemo and radiation, she wants her hair to grow back in u

We hold Tom Disselhorst in our thoughts. Tom has experienced several significant losses of parents and in-laws over the past 2 years, and now is helping his wife through an incurable illness.

We also light a candle for a congregational friend Kermit Lidstrom who died on November 26th. Our thoughts are also with his daughter Kathy Lampman and his cousin, Betty Mills. Kermit's memorial service will be December 6.

## Photo Assistant Wanted

Volunteer applicants should be well organized and interested in helping us get to know one another better! Resident photographer, Steve Crane, can take the pictures. The assistant would take charge of helping schedule folks for pictures, getting them downloaded, printed and posted for display in the church. No specific experience is needed—just a willing heart!

## Circle Suppers

In November, we organized a total of SIX Circle Suppers in host homes! How wonderful!

We hope that all who participated enjoyed the opportunity to get to know one another better at these informal gatherings.

If you have feedback (positive or negative), ideas or would like more information, please let organizer, Martha Straw know: mkstraw@live.com.

## Board of Trustees and Staff

President, Carol Jean Larsen  
Vice President, Tim Hathaway  
Secretary, Marnie Piehl  
Treasurer, Lisa Omlid  
Director, Rick Makelky  
Director, Beth Nodland  
Director, Colleen Reinke

cjlarsen43@bis.midco.net  
hathaway.timothy.l@gmail.com  
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piehl.patch@gmail.com  
omlid.lisa@gmail.com  
rmakelky@hotmail.com  
bnodland@aol.com  
cjreinke@gmail.com

### Office Administrator

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

### Coordinator of Congregational Life

Molly Brooks  
Cell phone: 919-564-6907  
E-mail: brooks.molly@gmail.com

#### **MOLLY'S HOURS:**

Wednesdays: 5:30-8:30 and Sundays: 10:00-2:00  
(by advance appointment only for meetings)

### Coordinator of Life-Span Religious Education

Dustin White  
Cell phone: 701-516-4781  
E-mail: Dustin@Belzion.com

## Bis-Man UU Fellowship & Church

P.O. Box 297  
Bismarck, ND 58502

[We are on Facebook!](#)

**Check out our Website!**

[www.bismanuu.org](http://www.bismanuu.org)

## REGULAR CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday—Friday: 9:00—2:00 PM



## Very Useful Links

[Unitarian Universalist Association](http://www.uua.org)

[www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)

[Mid America Region](http://midamericauua.org/)

<http://midamericauua.org/>

[Quest for Meaning](http://www.questformeaning.org)

(Church of the Larger Fellowship Young Adult Forum—VERY cool!)

[www.questformeaning.org](http://www.questformeaning.org)

### **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.*

Unitarian Universalism

Love is our doctrine  
Service is our prayer

Come, Come,  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM  
Whoever You Are

Giving Life the  
Shape of Justice  
Unitarian Universalism

UU Bumper Stickers

Can be yours for only \$3.00 ea.  
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