



Island Passages

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND

P.O. Box 1076, Freeland, WA 98249 • 360-321-8656 • www.whidbey.com/uucwi/

April 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Start Daylight Savings Time 4:00p -5:00p Service: This I Believe	3 7:00p Women's Group (p. 2)	4	5	6	7	8 9:00a -12:00p Lay Leader/Worship Workshop (p. 2)
9 2:00p choir practice 4:00p -5:00p Service — Who or What Is in Charge? The God Question	10	11	12	13 1:30p Conversations on Issues of Aging (p. 3)	14	15 9:00a -11:00a North End Koffee Klatch (p. 3) 2:00p-4:00p Welcoming Congregation workshop (p. 3)
16 Easter 4:00p -5:00p Easter, Passover, Equinox: Three Great Religious Celebrations of Spring	17	18 7:30p Book Group (p. 3)	19 10:15a Social Action Committee meeting at WGH	20	21	22 9:30a Adopt-A- Road (p. 3)
23 2:00p choir practice 4:00p -5:00p Intergenerational Earth Day Service	24 newsletter deadline	25	26	27	28	29
30 4:00p -5:00p Service: To Be Announced	<p>Additions and updates can be found on the calendar on the congregation's website: www.whidbey.com/uucwi/</p>					

April 2nd— This I Believe

This Sunday several members of our congregation will speak about their own personal religious and spiritual journeys. Through this sharing we come to know each other in more meaningful ways and are inspired and challenged to think about our own beliefs. The “This I Believe” format began in a church in Oregon and has since become a favorite annual event in many UU congregations.

Lay Leader: Sarah R.

Membership Representative: Malcolm F.

April 9th— Who or What Is in Charge? The God Question

with minister the Reverend Kit Ketcham

This is the fourth sermon in a series dealing with some of the great questions of human living. UUs struggle with the idea of God. The traditional images don't fit for us and we find the mystery of a power beyond human power to be tantalizing and provocative. This service will incorporate humor, poetry, and personal reflections from Reverend Kit Ketcham and several members of the congregation.

Lay Leader: Baird B.

Membership Representative: Roy B.

April 16th— Easter, Passover, Equinox: Three Great Religious Celebrations of Spring

with minister the Reverend Kit Ketcham

It's no accident that these three major religious events occur at the same time of year. Reverend Kit Ketcham will offer her reflections about their similarities and differences.

Lay Leader: Joann C.

Membership Representative: Baird B.

Special Offering: Friends of Friends Relief Fund which provides help to South Whidbey residents with uncovered medical bills and other costs of illness.

April 23rd— Intergenerational Earth Day Service presented by Lorie Wood and the CRE youth

The youth of our church will present an intergenerational Earth Day service under the direction of our Director of Religious Education,

Lorie Wood, and her assistants, Laura and Erin Hilton.

Lay Leader: Mavis C.

Membership Representative: Malcolm F.

April 30th— To Be Announced

with guest speakers Fletcher and/or Elizabeth Davis

Due to a last-minute change of plans, we regret that we do not have the exact topic for this service. Please check our website or the local papers closer to the date.

Fletcher Davis is an Episcopal minister, and Elizabeth is retired attorney. Elizabeth has spoken at nearby churches about Earth Ministries.

Lay Leader: Marilyn S.

Membership Representative: Baird B.

Congregational News & Events

Women's Group, April 3rd

The Women's group will meet at the home of Gail A. All women of the church are invited to gather for a general discussion of ritual and what that may mean in their own lives. We gather for refreshments and socializing at 7 pm and the discussion begins at 7:30. Please call Gail for directions to her house.

Lay Leader/Worship Workshop, April 8th

9:00 a.m. to noon at B. home.

This workshop is intended for all our sublime and very reverential lay leaders, anyone who might be willing to become a lay leader, and anyone interested in fashioning our worship services. It is a continuation of a workshop held last fall where the conversation was so rich that participants enthusiastically wanted a second session. Participants are invited to consider our order of service in advance and come prepared with comments, criticisms, questions, new ideas, etc. Workshop leaders will continue to be the Reverend Kit Ketcham and Bill G. If you wish a copy of the notes taken at the last session, please email me.

~ Bill G.

Conversations on Issues of Aging, April 13th

This month our meeting will take place at the home of Marilyn S. in Langley (call or email for directions). We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 1:30 p.m. We plan to address the following questions this month: "If I were to die tomorrow, what would I regret? What would I celebrate?"

North End Koffee Klatch, April 15th

NEKK will meet from 9-11 a.m. on April 15th instead of April 8th because of the Worship Committee retreat on the 8th. See you at Whidbey General's cafeteria to celebrate Tax Day!

Welcoming Congregation, April 15th

We'll meet from 2-4 p.m. on the 15th instead of April 8 to wordsmith possible changes to our UUCWI bylaws, incorporating language which is welcoming to sexual minorities. The meeting will be at Trinity. [Editor's note: See additional articles on this page and page 4.]

Randal Bays to Play April 16th

I was hoping that fiddler Randal Bays would be available in March around St. Patrick's Day, but he is in great demand, and the soonest he could come is April 16th, so we'll have a special treat for Easter. Randal moved to Whidbey last summer with his wife and son and live in the Maxwelton area. He is internationally known for his Irish fiddling and performed his first concert at Thomas Berry Hall in the fall. We can be grateful he's willing to play for our modest stipend. He'll bring CDs to sell, so please come prepared!

~ Linda G

Book Group, April 18th

There Are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America by Alex Kotlowitz is the selection for the book discussion group on April 18th at 7:30 p.m. In this powerful and moving book (an expansion of a 1988 Wall Street Journal series), reporter Kotlowitz traces two years in the lives of ten-year-old Lafayette and seven-year-old Pharoah Rivers as they struggle to beat the odds and grow up in one of Chicago's worst housing projects.

The meeting will be held in the home of Joan G. in Langley. Please call for directions.

Road Clean Up, April 22nd

We'll pick up litter from Mutiny Bay Road unless the rain is steady. Please let me know by the 20th if you plan to help so that I can have enough equipment for all. We'll meet at 9:30 at the parking lot at Trinity to car pool, or just show up at Mutiny Bay and Bush Point Roads if that is closer for you.

If you would like to help but have not seen the short safety video, please arrange to borrow the CD. Contact me if you have any questions.

~ Nancy S.

Children's Religious Education (CRE) Planning Meeting, May 7th

Attention all parents, CRE workers and interested church members. We have scheduled this CRE meeting to discuss our exciting new program, consider possible curricula for next fall and to meet our three new CRE teachers and helpers. Bring your ideas and hopes for how to grow our program. We'll meet Sunday right after the church service in the classroom. Child care will be provided.

~ Frances W.

Welcoming Congregation Vote Coming Up!

At our annual congregational meeting coming up toward the end of this church year, the group which has been studying the issues associated with becoming a Welcoming Congregation will present a summary of the work we have done together as we've learned more about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender friends and neighbors.

Following, you will find a list of the commitments that a Welcoming Congregation agrees to make as it asks for official status with the UUA as a Welcoming Congregation.

As our core group of workshop attendees has examined the list of actions which underlie these commitments, we find we have completed most of them and feel that we have achieved a degree of understanding and knowledge that will help us reach out to the GLBT community and be truly welcoming to all persons.

Becoming an official Welcoming Congregation is a small step in living our UU values. We will continue to explore justice and equality issues for sexual minorities AND for all groups and

individuals unjustly treated in this polarized world.

We hope you will support our efforts and vote yes when the issue comes to the congregation at our annual meeting. For more information, you may contact Reverend Kit Ketcham.

Welcoming Congregation Commitments

1. A Welcoming Congregation (WC) is inclusive and expressive of the concerns of bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender (b/g/l/t) persons at every level of congregational life – in worship, in program, and in social occasions, welcoming not only their presence but the unique gifts and particularities of their lives as well.
2. A WC does not assume anyone's affectional/sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Vocabulary of worship reflects this perception; worship celebrates diversity by inclusivity of language and content.
3. An understanding of the experience of b/g/l/t persons will be fully incorporated throughout all programs, including religious education.
4. The bylaws and other official documents of a WC include an affirmation and non-discrimination clause affecting all dimensions of congregational life, including membership, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals.
5. A WC engages in out-reach into the b/g/l/t communities, both through its advertising and by actively supporting other b/g/l/t affirmative groups.
6. A WC offers congregational and ministerial support for services of union and memorial services for b/g/l/t persons, and celebrations of evolving definitions of family.
7. a WC celebrates the lives of all people and welcomes same-gender couples, recognizing their committed relationships, and equally affirms displays of caring and affection without regard for sexual orientation.
8. A WC seeks to nurture ongoing dialogue between people of different affectional/sexual orientations and gender identifications, and to create deeper trust and sharing.
9. A WC encourages the presence of a chapter of Interweave (Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender

concerns).

10. A WC affirms and celebrates b/g/l/t issues and history during the church year (possibly including Gay Pride Week, in June).
11. A WC, as an advocate for b/g/l/t people, attends to legislative developments and works to promote justice, freedom, and equality in the larger society. It speaks out when the rights and dignity of b/g/l/t people are at stake.
12. A WC celebrates the lives of all people and their ways of expressing their love for each other.

Green Building Update

The Building Committee is getting close to the exciting period where we begin to specify materials. Here are the criteria we will work to in selecting the 70-odd materials that we will be using:

1. Products made with salvaged, recycled (post-consumer or post-industrial) or agricultural waste content
2. Products that conserve natural resources — for example, ones that are rapidly renewable.
3. Products that avoid toxic or other emissions
4. Products that save energy or water, particularly building components that reduce heating/cooling loads.
5. Products that contribute to a safe, healthy environment — that don't release pollutants, that improve the use of natural light etc.

And of course each of these general criteria have several subcategories

~ Malcolm F.

Green-building resource person

Cookbook

Our recipe book for Good Cheer Food Bank is ready for final proofreading. With a whopping 113 recipes and several more variations, this should be a helpful aid for those looking for ways to use the dried beans, powdered milk, canned and seasonal fruits and vegetables, meats and other foods that Good Cheer provides, plus other low-cost foods. Good Cheer is now considering selling copies as a fundraiser, although it will be free to their clients. Many thanks to all who contributed to this Social Action Committee project!

~ Nancy S., Chair

CRE Takes Off!

You guys are probably very much in the dark on the happenings of CRE, and that's why I'm here. I'm Evan W., a student in CRE. I'm here to tell you what's going on in CRE. First, I'll tell you about our new staff. Over the past few years we've been switching CRE teachers like crazy! But we've finally come to a permanent (for some) staff. Teaching teens/preteens (11+ years old) will be Lorie Wood. Teaching elementary (4-10 years old) will be Laura Hilton; however, she is only temporary. Sadly, she will be leaving with her sister Erin at the end of June.

Erin Hilton is teaching the toddlers (0-4 years old). These age groups will be separate so that each group of children meets with people of their own understanding level and their own age group. Periodically, the groups will work together on special projects like the Earth Day ceremony. Speaking of Earth Day, the CRE team is putting on a story that has two songs and also a time in which members of the class will each make a commitment to the earth. Later in the year (June 25 to be exact), we'll be putting on another story called, "Land of Lavender and Roses.

The curriculum of CRE is still being worked out, but we are hoping to focus mainly on social action and exploring the world around us while applying the seven principles of our UU faith. Recently, however, we had a guest, Malcolm F. He described the many ways in which we need the earth, how we use the earth, as well as ways to preserve it. I got an interview with him after the class. He said he was very pleased with how the kids listen and added they were very understanding and had wonderful ideas. He also said he was impressed by their attentiveness, and I personally enjoyed it.

Also after the discussion, I got an interview from Erin and Laura. Both said they loved the kids but wished that they attended more consistently. Laura particularly wanted to say to everybody to please come to the Earth Day service! One last note of happiness, we also ask people to bring all the aluminum cans from home and put them in a basket near the sign-in desk. These will be taken to the recycling site and for each can we will get money for the trees penny jar fund. This is a spare change bottle that we are going to use to purchase trees to plant. Hopefully this will make you very much more informed about the CRE program!

~ Evan W.

Greetings from the CRE World!

I want to thank everyone for the very warm welcome I have received. I am so excited to be part of this growing program. We now have about 10 children in our primary school aged group. We hope to see the return of our teens and pre-teens as well.

We have some exciting things planned for the rest of the year. The children are currently preparing for an intergenerational service to celebrate Earth Day on April 23rd. We are looking forward to sharing our hard work with you, but more importantly, we have been learning more about our 7th UU Principle and why it is important to care for our earth every day, not only on Earth Day.

We are also learning about Heifer International, and we have chosen it as one of the caring organizations that we want to support. To do this, we are raising money through a penny drive (please notice our penny jar on the membership table) and by recycling aluminum cans. We hope you'll donate your cans to this effort (we recycle them for cash). Recycling helps our earth and helps us raise money for other worthwhile causes. We're trying to raise \$60 to give to Heifer International for the purchase of trees that will help with eroded hillsides, vanishing farmland and forests, polluted water and urban sprawl. The gift of trees will help provide a green future for all generations.

The CRE youth will also be making nesting materials available for the birds. They'll need the plastic containers that strawberries are sold in at the grocery store and onion/citrus bags. They would also appreciate donations of sturdy cord, bits of yarn, a few cloth scraps, and/or clean rabbit, alpaca, or llama wool.

Our children also want to know you! If you have something special you'd like to share with them, please let me know: loriewood@thelearningpark.com or 360-341-1321. Malcolm Ferrier has shared his experience about conservation with us, and we're looking forward to Frances W.'s sharing her knowledge about birds in April.

Thanks again, and I am truly looking forward to working with all of you to create a CRE program that will encourage our children to explore all that is around them with a “loving heart, an open mind and helping hands.”

~ Lorie Wood

From Our Minister

Dear UUCWiers,

As I settle into my new home in Freeland, I am feeling very excited about living on beautiful Whidbey Island and enjoying the many opportunities of a small community with such an active arts and environmental life. There are so many things I want to do!

Our Committee on Ministry (John A., Wendy F., and Baird B.) have helped me think through what it will mean to live here among you, enjoy additional time with you, and yet maintain the boundaries of quarter-time ministry. It would be way too easy to overextend myself and to act like a fulltime minister for quarter-time pay! But that wouldn't be wise.

So I will be careful about that and may ask you, if we are together in a social setting sometime, to save “church talk” for another time and place. Of course, emergencies do not adhere to any schedule, and they are my responsibility no matter when they occur. So please continue to let me know about emergencies whenever they crop up.

Now that my time is more flexible, I'm planning to help reconstitute the Caring Connections committee, perhaps offering some training for folks interested in learning some pastoral skills. If you have ideas about how I might use my “extra” time (aka, the time I'm no longer sitting on the ferry dock), please let me know.

Much love,




Look for information about the Canvass Kick-off Dinner soon!

Earth Day Essay Contest

The Social Action Committee, with approval of the Board of Trustees, is sponsoring an Earth Day essay contest for all Whidbey Island students in grades 3-12. Environmental Education Week begins April 16, 2006, and culminates on Earth Day, April 22nd. UUCWI encourages all teachers and students to engage in environmental activities at that time and offers this essay contest as an activity.

Full details, including submission information, are posted on our website through a link on our home page. Press releases have already been sent to Whidbey newspapers.

The committee would welcome assistance from the congregation on this contest. Verifying school principals' names, stuffing letters and flyers in envelopes to be mailed to schools, and following up with schools and teachers during April are relatively quick tasks that will help make this project a success. If you can give an hour or two or have further questions, please contact Malcolm F. or me.

~ Nancy S., Chair

President's Column

by Toyon C., UUCWI President

A big thank you to all who attended the recent congregational meeting to vote on the next step of the building project. Of a possible 64 voting members, 41 (or 64%) cast a ballot at the meeting. Of those ballots, 90% were in favor of proceeding to obtain the working drawings of the proposed building; 85% accepted the offered data as verification of the congregation's financial ability to undertake this project; and 85% were in favor of applying for a \$250,000 loan.

It is reassuring to know that a good majority of our members are behind our major undertaking at this time! It was equally gratifying to see our democratic process at work. There were those (including one member of the Board of Trustees) who were not in favor of the building or of all aspects of the proposal. Thoughtful comments, pro and con, were made and heard at the meeting.

It seems to me that it is relatively easy to be on the bandwagon – to know you are a part of the majority in your thoughts and vote. It is more

difficult to state a differing view – and to continue as a contributing member after the majority has made a decision you disagree with. I guess no one said this democracy business is easy – just the best we have (which is why “the use of the democratic process” is part of our principles).

I am especially grateful to those who offered deeply-felt alternative viewpoints to the proposals at hand and who, despite their minority votes, will continue to be a valued part of our community. I also appreciate those who have heard and respect their fellow members’ views. May we all keep talking and listening!

We’re not quite done with all of this – as everyone knows. The next vote will be crucial when we decide whether we should actually begin building! Our goal is to be certain everyone has an opportunity to be heard and to vote their preference. The UUCWI Bylaws will continue to govern such matters as exactly who may vote, what percentage is required for approval, etc. The Bylaws are available on the UUCWI website (click on “Committees”, then “Board of Trustees”, then “Bylaws”).

In the meantime, please don’t forget that our real work – that of creating community for our own and contributing to the larger world – is more important than ever. New committee chairs and members will be needed for the coming church year. Please be thinking about how you can contribute to the work of such committees as CRE, Social Action and Caring Connections.

Member News & Notes

New Member: Lois C.

Originally from British Columbia, Lois has spent most of her life in the western US. She is a state employment retiree, having worked for Children's Administration of DSHS for about 27 years. A UU since 1960, Lois joined University Unitarian Church in Seattle prior to our merger with Universalists. She was briefly a member of First Church in Des Moines (now Saltwater Church) and later joined Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation where she was active for over 25 years.

Lois has three children — two daughters here in Freeland — and six spectacularly beautiful grandchildren who are the light and joy of her life. Lois attends Eliot Institute regularly and would be happy to answer any questions about this wonderful family camp experience.

Art Showing

UUCWI member Nola A. will have a showing at Gaskill/Olson Gallery on 1st Street in Langley through the month of April.

From PNWD and UUA

PNWD’s Young Adult Conference

This conference, intended for those ages 18-35 or so, will be held April 7th to 9th at Evergreen UU Fellowship in Marysville, Washington. This spring conference will be focusing on the question that many young adults face: how do I live in accordance with my spirituality and still make it in the real world?

In addition to various workshops will be keynote speaker Reverend Michael Dowd. Author of *Earthspirit*, Reverend Dowd tours America speaking on environmental, peace, and justice issues; he previously managed government funded Sustainable Lifestyle Campaigns on both coasts. His great joy in life is telling the history of everyone and everything in ways that touch, move, and inspire people of all ages and theological orientations. For more information visit www.thegreatstory.org.

Head to www.pnwdyoungadults.org now for more information and online registration, or contact Chris Morris by phone at 206-818-0941. The cost is \$35-60 on a sliding scale. Scholarships are available to ensure that everyone in our community can attend.

UUSC Holiday Card Design Contest

UUSC invites creative members and supporters of all ages to submit a festive design for a new UUSC card for the 2006 holiday season. Create a design that reflects the spirit of the holidays, as well as justice, equity and compassion. For submission guidelines and to view last year’s award-winning cards, please visit www.uusc.org/holidaycards or contact UUSC local representative Nancy S..

Submissions must be received on or before April 28, 2006.

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CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND
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**Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of Whidbey Island**

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If you wish to contact any of the Board
members, call UUCWI voice mail at (360) 321-
8656.

Minister: Kit Ketcham (206-781-3098)

Chaplain: Sally Elder (360-675-3314)

Our minister and chaplain are available for rites
of passage ceremonies (including ceremonies of
commitment or union) and pastoral visits.

Newsletter Information:

News, announcements, events, and other items of
general interest to members of the congregation
should be submitted in writing by the 20th of each
month to editor Nancy S.

Short faxed
items may be acceptable; call for more
information. Items submitted after press time will
appear in the following month's newsletter if
appropriate. Time-sensitive late items will be
posted with the announcements and/or on the
calendar on our web site.

Current and past issues of this newsletter are
available online at [www.whidbey.com/uucwi/
newsletter.html](http://www.whidbey.com/uucwi/newsletter.html). Last names, phone numbers, and
addresses are deleted from the online version for
members' privacy.

Communications Committee:

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