



# High Plains News

“Building a liberal spiritual community that welcomes all to lives of wholeness”

March 2013

High Plains Church - Unitarian-Universalist

Vol 20, No 3

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## A Letter from a Winter Con Participant

Last weekend I had the unique experience of attending a Unitarian Universalist youth conference, otherwise known as a “con.” My initial anxiety about the con was that I, as an outsider to the Unitarian church, would have a difficult time fitting in with kids who had been members of the religion for their entire lives. After all, upon signing my name for registration I could barely remember a total of three Unitarian hand gestures. This fear was further reinforced by the fact that many high schoolers of my congregation had attended upwards of three or four cons *each*, some even proclaiming *eight*. A practicing Unitarian for no more than six months, I had been to a few overnight events at the very most, but never a full-blown con. I had only to go so far as the bus to Salt Lake City before I realized that being an outsider was hardly a valid source of concern. Youth with whom I’d barely ever associated welcomed me with open arms into their close-knit circles. This was through no obligation imposed on them by close-guarding figures of authority, but rather a genuine interest in entertaining and being entertained by strangers.

When we arrived in Utah at South Valley Unitarian, we, the combined youth of Colorado, immediately began engaging with the various congregations of Utah and Wyoming who were also attending. We traded stories of our respective home states and the various facilities within which we interacted when not disposed to strictly Unitarian gatherings. Many of us professed to coming from families and societies that were not only closed-minded, but openly hateful towards certain minorities and lifestyle choices. I spoke to a handful of ex-Mormons, some of whom were gay and lesbian, and therefore considered “deviants.” I myself am forced to hide my atheism from a largely Southern Baptist family who would look down upon me for my beliefs. This ability to open up so immediately about our experiences and our hardships fostered a sense of unity among us, youth and adult, and though none of us stated it outright I believe that this connection was one that embodied the Unitarian ideal of love and respect.

The con was comprised of informative workshops, wonderful food, and thoughtful discussion. In between activities and workshops we were able to write letters to our friends, new and old, via the use of the customary con mailboxes: brown paper bags that are hung along one of the church walls. We had delightful and intelligent speakers who gave informative talks and conversed warmly with youth after workshops and the keynote speech. We closed each day in meditation, known otherwise as the Unitarian worship. Our last night together was marked by Coffeehouse, the no-talent-talent-show, where intergenerational con attendees were able to display their multitudinous talents.

When we finally piled back onto the bus Sunday morning, we were all thoroughly exhausted and deeply satisfied with our experience. We spent the remainder of our nine-hour bus ride reflecting on our time together and savoring the last of it. Overall, my first conference turned out to be a terrific forum for ideas and critical thinking, as well as an excellent source of enriching information. YAC (Youth-Adult Council) members and South Valley Unitarian are very warmly thanked for their dedication and for their generosity in making this event possible.

Magnolia Cook

## Events Calendar March 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Stitchers 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Parent/Child U&I 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm High Plains Sisters 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	2 9th Grade Trip Retreat...
3 ...9th Grade Trip Retreat New to UU 11:30 am - 12:00 pm YRUU at High Plains 12:30 am - 2:30 pm	4	5 Meals on Wheels 11:30 am - 1:00 pm	6	7 Yoga Class 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	8	9
10 Foster Family Support 11:30 am - 1:00 pm YRUU at High Plains 12:30 am - 2:30 pm	11	12 Meals on Wheels 11:30 am - 1:00 pm	13 Compassionate Comm. 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	14 Yoga Class 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	15 Stitchers 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	16
17 Finance Team 11:30 am - 1:30 pm YRUU at High Plains 12:30 am - 2:30 pm	18	19 Meals on Wheels 11:30 am - 1:00 pm Adult Discussion Group 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	20 Board Meeting 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm	21 Yoga Class 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	22	23
24 YRUU at High Plains 12:30 am - 2:30 pm	25	26 Meals on Wheels 11:30 am - 1:00 pm	27 Compassionate Comm. 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	28 Yoga Class 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	29	30
31 YRUU at High Plains 12:30 am - 2:30 pm						

Be sure to check the Events Tag on the website at [www.hpcuu.org](http://www.hpcuu.org) for additions and corrections to the calendar.

### Upcoming Services

**March 3: "Enlarge, Enliven, Enlighten!"** with visiting minister Anastassia Zinke. Zinke proposes that our mission as Unitarian Universalists should be to enlarge, enliven, and enlighten our lives and others. But what does this mean? How can we do this? What messages are worthy of this effort? Anastassia Zinke is a Unitarian Universalist Minister. She has served First Parish in Concord (MA), All Souls Church in D.C., and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis in varying capacities. She received her Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in NYC. In addition to building multicultural communities, she has a life-long passion for social justice and service. She and her husband, Kent, just had their first child, Sadie Sargent Zinke, on February 9.

**March 10: "Stewardship Superheroes!"** written by Kent Hemmen Saleska, Minister & Tom Lindquist, Canvass Chair, UU Church of Minnetonka; directed by Kelly Miller, Stewardship Chair, HPCUU. Performed by 15 members and friends of High Plains Church. Come and enjoy the fun!

**March 17: "Music Sunday"** - Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Celtic music and dance. Join Music Director Joe Uveges, Katie Uveges, and more for a day of musical celebration.

**March 24: "Envisioning the Future of High Plains Church"** with the Mission Discovery Team and the Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock. We'll take the information gleaned from considering the Purpose of High Plains Church and begin the process of creating a current Vision and Mission for HPC with a process designed to engage the entire congregation.

**March 31: "Easter Sunday - Jesus and the Hero's Journey"** with the Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock. The hero's journey is an archetypal story in mythology. The hero's journey is a story that speaks to us because it is always, to some extent, our own journey.



## Minister's Musings

by Rev Beatrice Hitchcock

### The Purpose of High Plains Church, Unitarian Universalist

Vision and mission statements do not make people purposeful. People filled with purpose make inspirational mission statements. So to begin the Vision/Mission process, you are invited to think about High Plains Church's purpose.

The following questions are adapted from "Flipping Over Your Mission," by Doug Zelinski, Director of Leadership Development, March 2011 Newsletter of the Clara Barton and Massachusetts Bay Districts of the UUA.

#### 1) Religion's Purpose:

What do we believe is the fundamental purpose of religion and are we willing to join with that purpose?

#### 2) Internalizing the Unitarian Universalist Legacy:

Which of the historic ways that Unitarian Universalism has fulfilled religion's purpose inspires and instructs us now and which help us learn from our mistakes?

#### 3) Honoring the Call:

What is our current calling as Unitarian Universalists and are we answering it?

#### 4) Valuing Unitarian Universalism as a Free Faith:

As a free faith, what freedoms are most important to focus on and how do we do that as UU's?

#### 5) Valuing Unitarian Universalism as a Liberal Religion:

What makes our liberal faith liberal and how have we demonstrated this religious liberalism?

#### 6) Defining the Transforming Message:

How has our faith transformed me and how can it transform the world?

*You are invited to consider these questions on your own, and to discuss them in your family, U&I groups, team meetings, and informal gatherings.*

The Mission Discovery Team will be collecting answers to these questions, to guide them in the mission process. Team members were selected by the Transition Team and the Board to represent a broad selection of High Plains Church members. The team includes a founding member and one of our newest members, a young adult, RE parents of young children and youth, people who have held leadership positions and some who have not. The six members are: Betty Davis, John Ekhaml, Samantha Sly, Amy Plapp, Larry Sargent, and Annabel Carney. You may email written responses to any or all of the questions to them at: [mission@hpcuu.org](mailto:mission@hpcuu.org).

## Superhero Academy Sign-ups

By Kelly Miller

Please sign up for Superhero Academy! This is your opportunity to learn about the finances of your Church, to participate in open discussion about what is important to you, to fellowship with a small group of your community, and to pledge your support of this community. If you have any questions, [stewardship@hpcuu.org](mailto:stewardship@hpcuu.org), I would be happy to answer them.

### Are you New to UU?

Do you have questions about Unitarian Universalism? Do you want to know more about us? Join Reverend Beatrice Hancock for a short get together on the first Sunday of each month. Childcare will be provided.

Questions? Contact Reverend Beatrice or Gail Ballare at [gailballare@gmail.com](mailto:gailballare@gmail.com).

## Minister's Schedule

Friday, Mar 1	<i>Transition Team</i>	
Sunday, Mar 3	Service	10:00 am – 11:00 am
	New to UU	11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Tuesday, Mar 5	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Wednesday, Mar 6	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Thursday, Mar 7	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm,
	Forgiveness workshop	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Sunday, Mar 10	Service	10:00 am – 11:00 am
	Ministerial Options Discussion	11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Tuesday, Mar 12	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Wednesday, Mar 13	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
	<i>Women's Clergy gathering</i>	5:30 pm
Thursday, Mar 14	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
	Mission Discovery Team	6:30 pm
Tuesday, Mar 19	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
	Adult Discussion: Ministerial Options for HPC	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Wednesday, Mar 20	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
	Board	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Thursday, Mar 21	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Sunday, Mar 24	Service	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Tuesday, Mar 26	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Wednesday, Mar 27	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Thursday, Mar 28	Office hours	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Sunday, Mar 31	Easter Sunday Service	9:00 am – 12:00 pm

The Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock keeps regular office hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, except when meeting out of the office. Meetings at other times by appointment. Friday and Saturday are sermon-writing days at home. Monday is her day off. March 17<sup>th</sup> will be her one Sunday off this month. *Italics indicate off-site meetings.*

### What's Happening in Faith Formation?

Please note that this is not meant to be a comprehensive list of everything that has happened in the church in regard to Faith Formation, but instead to serve as a highlight reel of the last month and a look at what is coming up in the next month.

#### February:

Feb 8-10: Youth (and Jessica) attend Winter CON in Salt Lake City, UT.

Feb 22-23: Middle School retreat, "Bounce CON" at Foothills Unitarian in Ft. Collins, February 22-23.

Feb 25-27: Jessica attended 21<sup>st</sup> Century Faith Formation Conference in Denver.

#### Upcoming in March:

March 2-3: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip Retreat hosted at High Plains.

March 6-8: Jessica attends Mountain Desert District LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) retreat in Woodland Park

March 18: Registration deadline for youth to attend Bridging CON at First Unitarian Society of Denver, April 12-14

March 18: Youth registration deadline for Pacific Western Regional Assembly in San Jose, CA, April 26-28

March 25: Adult/child registration deadline for Pacific Western Regional Assembly in San Jose, CA, April 26-28

March 31: Easter Egg hunt for PreK – 5<sup>th</sup> grade after Sunday morning worship

If you have a group which you believe works toward the goals of Faith Formation please contact Jessica at [dff@hpcuu.org](mailto:dff@hpcuu.org) about including your meetings on the monthly list of Faith Formation Programming events.



## Faith Formation

by Jessica Laike

“I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.”

– Brené Brown

Connection – in this day and age of smart phones, iPads, laptops and tablets we are more technically plugged in than we have ever been, and yet all too often I hear that people feel more disconnected than ever. As I write this I have been through two days of a three day training for religious educators and leaders on this very subject; how to use technology to foster and create the authentic kind of connection that people join faith communities to find. Let me say now that this is one very daunting, though certainly worthwhile, task. I am both excited and a little intimidated by all of the possibilities.

Any of you who follow the High Plains page on Facebook know that a few months ago I started posting a daily meditation on the page. This is one very small example of the types of things you’ll be seeing in the next few months, and I would love to hear your thoughts and insights on the subject and what sort of content you would like to see. As I embark upon this journey and attempt to wade through the plethora of resources and information, I could use your help. If any of you would be willing to reflect on a few questions, and perhaps even share your thoughts with me, I would be deeply appreciative of any insight you would be willing to share.

How do you connect with the people in your life in meaningful ways?

Do these connections happen ever happen online?

Does social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, etc) deepen or detract from your feeling of connectedness to the people in your life?

Does your online contact with the people in your life deepen the connection you feel with them when you spend time together in person?

Do you think meaningful, authentic connection is possible online?

Would you participate in a class or discussion group which met primarily online and only occasionally in person?

If you would like to share your reflections please feel free to email them to me, or if you prefer you may print or write them out and leave them in my box if you would like to respond anonymously, in either case your feedback would be invaluable.

In faith,  
*Jessica*

### Make your Monthly Payments Electronically

If you don’t already participate in the electronic funds transfer program for monthly pledge payments at church, please consider doing so. Under this program, you authorize the church to transfer funds for your pledge payment each month from your bank account to the church’s account. High Plains has offered this payment option for seven years, and about a third of church members take advantage of it. The program is great for the church because it helps to make revenues constant and predictable, like many of our expenses. It’s great for you because you don’t have to remember to write a check every month – you just fill out a form one time, and the treasurer does the rest.

If you are interested in participating, or if you have questions, please talk to the church treasurers, Janet Oliver or Meghan Powell, or just look in the “finance procedures” binder on the church secretary’s desk and find a blank form, fill it out, and give it to Janet or Meghan or leave it in the treasurer’s mailbox at church. The forms are entitled “Direct Answers to Questions about Electronic Contribution” and are located in one of the inside cover pockets of the notebook. Any time that you wish to change an existing payment amount or discontinue payments, use the same form.



## The President's Post

by Danielle Heimer

Although we have finally had real, measurable (and sometimes blowing and drifting) snow in the last week, we also are enjoying lengthening hours of daylight and the suggestion of spring to come. Beautiful pale green shoots of new endeavors at High Plains can be seen as well. The Board and Transition team worked with Rev Beatrice to create a team to help guide the congregation through a mission and vision process--the team, representing a broad sample of the congregation, has decided to name themselves the Mission Discovery Team. The members of the team are Betty Davis, Annabel Carney, Larry Sargent, Samantha Sly, John Ekhamel and Amy Plapp. The team felt like the best way to begin the process was with a discussion of purpose, both in the sermon Rev Beatrice preached on Sunday the 24th of February and during the following potluck with the Board and Mission Discovery team. That snow I mentioned earlier kept a lot of people home and so Rev. Beatrice shared her sermon and the questions for the discussion via email. If you did not receive the email and weren't able to attend the potluck, please email the minister, board or Mission Discovery Team at [mission@hpcuu.org](mailto:mission@hpcuu.org). While there will be other opportunities for in person conversation about mission and vision, it would be very helpful if members can also send their ideas about purpose electronically.

Gardeners in the congregation know that a lovely yard in spring requires work during the winter and our stewardship team has been hard at work over the last few months preparing for our Annual Stewardship Campaign, which kicks off on March 10. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the service and fellowship hour hosted by Stewardship on the 10th! There will be another discussion with the Board also on the 10th--a chance to talk about the various types of ministry High Plains is considering as we move forward.

Our first half year of Interim Ministry has been productive and helpful to the congregation. The timelines for the search process require us to begin thinking about our next steps--are we ready to begin searching for a settled minister, do we feel we have done adequate work to prepare for a successful settled ministry? What options are there besides settled ministry? How might those fit at High Plains? There are different types of ministry available to UU congregations and here is a brief description of the various types, which I hope helps in considering the questions above:

- **Settled Minister** - a minister *called* by the vote of a congregation to serve for an indefinite period of time, usually full-time. A settled minister performs typical functions of ministry - preaching, pastoral care, rites of passage - and works with the leadership of the congregation on mutually agreed upon goals. May serve as a sole, senior, or associate minister. Rev Beatrice has a description of the search process available on the brochure rack. If we enter into search for a settled minister at the beginning of the '13-'14 church year, a Search Team would need to be created (by application and selection of the Board) and approved by congregational vote at our Annual Business meeting, held in May or June.
- **Contract Minister** - a minister hired by a congregation to perform specific typical functions of ministry, for example preaching and pastoral care. The contract details the services requested based on the needs of the congregation and their budget. It is usually renewable on a yearly basis. A Contract Ministry is often, but not always, a part-time ministry. Part-time ministry is one of the options to be considered as well.

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- **Interim/Transitional Minister** – a minister *hired* by the congregation to help them prepare for its next phase of settled ministry, usually full-time. The interim minister usually follows the resignation or retirement of a settled (called) minister. An Interim Minister may not subsequently become the congregation's Settled Minister. We could extend our Interim Ministry for an additional year beyond the two initially planned for.
- **Developmental Minister** – a minister *hired* by the congregation to work with them on specific tasks not limited to those typical of interim ministry, usually full or ¾ time. Developmental Ministry is contracted for three to five years with an annual evaluation and option to extend beyond the initial period. A Developmental Ministry may evolve into a Settled

Ministry if both the congregation and the minister feel the match is a good one and they would like to continue to work together. If High Plains feels this is a good option and determines the goals we would like to work on with a developmental minister, we would work with the Transitions Office of the UUA in Boston to find a match for us.

- Not having a minister is also an option, though the Board feels this is not a good solution for High Plains in light of our current needs and would not contribute to our long term goals or to growth.

The ideas and input of the congregation are important in making this decision. If you have additional questions about types of ministry, or the time frame, please ask your Board. We hope that many of our members and friends will participate in this discussion on March 10th!

## You like us; you really "like" us!

By Kim Doty

As the new publicity team got underway last year, one area we knew needed attention was social media. In early September, we re-launched our Facebook presence. It had been 8 months since our last post, and one of our primary goals is consistency. We try to post no less than once and no more than 3 times a day.

Jessica Laike is contributing a daily meditation and Kim Doty is posting coming events and UU "memes" which are photographs with complementary quotes superimposed on them. We are trying to post more than just upcoming sermon topics, to include worship associates, special music, fellowship events and whatever we can gather about the next service.

We are up to 154 'likes' which are Facebook members who have chosen to see our postings in their daily newsfeed. If you haven't liked us yet, check us out at [www.facebook.com/HighPlainsCUU](http://www.facebook.com/HighPlainsCUU) and click the like button. The more likes we have, the more we appear in people's newsfeeds, which extends our "reach". It's also helpful to our presence if you "check-in" when you're at High Plains, whether for a service or meeting or other event.

If you're already following us, please share our posts whenever you feel so moved, as that helps the Facebook alchemists decide if we are worthy of coverage. It also helps if you 'like' posts or comment on them. If you have any questions, or there is other information you'd like to see on our Facebook page, please let your publicity team know at [publicity@hpcuu.org](mailto:publicity@hpcuu.org).

This is one of our public church online presences, and is distinctly separate from the High Plains Unitarian Universalist Discussion Group on Facebook which is a closed group that outsiders can see, although they cannot see the posts made to that group until they join, which gives us a place to share thoughts with like-minded people.

## This Day in Unitarian Universalist History

by Dr. Frank Schulman

1 March 1837

William Dean Howells was born in Martins Ferry, Ohio. He had little formal education but was determined to become a writer and studied on his own. In 1866, he began his long affiliation with *The Atlantic Monthly*, becoming editor in chief in 1871. A Unitarian, he also helped establish the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (1909).





## Dollars & Sense

by Jack W. McElroy

*“Money has everything to do with religion, with the choices that we make about how to be in relationship with ourselves, our neighbors, and with the divine. Religion is about life, and life, it seems, has a whole lot to do with money.”*

Lynn Ungar

### Fast Forward...Next Year’s Budget (and Beyond):

Yes, work has begun on the Church Operations Budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2013. To date, efforts are underway to identify what is most needed and to some extent what would be nice to have. The budget that will be presented to the congregation for approval will likely be very similar to this year’s budget. It will already have been reviewed and reworked by both the Finance Team and the Board of Trustees.

The program teams have submitted their requests for funding for next year.

The two significant cost drivers for High Plains Church are facilities and personnel. It is not likely that the new budget will assume any changes in personnel. However, our Director of Faith Formation will become eligible for retirement plan participation upon completing a year of qualifying employment. An increase on workers compensation premiums is anticipated. As for facilities expenses, it is known that utilities rates will increase and assumed that property insurance premiums will do likewise. We will pay more on debt service for our mortgages though we won’t know how much more until December.

All that brings us to some good news: Our dreaded “church financial cliff” will not occur in the coming fiscal year. With the use of a large portion of our remaining capital reserve, we will have a budget that provides for mandatory debt service and ongoing personnel costs for our current staff.

Here is the bad news: By the end of the next fiscal year (June 30, 2014), all indications are that the capital reserve fund will be at \$10 thousand or less. That means that the budget currently being prepared may be the last one for some time to provide for full staffing and building costs as they exist today. The budget we implement at that time will be different and most difficult.

### Cash Position @ January 31:

At January 31, 2012, High Plains had unrestricted cash totaling \$5,083.

Temporarily Restricted Cash at January 31 includes the following:	Capital Fund Drive	40,181
	Youth Travel Fund	3,170
	Playground	57
	Aesthetics	1,562
	Music Director	320
	Total Restricted Cash	45,290
		=====

### Summary of Financial Performance:

Overall revenues and expenses for church operations for the first seven months of the current year remain favorable compared to budget. It is currently anticipated that revenues, both operating and non-operating, will be below budget for the full year. However, expenses are also expected to be less than budgeted for the year.

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All questions or comments regarding HPCUU financial issues may be directed to [cfo@hpcc.org](mailto:cfo@hpcc.org).

If you are a member in good standing and would like to receive a copy of the most recent financial schedules (January), you may request by email. Statements shall be provided via email.

Portions of this column are taken from the Financial Report to the Board of Trustees, prepared February 16. Upon request, again by email, any member in good standing may receive the full report.

## High Plains Church—Unitarian Universalist Board of Trustees Minutes February 20, 2013

Present: Joe Nerad, Al Sly, Jack McElroy, Kelley Ghorashi, Cindy Fesgen, Danielle Heimer, Jessica Laike , Beatrice Hitchcock

### Minister's Report

Reviewed the highlights from the report.

Potluck to talk about church's purpose on Feb. 24.

-Share discussion of common themes that come up about purpose with the mission team.

The next discussion will be March 10 potluck to dialogue about ministerial options.

Beatrice shared about a church in Rochester, NY and how they developed their vision, mission and what their practices are.

Looking theme based monthly worship to go deeper and build meaning.

The mission discovery team will be beginning their work and are going to report out at the annual meeting.

Fellowship Team is assisting with the potlucks.

### Piano Task Force

Tom Ward reported to the board on their findings. The team was unanimous in their recommendation to purchase the piano for \$10,000. The board asked questions of Tom regarding the recommendation. Tom shared that there are individuals who have indicated a willingness to contribute to the piano. Good music is a critical element of our worship and is a draw for many in the congregation. There are not comparable instruments in the \$10,000 price range; would be around \$30,000. Caring for the piano would cost about \$200 per year.

The board discussed the recommendation. Timing is poor because of the stewardship the campaign coming up. The board discussed various options and opinions on whether to move forward with the purchase of the piano.

The board will put the report out to the congregation and ask for comments.

A suggestion was made that the report goes out first, comments gathered, and board decides at the board meeting in March. The report will be sent to the Meismanns and they will be informed of our interest and desire to have more time in order to gather feedback from the congregation.

**DFE- May Day Carnival** on Saturday, May 4! Anyone interested in helping, please contact Jessica. Save the date!

Due to the heavy snow, the board adjourned at 8 pm and scheduled an additional meeting for Wednesday, February 27 at 6:30 pm.

## Additional Board Meeting Minutes January 30, 2013

Item 1. Jack Major's proposal about an ad hoc committee on roles of minister, board and council was discussed by the board. The board will consult with Beatrice about how to incorporate these issues into the interim process that addresses the understanding of the congregation in regards to the appropriate leadership roles of minister, staff and lay leaders. The board welcomes participation from all members in this process. In addition the board encourages all members to participate in upcoming leadership development opportunities provided by the Leadership Development Team. The board will respond to Jack in writing regarding his proposal.

Item 2. Interim Appraisal - The board synthesized their responses to submit to the UUA. Technically this isn't really the midterm of the interim ministry, so the board answered as completely as possible.

## Caring Corner

Please keep in your hearts ...

- Carol Peterson who is recovering from surgery in her ongoing battle with Cancer.
- Curt and Elizabeth Wilkinson due to Curt's worsening health.
- Sue Bennet who lost her job when Visiting Nurses Association closed.

The Caring Team is here for you ...

Whether you need a helping hand, an ear to listen, a ride to the doctor, meals delivered to your home, or other assistance, the Caring Team is here to help. Please let us be there for you, and please notify us of any of our members and friends who may need help by emailing [caring@hpcuu.org](mailto:caring@hpcuu.org). You may also contact Team lead Meighan Powell at [apixxie@gmail.com](mailto:apixxie@gmail.com) or 719-243-4786, or other members of the Caring Team: Phyllis Dunn, Michelle Bull, Jennifer Centric or Rachel Ekhaml.



**Thu, Apr 4** **Fellowship Team meeting** – Join us at 6:30 p.m. at the 3 Margaritas (just across the church parking lot) for our every-other-monthly meeting. We'll plan and discuss upcoming fun events at the church like potlucks, a summer Fun Day and activities for the next church year. Who can resist joining a team that meets at 3 Margaritas??? Hope to see you there! Questions, please contact Heather Ashbee at [fellowship@hpcuu.org](mailto:fellowship@hpcuu.org). All welcome!

### HiP Hosts in March

**March 3rd** – We are still without a HiP Host for March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Can you take a turn bringing treats this Sunday? If so, please email [fellowship@hpcuu.org](mailto:fellowship@hpcuu.org).

**March 10<sup>th</sup>** – Kelly Miller and the Stewardship Committee. Please stay after coffee hour for the fifth in a series of roundtable discussions with Reverend Beatrice Hitchcock and the Board. Snacks and babysitting will be provided and everyone is encouraged to attend.

**March 17<sup>th</sup>** – Al Sly's U&I Group: Al Sly, Judy and Larry Sargent, Jonathan Herdt, Joe Nerad, Brent Dubach, Karen and Al Gershanov, and Kathy Koon

**March 24<sup>th</sup>** – Open – Sign up on the HiP Host board beside the coffee counter if you can bring coffee hour treats on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

**March 31<sup>st</sup>** – Open (Easter Sunday)

**Clean Up Volunteers Needed!** Can you help with clean up after coffee hour one Sunday per month? We are looking for two more volunteers or families to help load the dishwasher, wash coffee pots and wipe down the counters. It's not glamorous work... but it's got to get done! If you can take one Sunday a month, contact Heather Ashbee at [fellowship@hpcuu.org](mailto:fellowship@hpcuu.org). This is an easy and greatly appreciated way to give back to your church community!

Do you enjoy planning parties and events? The Fellowship Team is always looking for new members. Please contact Heather Ashbee at [fellowship@hpcuu.org](mailto:fellowship@hpcuu.org).

## Issues on Aging

By Betty Davis

We will continue our discussion of aging as a spiritual practice by talking about the stages of aging and looking at our own emotions around aging. We would love to have you join us on Saturday, March 16, from 10:30 – noon in the middle school classroom. Please call Betty Davis at 471-7544 if you have any questions.

## Adult Discussion Group

By Sheila McElroy

Are you new to High Plains Church and Unitarian Universalism or have you been a member for a while? Would you like to know more about UU symbols, the seven principles, how ministers are chosen, or UU history?

Whether you are new to HPCUU, a friend or a member you may have a question. Then the Adult Discussion Group can help you with the answer. The next topic is Ministerial Options for High Plains in 2014. The congregation might be interested in a Settled Minister, a Developmental Minister, Part-time or Interim Minister. Or the choice may be lay led.

Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock will discuss the topic. Next month's topic will be chosen by the attending group. Come and join the conversation. The group will meet 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Tuesday, March 19. For more information contact Gail Ballare, contact person, through the church office at [office@HPCUU.org](mailto:office@HPCUU.org).

## Intergenerational Book Club

By Heather J Mitchell

High Plains Intergenerational Book Club meets Wednesday, April 3, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm. We are reading **The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion**, by Jonathan Haidt. He discusses politics and religion from his viewpoint as a moral psychologist, especially what liberals, conservatives, and libertarians can learn from one another.

## Looking for a volunteer position?

By Sheila McElroy

HPCUU volunteers fill various duties at the Marian House Soup Kitchen located in downtown Colorado Springs. Since 1985 Catholic Charities of Central Colorado has run the Soup Kitchen and provide hot meals to over 600 people, 365 days a year.

Anyone can eat at Marian House, families, seniors, veterans, the poor, people with disabilities, the homeless and you. Serving times include Monday through Saturday, 10:30 am to 1:00 pm, and Sundays, 8:45 am to 10 am.

High Plains Church members volunteer bi-monthly. If you would like to volunteer or need further information, contact Brian Delaney, volunteer coordinator, through the HPCUU office at [Office@HPCUU.org](mailto:Office@HPCUU.org). Teens age 13-15 years of age can volunteer with supervision of a parent; children over 15 can be supervised by Marian House staff or adult volunteers.

Marian House accepts working appliances. Call 719-229-9942 for more information.

## High Plains Stitchers

Bring your stitching project and join us at a *NEW LOCATION* starting on November 2: La Tartine at 1420 Kelly Johnson Blvd, 80920. This location has a full lunch menu as well as beverages and yummy pastry items. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Fridays from 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm. And if you don't have any stitching, come anyway and just "hang out" with us!

Questions? Contact Janet at [stitchers@hpcuu.org](mailto:stitchers@hpcuu.org)



## The Ministerial Future for High Plains Church

Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock, Interim Minister

The plan is that I will serve two years at High Plains Church as your Interim Minister, departing at the end of July, 2014. I am, however, serving a one-year, renewable contract, that you have the option of not renewing for the 2013-2014 church year.

Two-year interim ministries are now standard, because the ministerial search process for a settled minister takes over a year. With the old, one-year interim model, congregations would have to put together their congregational packet and decide what kind of minister they wanted before they had a chance to do any of the interim processes.

Your possibilities for the future are as follows: you may choose to have no minister, or perhaps contract for a part-time minister, or at least a ¾ time developmental minister. Developmental Ministry is a new form of UU ministry that is explained in full later in this article.

You could call a full-time settled minister. The Rev. Matthew Johnson-Doyle and the Rev. Roger Butts were settled ministers at High Plains. Or, you could have a full-time developmental minister. Or, you could have another interim minister, or a consulting minister.

Your ministerial pay and benefits package currently meet UUA recommendations for a church in your area with under 150 members. However, the amount you offer will limit your choices for full-time ministers of any kind.

### **Developmental Ministry** (from the UUA Transitions Office)

There may be a moment in a congregation's life when it realizes that typical and traditional approaches to ministry may not be successful. It is time to do something differently.

#### *Examples of Congregations that Might Seek Developmental Ministry*

An aging congregation realizes it will not survive as long as it keeps eating its endowment and does not attract new members. A congregation with chronic building issues has difficulty in deciding how to make a decision on whether to leave or stay. The congregation that has said it needs to grow has been at 125 members for the last fifty years. A congregation that has been through 8 ministers in 12 years or 19 ministers in 55 years (where no minister has stayed for longer than 5 years) wants to work on issues of trust and authority and wishes to break this pattern of short-term ministry.

All of the above are examples where a different kind of ministry is wanted and needed.

One option a congregation can now consider is a developmental ministry.

#### *What Developmental Ministry Is*

A developmental ministry is an opportunity. A congregation has come to the realization it is time for it to change. This is not an easy realization most of the time, but clearly some things must be done differently or the chronic challenges of the congregation will paralyze the congregation with lasting impact; in some cases the paralysis could lead to the end of the congregation's life.

One of the challenges, of course, is that people fall in love with Unitarian Universalism from the moment they become members. They want that good feeling to continue. More often than not this means to the individual (and to the larger collective congregation) that the congregation must be like what it was when s/he fell in love. The result is an unconscious stasis where very little changes. Crises may occur (and in fact may be a part of the unconscious patterns of the congregation's existence) but the crisis "gets solved" (or ignored) and things return to "normal".

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Until they don't. And the congregation realizes either

- 1) "things are never going to return to normal" Or
- 2) "we don't like this thing that has been 'normal' anymore" And/or
- 3) "there needs to be a new normal"

This realization on the part of the collective congregation creates the desire for new opportunities. They see the issues and problems and chronic concerns that need to be different and realize that not only do they need to address these but also need some help in doing this. So they decide to act.

The congregation, or a trusted group in the congregation, decides what things need to be worked on and commits to working on them in collaboration with the new minister.

The congregation contacts the Transitions Office and says, "We're ready to do things differently. We'd like to apply for a developmental minister to work with us. Here are the issues, problems, and chronic concerns that have us stuck. We'd like to have a minister who can help us look at these issues so that we can arrive at a place where we can make different decisions about things and be in a different and better place as opposed to the same place we've been circling around for the last many years."

The Transitions Office receives the list (an application) of congregationally agreed-upon objectives and does some research. It checks with UUA district staff to in fact confirm that the congregation does seem to be in particular holding patterns and that these are the holding patterns that need to be addressed. The Transitions Office may also check with other sources (like previous ministers who served the congregation, other religious professionals who have worked with the congregation such as outside consultants or other former staff members of the church).

Additionally, this must be a ministry of at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  to full time.

The Transitions Office returns to the leadership and says either:

- 1) Your list is a good one. I'll get the ball rolling.
- 2) Here are some discrepancies you need to resolve.
- 3) All information tells me that what others say about you and what you say about yourselves are so wildly discrepant that perhaps this isn't the best place for you.

For options 1 & 2, chances are things can move forward. For option 3, the likelihood of success seems doomed from the start and other options should be explored.

Then the Transitions Office begins to look for ministers who are both interested and have some skill sets that seem to match well with the congregation. The Transitions Office selects a minister. The minister and Transitions Office confer and the minister is presented to the trusted leadership of the congregation. The congregation and minister meet and confirm that these are things the congregation has agreed to work on, discusses how the minister can best aid the congregation in these objectives, and determine whether there are any overriding objections on the part of either the congregational leadership or the minister to working with the other.

Should there be significant objections, then contact should be initiated immediately with the Transitions Office to determine the next course of action. Should there be no significant objections then the minister will be appointed as developmental minister to the congregation for a period of 3-5 years as mutually agreed upon by the congregation, minister, and UUA.

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At the end of that 3-5 year time, the congregation will engage in a process to assess how it has done (the assessment should naturally be an ongoing process) and determine it's next course.

- Have the goals and objectives been achieved or progressed upon?
- What new goals and objectives need to happen next?
- Has the congregation shifted from the issues, problems, and chronic concerns that paralyzed the congregation, to a new place?
- How has that happened and how is that story being told?
- What momentum do we have and how do we keep and build upon this?

The congregation and minister will move from assessment to determination phase as to what is best for the congregation.

- Should the congregation move toward settled ministry?
- Should the congregation do another developmental ministry?
- Is the current developmental minister the best fit for what needs to happen next or is someone new needed?

The answers to these two sets of questions should not be rushed. Doing things well is a far better option than doing things quickly. It may take a full year to determine the answers to these questions and to determine what's next. The congregation and minister should be in consultation with UUA staff, ministerial colleagues, and regional resources to assist in the answers to these questions. These answers should then help develop the next best course for the congregation.

Ministers interested in developmental ministry should contact the Transitions Office to arrange a conversation. A completed Ministerial Record will be required, as will genuine enthusiasm, a willingness to work, to be non-anxious, and a passion and desire to serve congregations and Unitarian Universalism.

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Once a congregation decides that Developmental Ministry is the best option for them, and agrees on the work to be done, the process of finding a developmental minister is a relatively quick process, perhaps similar to finding an interim minister.

If you are calling a settled minister in 2014, the process of choosing a search committee will begin this Spring.

For a number of reasons, I think that developmental ministry may be the best choice for you in your next ministry. The congregation has been saying that it wants to grow for years, but growth has been disappointingly slow. In the last 18 years you have had seven ministers and no minister has been here longer than five years. There are some unresolved issues around trust and the authority of the minister and other leaders. You have not had a clear mission or vision to focus your work as a church; (hopefully, these will be clear soon.) You have unresolved financial difficulties. These are all things to think about.

High Plains Church has several options to choose from in finding its next minister. The decision is yours. The Board is inviting discussion on your choices on March 10, following the service.

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The UUA's recommended timeline and process for calling a settled minister to start in August 2014, is as follows; (dates in **bold** are fixed):

<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Task</b>
<i>Direction Finding</i>	
March – June 2013	HPC Board arranges for visits of District Executive (DE), Ministerial Settlement Representative (MSR), and District Compensation Consultant (DCC). Board plans search committee process and adopts budget Board conducts congregation's selection of search committee
<i>Self-Study</i>	
June – Sept 2013	Search Committee (SC) provides requested information to MSR Board selects negotiating team to recommend a ministerial compensation package and draft agreement SC gathers information from congregation and composes Congregational Record (CR)
Aug – Sept 2013	SC sponsors Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop
<i>Framing the Search</i>	
Sept – Oct 2013 <b>October 31, 2013</b>	SC prepares information packet, including draft agreement and survey results. SC completes online application for minister and Congregational Record
<i>Open for Business</i>	
<b>October 31, 2013</b>	SC requests MSR to give go-ahead for Transitions to unveil Congregational Record
Nov – Jan 2014	SC calls interested ministers, exchanges packets with those whose interest it reciprocates SC receives, circulates, and evaluates ministers' packets, conducts group phone interviews, interviews named references SC selects and schedules three or four candidates for pre-candidating weekends including neutral pulpits
<i>Pre-Candidating</i>	
Feb – Mar 2014	Pre-candidating weekends!
<i>Selection</i>	
<b>March 21, 2014</b>	SC decides on proposed candidate, makes offer contingent on satisfactory criminal background check and interviews of developed references in current congregation/employment
Mar – Apr 2014	Negotiating Team concludes ministry agreement with candidate Board and candidate execute ministry agreement subject to extension of call by congregation and acceptance of candidate Board announces candidacy
<i>Candidating Week</i>	
Apr – May 2014	Congregation extends call and minister accepts! SC submits Notice of Call to Transitions Office



**HPCUU**

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Member of Unitarian Universalist Association

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**Inside:**

**A Letter from Winter Con  
Board Minutes**

**CFO Report  
Ministerial Future**

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**Please submit your articles for the April newsletter  
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## Photos from Winter Con in Salt Lake City, Utah



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