

# yUUper Newsletter

**Keweenaw Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**

"We affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person."

**Sunday Mornings at 10:30 May 2017; Vol. 32, #4**

BHK Building (700 Park Ave., Houghton). Enter on North Side, off Waterworks Drive

## Sunday Schedule for April

### This Month's Theme: *Transforming*

**April 2: Transformation of a Community:** In his annual stewardship sermon, Rev. Chris will examine the ways our congregation has transformed in the last two years and the bright future we may look forward to.

**April 9: Parkinson's Disease.** Dr. Christian Dinsmore will discuss this disease, a disorder of the central nervous system. Its exact origin is not fully known. While the average age at onset is 60, some people are diagnosed at 40 or younger.

**April 16: Transformation of Hope at Easter.** Easter is celebrated at a time when grief is transformed to hope. What was it about Jesus's resurrection that provided hope to so many, and what lessons can we learn from it? Book sale and potluck today.



**April 23: "Transforming the Religious Landscape: The Bahá'í Faith"** April 21 marks the start of the Festival of Ridván, one of the two most significant celebrations in the Bahá'í faith, when Bahá'u'lláh declared himself a Manifestation of God, ushering in the newest of the world's great religions. Join us as Rev. Chris examines the significance of this faith and what we as Unitarian Universalists can learn from it.

**April 30: Praying While UU,** conducted by the Worship Committee. Members are encouraged to think about the questions posed in the recent *UU World* article "A Guide to ACTS prayer." <http://www.uuworld.org/articles/guide-acts-prayer>

### Green Book Club to Meet April 25th

The book club this month will discuss *Sharing the Earth: An Environmental Justice Reader*, by Elizabeth Ammons & Modhumita Roy, eds.

### "Governance and Growth"

#### Minister's Musings:

*Note: The following column originally appeared in Rev. Chris's March Board report. It is presented here with minor changes and additions at the recommendation of several leaders in the congregation.*



In anticipation of our upcoming town hall meeting, I've been reading Dan Hotchkiss's excellent book on congregational governance, *Governance and Ministry*.

Hotchkiss suggests ways in which congregations of all sizes can structure their governance models, or the way a congregation functions on a day-to-day basis regardless of polity, to best meet the needs of congregations as they change and grow. It is an excellent book, and one I want all of our leaders to read at some point.

The biggest shock for me in reading Hotchkiss's book is in his description of *family-sized congregations*, or those most sources believe are between one and fifty members. Such

congregations are often characterized by small groups governing the congregation, limited need for committees, and limited role for the minister.

The fact that several members expressed concern about me having a role in the administration of the church is a tell-tale sign, according to the description in Hotchkiss's book, that we are operating under a family-sized model, not a pastoral-sized one.

I think what shocked me is that I realized we are *pastoral-sized*, the next size up in the model, but still, in many ways, functioning as a

“We are pastoral sized”...but  
“functioning as a family-sized  
congregation.”

*family-sized* congregation. Hotchkiss sees between 50 and 100 members as a plateau and transition time for congregations: they can, technically, still function as family-sized congregations but they must change their systems of governance to the next level if they hope to grow beyond 100. Otherwise, they will see a continual increasing and waning of members as the family-sized governance model is unable to accommodate the needs of the growing congregation.

I have no experience serving as a minister at a family-sized congregation. My previous experience has been in serving congregations that are pastoral-sized (50-150 members) or program-sized (150-250 members). As a result, I didn't recognize what was going on until I read Hotchkiss's book.

I believe family-sized governance served this congregation well, especially in its early days. If we are to grow, however, I believe we must face the reality that we have outgrown this model and what that means for our future.

To give an example of what I mean by this, the one room school in Copper Harbor is served very well by its limited structure and staff. However, if a hundred children were suddenly to move to the area it serves, the little school would be overwhelmed unless it changes its administrative and staff structure.

Churches work the same way as they grow. I now believe that this needs to be discussed openly and honestly among the congregation, with as much information as possible given to you on how these systems work. This must be

done before we attempt to change the governance system.

I cannot, however, be the one to lead this process. If we are still operating under a family-sized congregation's description of what we believe a minister does, then the Board will need to lead this forward.

This will be a multiple year project, and I expect that the next Board will still be leading this transition. I can provide resources and assistance.

I think part of the problem of the last year and a half is that, because I have never served a family-sized congregation, I assumed an authority that is not inherent in our current functioning governance structure. I believe such transition will be best lead by trusted leaders in the congregation.

It is my hope that this congregation will be able to have an open and honest conversation about governance.

As I write this, we are just a few days away from our second town hall meeting, and, though I cannot report on the result in this column, I believe it is a good sign that our lay leaders recognize this as an important issue for the congregation. I will work in any way I can to help this process go smoothly.

—Rev. Chris

### **Local Neurologist to Speak on Parkinson's Disease at April Forum**

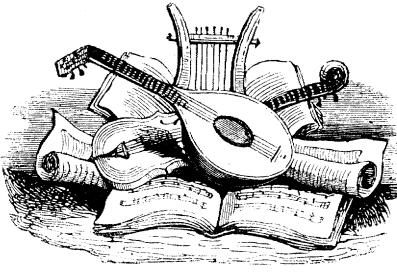
Dr. Christian Dinsmore's talk on Parkinson's disease will be the April forum topic. This disease has attacked several KUUF members, and as our group ages, the topic should be of interest to everyone

Probably the most famous Parkinson's patient is Michael J. Fox, actor, who was diagnosed by age 30. His example shows there are ways to counter the effects of the disease where one can live a healthy, productive life

Dr. Dinsmore is board-certified in psychiatry and neurology.

## The Worship Committee

*Editor's note: Everyone in the congregation has been*



*asked to participate in some way that helps the KUUF function. Thus I have asked a Worship Committee member, Barry Fink, to describe her group's*

*responsibilities, with the thought that those seeking some form of KUUF participation might find this committee of interest.*

### ***What are the responsibilities of this committee?***

On those months containing five Sundays, the fifth Sunday is a collaboration between the minister and the committee. For example, this month, April, contains an extra Sunday, and Rev. Chris will be gone then. We will thus be responsible for the final service on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Committee members may help with readings, chalice lighting, selection of hymns, or other elements of the service. We also prepare a theme or topic for the service. On any Sunday when the minister is not with us, the committee has the full responsibility for the service.

### ***Who is the chair and who are committee members?***

We don't have a designated chairperson since Rhianna left. Members are Horst Schmidt, Shirley Galbraith, Michaux Moore, Chris and me, Barry Fink. Those interested in joining the Worship Committee could talk to any of us for more detail on what we do.

### ***How often do you meet?***

We meet prior to any upcoming program we are working on; sometimes that is once a month or maybe six weeks.

The committee knows that the newsletter deadline must be met in order for the topic of our service to get printed, so we may call a short

meeting before the deadline in order to agree on a theme.

### ***How do you generate ideas for the services you cover?***

This could be easy or hard. If the service we are covering occurs near a holiday or special event, it is often easy. For example, we covered a service last spring, and it happened to fall on *May Day*.

We also get ideas by listening to fellowship members who tell us what people would appreciate, such as the April 30<sup>th</sup> service this month. Some members had spoken about wanting a spiritual focus, and the service on the 30<sup>th</sup> will be an exploration of prayer, drawing from ideas in the most recent edition of *UU World*.

### ***Are all committee members required to take a speaking role?***

Not at all. Other ways to help are in sharing ideas, researching, and helping select material for readings, and other preparations.

### ***Can you use new members?***

Yes. Please.

### ***Why is this committee important?***

KUUF operates on the concept of shared ministry, so the congregation plays a role in shaping the services along with the minister. Those Sundays when we occasionally need to present the service without the minister need a structure in place for continuity on those days.

## **KUUF Board Targets Next Fiscal Year's Budget**

The Board met on March 19<sup>th</sup> and considered, among other topics, a proposed budget for the next fiscal year, beginning in June.

Finance Committee chair Bill Leder presented a proposed budget of \$104,555, with a canvass goal of \$98,000. The plan was board-approved unanimously.

Board VP Horst Schmidt again accepted the canvassing chair position.

## KUUF Member Spotlight:

### John and Betty Haro

Most KUUF members will fondly recall Betty and John Haro, who were active in the Fellowship until they decided it was time to relinquish their *snowbird* traveling and remain all year in their winter home of Phoenix, Arizona.

The Haros kindly welcomed this newsletter's editor (and spouse) in early March at their home in Sagewood, a senior citizen's complex some 20 miles north of the capital city.

Sagewood currently contains some 400 condos with 300 more now under construction. Amenities abound, including both inside and outside pools, several restaurants on-site, and many other features.

"This is a wonderful place to live," John said, "but having grown up in Pelkie and L'Anse, and enjoying the four seasons, I still miss the UP."

Fellowship members will recall that Betty is a skilled pianist who often played for local services. In prior winters, when the Haros lived



Betty and John Haro sharing a meal with the *yUper Newsletter* editor and his staff at the Sagewood complex outside Phoenix, AZ in early March. The meal, at one of Sagewood's several restaurants, was excellent.

in their own Phoenix home, she enjoyed playing on a full-sized, performance piano, but that was no longer possible when the couple moved to Sagewood. Betty now uses a baby grand electronic instrument. "We had to find one," John says, "that fits."



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