**2015-16 Applications for Covenanting Communities**

Prepared by Tandi Rogers

June 18, 2015

1. [Buffalo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Buffalo, Minnesota)](#Buffalo)
2. [Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (virtual & multiple locations)](#CUUPS)
3. [Lucy Stone Cooperative (Roxbury, MA)](#LucyStone)
4. [Methow Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Twisp, WA)](#Methow)
5. [North Kitsap Unitarians (Poulsbo, WA)](#NorthKitsap)
6. [Peninsula Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Port Orchard, WA)](#Peninsula)
7. [Prairie Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Hutchinson, KS)](#Prairie)
8. [Sacred Fire Community (Carrboro, North Carolina, growing in locations)](#SacredFire)
9. [Sacred Path, A Unitarian Universalist Church (Indianapolis, Indiana)](#SacredPath)
10. [The Welcome Table (Turley, Oklahoma)](#WelcomeTable)
11. [Unitarian Universalists of Goldendale (Washington)](#Goldendale)

**Buffalo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Buffalo, Minnesota)**

**Group Name:** Buffalo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (BUUF)
**Group description and purpose:**

BUUF was created in 1996 during a dinner conversation with like minded people. They later met with the Executive director of the Prairie Star District and subsequently drafted their Bylaws. They have been meeting as a UU fellowship ever since.. It is a not-for profit corporation in the State of Minnesota. Both our incorporation papers and Bylaws are attached to this application.

Our Mission statement reflects our purpose and states:

*As a welcoming and accepting, diverse and inquiring religious and ethical community, we unite to provide an environment, which stimulates a free exchange, and exploration of ideas, fosters spiritual and intellectual growth, and serves as a base for active outreach to benefit the world around us.*

**Contact Person:** Duncan Fowler, Vice President

 110 Mills Woods Trail

 Buffalo, MN 55313-2007
 763-684-4838

 DuncFowler@Gmail.Com

**Web Site:** [**www.**BUUF.Org](http://www.BUUF.Org)

**Meeting Location:**

**Answer the following questions:**

* **How do you claim UU Identity and principles?**We place entries in the local paper showing our meeting place and time with the other religious groups in our area. We are listed as the Buffalo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship wit the local Chamber of Commerce. We have a brochure (attached) that describes our UU beliefs and values.
* **How do you advance UU values in the world?**We frequently have speakers that help us better understand the world around us. We have contributed to UUA and the Mid America Region UUA and its predecessor for years. In addition we contribute to the local food shelf, participated in local fairs including The Heifer Project International displaying UUA brochures and participate in the Minnesota Highway Adopt a Highway program. Our members regularly attend UUA and Mid America UUA conferences and meetings.

# What relationships do you have with other UU congregations, groups or organizations?We meet as a group on Wednesday evenings. Many of our members also attend other UU services in Minnetonka, St Cloud, Bloomington as well as the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis. We make use of Mid America Staff as resources and have leaders from other UU groups make presentations to us.

# What are your covenanting practices or documents?

# Enclosed are our:

# Bylaws;Papers of Minnesota incorporation as a tax exempt entity;

# A brochure on BUUFA copy of the agenda of a recent meeting

**Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (virtual & multiple locations)**

**The Vision**

(old vision, still in bylaws) The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, Inc. exists for the purposes of promoting the practice and understanding of Pagan, Nature and Earth-Centered spirituality within the Unitarian Universalist Association, enabling networking among Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalists, providing for the outreach of Unitarian Universalism to the broader Pagan community, providing educational materials on Paganism and Earth-centered spirituality for Unitarian Universalist congregations and for the general public, promoting interfaith dialogue, encouraging the development of theological and liturgical materials based on Pagan and Earth-centered religious and spiritual perspectives, encouraging greater use of music, dance, visual arts, poetry, story and creative ritual in Unitarian Universalist worship and celebration, providing a place or places for gathering and for worship, and fostering healing relationships with the Earth and all of the Earth's children."

**The Mission**

(old mission, still in bylaws)  The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, Inc CUUPS facilitates and supports the work of Unitarian Universalists by affirming and promoting the seven principles and six sources of the UUA, in particular the sixth, “Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.” CUUPS provides support for Pagan, Nature and Earth-Centered UU religious professionals and ministerial students and maintains relationships with movements and leaders outside of the UUA.

**Our Revisioning Process**

We are re-visioning and we are still providing an important voice and service to the broader religious endeavour. We support UU Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered seminarians along with those who express a spiritual tie to our planet.. We support CUUPS Chapters with organizational advice and assistance in building healthy relationships with their congregations, the congregation's board of trustees and ministers. We provide resources to incarcerated UU Pagans. We are a UU Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered voice for justice in our world. We advocate for UU Values in the Pagan and wider world. We advocate for Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered values in the UU and wider world. We make sure that Earth-based spirituality is represented in the available liturgy for UU congregations. We partner in interfaith dialogues within the larger Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered movement bringing the values of Unitarian Universalism to the table. As the visioning moves forward, we become a more nimble and responsive spiritual community for all of our members.

How does CUUPS claim UU identity and principles?

* by providing Sixth Source materials and historical info to congregations
* by promoting interfaith dialog among various Pagan traditions, organizations and various UU-hyphenated
* practitioners
* by making Principles 1-4 and 7 a focus in our ritual work, materials and outreach
* by claiming a direct lineage from our Unitarian and Universalist history, from Transcendentalism,
* to ‘all are saved’ Universalism, to universal values (a la Clarence Skinner), to connection to our sacred planet, to ritual and symbolism from historically colonized religions

How does CUUPS advance UU values in the world?

* by inviting Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered practitioners and institutions into covenantal relationship
* with UUs, and vice versa
* by encouraging UUs and Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered practitioners to experience the common ground
* we share
* by promoting inclusion and the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* by bringing respect for diversity and celebration of a ‘large tent’ approach to spirituality and community

What relationships does CUUPS have with other UU congregations, groups and organizations?

* through our educational materials available for congregations to use
* by member involvement in chapters and ongoing support to chapters, boards and ministers in UU congregations
* and covenanting communities. Of our 370 current members, 224 of them are affiliated with congregations, including the CLF.
* by working with and supporting UU publishing companies with resources
* through our relationships with UU and Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered organizations involved in
* national and international interfaith conversations
* through our Prison Ministry efforts in partnership with the CLF
* with explicit inclusion of historically marginalized groups, especially practitioners of historically
* colonized religions

What are CUUPS covenanting practices or documents?

* our website CUUPS.org which is used to establish norms, provide resources, and connect members
* we strongly encourage our members who are in congregations to establish covenants between their chapters
* and congregations (and the leadership provides resources to assist with that process)
* the many covenanting traditions from the many Pagan, Nature, and Earth centered religions, for instance
* “an it harm none, do what you will”
* we encourage members to attend and become involved in local UU congregations, to attend CUUPS convocations,
* to attend GA, and to engage in ritual and community building in their local communities (and provide resources to assist with that process)

**Lucy Stone Cooperative (Roxbury, MA)**

*I ask that this letter serve as their application. We’ve had conversations addressing each of the questions on the application and I am convinced they are a poster-child for Covenanting Communities.*

Dear Siblings in Faith,

UUCC and the Lucy Stone Cooperative were born out of a desire to expand the cooperative movement for democratically controlled community housing and out of a desire also to deepen and expand Unitarian Universalism by exploring what our UU values and tradition have to teach us about living in community beyond a congregation.

We are so excited to see that the Association is beginning to ask those same questions about what our faith looks like in new and different settings and what it looks like to live our values in community seven days a week.

From the very beginning, UUCC has been in conversation and relationship with the UUA in both formal and informal ways. We know though, that when the structures of relationship and power and resources are unclear, they are more likely to fall along the well-worn channels of privilege and personality, with less accountability.

The opportunity to formalize our partnership is a meaningful step for UUCC and for building the “and beyond” movement within Unitarian Universalism in general. We know that becoming a “Covenanted Community” of the UUA is neither the beginning nor the end of our connections, but is just one aspect of the means for ongoing relationship and resource-sharing.

We look forward to continuing the conversation about what it means for non-congregational covenanted communities to be in relationship with our Unitarian Universalist Association. In addition to the benefits and responsibilities the board has outlined as a starting point in their initial proposal, we would like to ask the UUA board as well as Covenanted Communities such as UUCC to explore additional benefits and additional responsibilities of what the existence of Covenanted Communities might mean:

We invite you to explore with us:

• Continued articulation of our covenant with one another as UU institutions and communities.

• The inclusion of Covenanted communities in the congregational loan program and the creation of other categories of impact investing funds, dedicated specifically to deepening our faith and justice work through financial investments.

• Participation of Covenanted Communities in the Common Endowment Fund.

• Participation in the UUA Health Insurance program for staff of Covenanted

Communities.

• A reimagining of the UUA dues structures that includes and challenges Covenanted Communities in meaningful financial commitments.

• Continued conversation about the role of UUA staff in supporting “beyonds” with resources, networking, organizing, and technical assistance.

• Continued conversation about what it means for our UUA to be an Association of Congregations that is also accountable to, informed by, and in relationship with noncongregational UU communities.

• Possibilities for partnerships and collaboration on programs, curriculum, and other resources developed by the UUA.

Thank you again for continuing to invite us into this faithful and reciprocal relationship.

Yours in Faith,

The Board of Directors of Unitarian Universalist Community Cooperatives

**Methow Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Twisp, WA)**

Their application is not ready yet. They want to finish it with their coach at General Assembly. I took the liberty of adding them, as I know them well. They have wonderful practices that were started by Rev. Virginia Sparling who planted them (and died last year.)

**North Kitsap Unitarians (Poulsbo, WA)**

Group name:  North Kitsap Unitarians

Group description and purpose:  We identify as a Unitarian Universalist congregation and a local chapter of the American Humanist Association.  Our purpose is to promote Unitarian Universalism and Humanism

Contact Person (name, phone, email): Nancy Evans-Jones, nancy@evans-jones.org; or Frank Mandt, frank@mandt.org,  360-297-2501 for both.

Website:  [www.nkuu.org](http://www.nkuu.org/)

Mailing Address:  PO Box 1624, Poulsbo, WA 98370

Meeting Location:  Poulsbo Public Library, 700 NE Lincoln Road, Poulsbo, WA 98370

How do you claim UU identity and principles?  We claim UU identity through our name and our Emerging Congregation status.  We promote the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism.  Our services reflect UU values: we have a UU minister who speaks monthly, and a talented UU lay speaker who speaks every other month. Sample audio sermons can be found on our website, [www.nkuu.org](http://www.nkuu.org/).

How do you advance UU values in the world?  We have an outreach program that contributes to local charities on a quarterly basis. Recipients have included YWCA ALIVE! Women’s Shelter, Kitsap Pride, Fishline Food Bank, Stillwater Environmental Center, North Kitsap Boys & Girls Club, and others.  We have sponsored and held public forums on marriage equality, universal health care, and the merger of the local hospital with a religious-based health care system and its impact on women’s reproductive rights and end-of-life decisions.  We have a “Secular Sunday” program (currently once a month), with a program and discussion format aimed at attracting atheists, agnostics, humanists, unaffiliated, “nones”, and others who would normally eschew “church”.  Current and future topics include:

* Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center
* Non-violent Communication
* Scarlet Road – Local Sex Trafficking
* Sustainability as Spiritual Practice
* Taking Control of End-of-live Choices

What relationships do you have with other UU congregations, groups, organizations, etc.?   Quimper UU Fellowship in Port Townsend, WA is our mentoring congregation.  We also share ideas and events with Kitsap UU Fellowship in Bremerton, WA, and Peninsula UU Fellowship in Burley, WA.

What are your covenanting practices or documents?  Our governing body works in accordance with its covenant. Our church recently completed a covenant workshop and the congregation voted to accept the covenant that emerged from that work.  We would be happy to forward copies of those covenants.

We, the members of North Kitsap UU Church, covenant:

To embrace a welcoming, compassionate, and nurturing spirit

To work toward justice and shared community with all beings

To appreciate the mystery of nature and the cosmos

To support each other’s search for spirituality and meaning

**Ceremony of Membership and Covenant**

**Celebrant**: Out of their hopes and dreams, the people fashion a community of love and service. In Unitarian Universalism, membership is a matter of personal choice, a decision to join a congregation of caring hearts and open minds.

**NKUUC Members and New Members**: We give life to these ideas by supporting each other in times of joy and need; by encouraging spiritual exploration and personal growth; and by serving the wider world in accordance with Unitarian Universalist principles. We welcome for membership every person who shares these values.

**NKUUC Members**: On behalf of the members of North Kitsap UU Church, we welcome you to our Unitarian Universalist family.

**New Members**: We are ready to join this community of love and service. We bring our talent and enthusiasm, our shortcomings and our doubts. We ask that you reach out to include us as full participants in the life of North Kitsap UU Church.

**NKUUC Members**: We are honored that you have chosen to join this congregation. May we grow together as a caring community.

**Celebrant**: Affirming one another in love, let us covenant together this day:

**ALL**: As members of North Kitsap UU Church, we commit ourselves to challenge and nurture one another, to speak honestly, to act with compassion, and to live with integrity. We pledge to support North Kitsap UU Church with hearts and hands, with talents and resources, to become a voice for passion, reason, and justice, and a community in which we can respond joyfully and courageously to all that life brings us

**Peninsula Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Port Orchard, WA)**

Their president died right as they were turning in their application and no one has access to his computer. Their incoming president is meeting with their coach as General Assembly. Again, I took liberties so they could be recognized in their region. I helped plant them along with their neighboring congregation. The Port Townsend, WA congregation (also a Breakthrough Congregation) is their mentoring congregation.

**Prairie Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Hutchinson, KS)**

The **Prairie Unitarian Universalist Fellowship** (referred to as "we") in Hutchinson, Kansas seeks recognition by the Unitarian Universalist Association as a Covenanting Community.  We are grateful that the UUA is creating an opportunity for groups our size to contribute to and gain from the resources of the Association.

Since incorporating in 2008, 39 people have signed our membership book , and we maintain consistently a dozen or more active members.

Our mission is to provide a nurturing liberal environment for spiritual exploration and self expression;  to support community; to work to meet the needs of the world.

**We are an innovative faith community** in that we have found the means to maintain a presence since 1881 when a Universalist congregation organized here with 40 members.  For many years we were a "house church" meeting in our own homes sharing idealisms and food once a month.  Beginning in April 2015, we are a "house church" with our own house, now meeting weekly.   We intend to innovate other uses for our house that will meet needs in our community.  We are sometimes a lone voice speaking out for justice and equity for the disenfranchised in this community of 40,ooo or so people in the heartland of the U.S.

**We want to grow** in becoming **a new home** for [liberal religious education, those seeking alternatives, an inclusive, creative community, chautauquas, refuge and safety and acceptance, practicing transformation] in our new permanent location in Hutchinson.  We recognize that growing the number of members necessary to affiliate with UUA as a congregation may not be possible in our small, conservative city but over the next year as we complete the renovations required by the city to be granted a special use permit, we will plan growth using six strategies:

* the use of digital technologies
* milestone formation/recognition
* ...{christian practices}?
* creating multi-ethnic appeal
* local initiatives leading to transforming the world
* spiritual formation

**We claim UU identity and principles** in our By-Laws (adopted in 2008 when we incorporated as a Kansas 501 c3) and in our weekly services.

**We advance UU values in the world** beginning in our city such as when we spoke at public forums in favor of amending the city's anti-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation.  We have taken collection and made donations to the UU Service Committee.

**We have relationships with other UU congregations and groups**.  Our minister since 2009, Thea Nietfeld split her time between our Fellowship and Salina.  We sent delegates to the first Mid-America Regional conference in Topeka last year.  We have been members of the Church of the Larger Fellowship for 4 years.

**Our covenanting practices  are expressed** in our Covenant of Right Relations which we adopted in early 2013:

* we acknowledge that each of us is at a different place on our spiritual journey and so will have different points of view;
* we covenant to be open-minded and open-hearted toward each other and without assumptions;
* we covenant to show up and to share Fellowship responsibilities;
* we will listen carefully to each other and with empathy and welcome newcomers;
* we will respectfully keep confidences.

Our address and meeting place is

1809 E. 30th

Hutchinson, KS  67502

Our website is <http://prairieuufellowship.org/>

Submitted by:

Pamalee Brown  620.899.2628   pbrownhpl@gmail.com

Records Secretary - Prairie Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Sacred Fire Community (Carrboro, North Carolina, growing in locations)

**Group Name:**

Sacred Fire Unitarian Universalist

**Group Description and Purpose:**

We are a missional ministry with two areas of work: 1) To minister with Unitarian Universalists around becoming more effective and impactful in our social justice work. This is done through preaching, teaching, and modeling. 2) To plant and grow covenanted communities made up of both UUs and unaligned people collectively working to *give life the shape of justice*.

**Contact Person (name, phone, email):**

Rev. Nathan Alan Hollister

(919)923-3398

sacredfireuu@gmail.com

**Website:**

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

**Mailing Address:**

301 Davie Road

Carrboro, NC 27510

**Meeting Location:**

301 Davie Road

Carrboro, NC 27510\*

\* *We meet in multiple places in the community depending on our activity (Gatherings, Building days, small group ministry, solidarity actions, etc.). This address is not a “drop in” place and we prefer it not be listed publicly as an open meeting place. Listing it as a mailing address is fine.*

**Answer UU Identity Questions:**

 ***How do you claim UU identity and principles?***

The ministry of Sacred Fire Unitarian Universalist is a UU ministry led by a UU minister. Part of that ministry is to bring us UUs into relationship with non-UUs that seek spiritual growth and depth, communities of belonging and care, and opportunities to transform the work. There are multitudes of people that resonate with our values and share our vision of building the Beloved Community, but that are not interested in the particular models of community we currently offer. The covenanted communities that we are growing offer an alternative model of relationship with Unitarian Universalism. The identity of UUism is embodied explicitly by some members, and implicitly by others in the spirit of the abolitionists, the Transcendentalists, and the religious humanists from our religious history. The Principles are embodied most markedly *in action*, through our spiritual practices of interdependence and solidarity.

 ***How do you advance UU values in the world?***

We view social justice work as our gospel; a gospel of deeds. For our covenanted communities we take inspiration from the UU Rev. John Haynes Holmes when he said that “if it is social salvation that we seek...we must then make religion coincident with life.” In these communities we focus on the day-to-day things that affect our lives—where we live, how we eat, where we work. We seek to bring UU values to the ordinary, to extraordinary effect. Additionally, our consulting ministry with UU congregations' central purpose is to help us collectively advance these values in the world.

 ***What relationships do you have with other UU congregations, groups, organizations, etc.?***

Our lead minister is formally Affiliated as a community minister with the four nearest congregations, and keeps up our relationship to them in that way. We offer workshops and trainings to UU congregations on all topics related to social justice, and we offer opportunities for participation to the nearby UU community in our own social justice endeavors such as our Food Justice work. Currently we are in dialogue with the Standing on the Side of Love campaign around one of our recently-emerged model of community organizing: a Solidarity Network.

 ***What are your covenanting practices or documents?***

To become a member of one of our covenanted communities, individuals join a small group, which we call a Circle. We have created an 8-session small-group curriculum that covers liberal and liberation theology, anti-oppression and power analysis, methods of social transformation, and ends with a covenanting process. Any are welcome to participate in our programming, and those interested in membership commit to deeper relationship and commitment in this way.

**Sacred Path, A Unitarian Universalist Church (Indianapolis, Indiana)**

Sacred Path Church

www.sacredpathuu.org

MAIL: PO Box 88608

Indianapolis, IN 46208

Worship ‐ 1818 W. 57th St.; Indianapolis, IN 46228

Garden ‐ 1509 W 27th St, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

CONTACT: Lori Stone Sirtosky

317‐418‐5674, lsirtosky@gmail.com

Description / Purpose

 Our faith community is devoted to personal and collective transformation. We recognize the world needs connected communities with fluid boundaries to heal and bring about justice for all. As such, we seek to be the church in our communities, not just to welcome people to a building on Sunday. This means we each commit ourselves to walking the talk beyond the church walls, embodying our faith and values in all relationships in our homes, on the job, and in our neighborhoods.

 Sacred Path envisions a “compassionate, abundant, and connected world, made real by risking radical love.” We call on those who walk with us to 'suit up' for the work we are all called to do, through self‐reflection, developing spiritual practices, and by developing our intercultural competency and healthy leadership skills. It’s not always easy, but it’s worth it.

 We “create sacred space”: as a lay‐led organization, we gather weekly to experience beauty, wisdom, and Mystery in all its forms. We meet in rented properties, abandoned lots, community gardens, and neighbors’ churches.

 We “cultivate authentic connections”: We believe that our hurting neighborhoods and marginalized communities begin to heal when we get to know one another. We practice leaning in to the discomfort of opening ourselves up to unfamiliar experiences and meeting one another wherever each of us may be on our own spiritual path.

 We “show up”: This takes many forms, whether it be marching in the streets, writing a letter, organizing a festival, establishing a prison ministry, or writing a check, we know it takes us all showing up to make a difference.

How do you claim UU identity and principles?

 Sacred Path’s worship and public witness efforts are grounded in Unitarian Universalist principles. We supplement our worship services with materials provided by the UUA and use both the Singing the Living Tradition and Singing the Journey hymn/prayer books.

 We draw on a variety of sources including Christian and earth‐based neo‐Pagan wisdom as well as humanist teachings.

 Our group values embodied worship and faith formation experiences that are multigenerational and inclusive of many learning styles.

 We claim UU identity clearly on our printed promotional materials and on the website:

http://www.sacredpathuu.org/portfolio/uncompromising‐inclusion/

http://www.sacredpathuu.org/portfolio/we‐are‐uus/

How do you advance UU values in the world?

o We host a bi‐monthly meet‐up for Unitarian Universalists and spiritual seekers designed

to help connect with one another and area congregations (if they are looking for that).

http://meetup.com/Indy‐UU/

o We are mentoring a new group in Johnson County just south of Indianapolis who have

begun using the meet‐up as an incubator to gather energy to start a UU faith

community in that area.

o We participate in and provide the major organizing energy for the Indy Winter Solstice

Celebration. http://www.sacredpathuu.org/experience‐the‐magic‐of‐winter‐solstice/

o In 2013, under the leadership of Cindy Tow, we established a community garden in the

Riverside community which provides healthy food for neighbors.

https://www.facebook.com/27thstreetgarden

o We network with other UUs and congregations via social media, facebook and twitter

https://www.facebook.com/sacredpathuu https://twitter.com/sacredpathuu

o We organize interfaith collaborations that bring together art and spirituality to meet

real needs in the community.

 In August 2014, we built a temporary labyrinth and invited

the community to experience this spiritual practice at the

Circle Up for Peace Festival. (left)

 In September 2014, we built a

temporary labyrinth with

canned goods donated by area

UU and other congregations at

the Spirit and Place Festival.

(right)

o We share original music with the larger

Unitarian Universalist community particularly,

It’s Time (The Gospel of UU)

http://pamblevinshinkle.com/project/its‐time‐satb‐choral‐piece/

Let Us Go Out

http://pamblevinshinkle.com/project/let‐us‐go‐out‐satb‐or‐ssa/

I’m a Gonna Walk

http://pamblevinshinkle.com/project/im‐a‐gonna‐walk‐satb‐or‐ssaa/

Let the Way

http://pamblevinshinkle.com/project/let‐the‐way‐lead‐plus‐4‐part‐chant/

o Pam Blevins Hinkle wrote an op‐ed about Unitarian Universalism in the local newspaper

The Indy Star (January 2013). http://pamblevinshinkle.com/the‐challenge‐for‐unitarian‐universalists/

o Franklin Oliver shares his writing on racial identity and justice in his blog Gayle Force

Press. “Ferguson and Jake,” the essay he wrote after Michael Brown’s death in

Ferguson, was picked up by Michele Norris’ “The Race Card Project.”

Read the essay:

http://gayleforcepress.typepad.com/gayle\_force\_press/2014/08/ferguson‐and‐jake.html

Read related story in local media:

[http://www.indianapolisrecorder.com/news/article\_fb302e9e‐d3ca‐11e4‐961f‐57a46bece9a9.html](http://www.indianapolisrecorder.com/news/article_fb302e9e%E2%80%90d3ca%E2%80%9011e4%E2%80%90961f%E2%80%9057a46bece9a9.html)

o Diana Ensign writes on issues of LGBT justice and racial justice in local media and for the

Loved for Who You Are blog. She also maintains her own blog on spiritual practices for healing.

 A ministry of love

http://www.nuvo.net/indianapolis/a‐ministry‐of‐love/Content?oid=3110341

 Overcoming obstacles

http://www.lovedforwhoyouare.org/overcoming‐obstacles‐jtt/

 Waves of great change are always moving us toward love

http://dianaensign.com/blog/waves‐great‐change‐moving‐love/

What relationships do you have with other UU congregations, groups, organizations, etc.?

 Locally

o We have connected to other congregations in the area and are currently fostering the

development of the Central Indiana UU cluster – http://centralinuu.wordpress.com

o Lori Stone Sirtosky is an Indiana cluster peer host for the Hybrid‐Online UU Leadership

Team Institute. She helped to establish the first MidAmerica participating cluster in this leadership development program in Fall 2014. We have been able to get five local congregations involved in this effort. Eight of our lay leaders have participated.

http://cerguua.org/huulti

o We helped to establish the Citywide OWL program in Indianapolis along with four other area UU congregations.

o Under the coordination of Marty Miles, Sacred Path has been a key organizer of the central Indiana UU presence at Indy Pride for the last two years.

o We also provided catalyzing energy and leadership in coordinating the first central Indiana all‐congregation picnic in 2014.

 On a regional and national level

o We send members to the MidAmerica Regional Assembly and the General Assembly.

o Two of our members are presenting at the 2015 General Assembly

 Ruth Hinkle shares her story of the “gap” beyond the bridge and discusses her

paper, “The Disconnect Between UU Youth and Adults”

http://www.ruthhinkle.com/2014/01/28/crossing‐the‐bridge‐uu‐young‐adulthood/

 Lori Stone Sirtosky in workshops: “Habits of Humility: Congregational Teams as

Learning Communities” and “Loving the Hell Out of This World, Part Two: That’s

Church???”

o We are connected to the Life on Fire community exploring missional living within

Unitarian Universalism. We have sent 17 members to one or more of these gatherings.

o We are exploring intentional partnership with the Welcome Table Church in Turley, OK.

 Application to become a covenanting community of the Unitarian Universalist Association

o Lori is a member of the Red Pill Brethren, a group of UU clergy and lay leaders who are passionate about missional ways of living and doing church and who seek to evangelize the missional paradigm shift within Unitarian Universalism.

http://redpillbrethren.tumblr.com/

o Some of our members of also members of the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

o A large portion of our group participates in the Midwest UU Summer Assembly each

year. http://muusa.org

 Many of us facilitate workshops, lead vespers, and organize community service

projects.

 Stephanie Lewis Robertson leads a popular workshop Making Your Mark: A Fabric Journey.

 Tom Robertson introduces campers to the spiritual practice of embracing “Yes, And” in Improv for Everyone.

 Kevin Turner and Lee Goss share their financial expertise.

 Ruth Hinkle leads youth and young adult programming and serves as the camp newsletter editor.

 Lori Stone Sirtosky facilitated the build of a permanent labyrinth.

 Eric Hinkle leads the earth‐based evening vespers.

 Pam Blevins Hinkle has led the MUUSA choir for the past 18 years.

o Pam is a member of the UU Musicians Network and has led worship services and choir retreats at UU congregations in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Texas to energize singing communities.

o Ruth created the UU Young Adult Connections facebook group (with over 1,300 members) https://www.facebook.com/groups/698574876830392/

o Ruth currently serves as the Interim Program Director for Faith Architects.

http://www.faitharchitects.org/whats‐new/full‐speed‐ahead/

o Stephanie (community art coordinator) and Lori (web developer/communications) are

on the organizing team of the Faithify‐funded “beyond congregations” initiative called

Cabaret Church led by the Rev. Sean Dennison. www.cabaretchurch.org

o Lori helped launch the UU outreach effort www.lovedforwhoyouare.org led by Tim

Atkins.

o Lori is currently a learning fellow with the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

www.clfuu.org

What are your covenanting practices or documents?

 We are in progress on developing our covenanting practices (always). We recognize six

dimensions of covenant that Conrad Wright refers to in his book, Walking Together: Polity and

participation in Unitarian Universalism:

o Between the person and the church

o Between church and its ministers

o Between church and other congregations

o Between minister and other ministers

o Between church and the larger community

o Between church and God (howsoever that is defined for each of us)

 We underwent a covenanting process starting in Fall 2013 which resulted in the adoption of our

Community Covenant in October 2014 addressing the first dimension above.

http://www.sacredpathuu.org/covenant/

 We work to honor the other covenantal dimensions as best we are able, with aspirations to

make additional areas more explicit as our community becomes more established.

o This includes an on‐going intentional conversation between Sacred Path and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis to heal our relationship.

**The Welcome Table (Turley, Oklahoma)**

**The Welcome Table Church**

****

*A Community in Mission to Share God’s Radical Love*

5920 N. Owasso Ave., Tulsa, OK 74126 918-691-3223 [www.progressivechurchplanting.blogspot.com](http://www.progressivechurchplanting.blogspot.com)

Rev. Ron Robinson Rev. Debra Garfinkel

revronrobinson@gmail.com

Name: The Welcome Table Church

Mission: making the loving and liberating spirit of Jesus visible in the world

Missional Field: primarily connecting with and serving our neighbors in the 74126 and 74130 zipcodes of the McLain High School and Turley neighborhoods of far north Tulsa (our food program also extends four miles north to the community of Sperry which is without a grocery store).

Contact Information: See above. Other websites include [www.missionalprogressives.blogspot.com](http://www.missionalprogressives.blogspot.com), [www.athirdplace.org](http://www.athirdplace.org), [www.turleyok.blogspot.com](http://www.turleyok.blogspot.com) and facebook groups <https://www.facebook.com/WelcomeTableMission> and <https://www.facebook.com/WelcomeTableGardenParkandOrchard>

Meeting Location: The Welcome Table Community Center, 5920 N. Owasso Ave., Tulsa, OK 74126, The Welcome Table GardenPark and Orchard, 6005 N. Johnstown Ave. primarily but not exclusively.

Claiming UU Identity and Principles: Primarily through promotional materials that list the UUA as one of our partners, and through our membership since 2002 in the Council of Christian Churches within the UUA, and using the Singing the Living Tradition as one of our main worship resources, and through identification of the ministers as being in fellowship with the UUA.

Advancing UU Values in the World: 1. fostering a free church community without theological tests for participation; 2. Being a leader for social justice in our community particularly through related programs of our community center and in partnership and mission with many other organizations and partners in our area; 3. Being a leader for environmental justice through our related transformation of blighted property in our poverty area into a gardenpark and orchard to help teach ecological principles as well as growing community relations and addressing food insecurity.

Relationships with Other UU groups: Council of Christian Churches within the UUA; Tulsa Cluster of UU Churches, worshipping annually at Good Friday service with other nearby UU churches, participating in worship and special events on other occasions at other UU churches, participating in Southwest UU Summer Institute, hosting UU churches on missional trips to our area, participating with UUs (and others) in the missional church group Red Pill Brethren and national and regional Life on Fire conferences for missional church that involve primarily UUs; providing workshops at General Assembly. Exploring deeper relational and possibly organizational connections with other missional driven UU communities. Host the national Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship offices. Partner with Church of the Restoration-UU in north Tulsa on Industrial Area Foundation membership and work, and Rev. Garfinkel works with both our community and Restoration.

Covenanting Practices or Documents:

We call people into community to participate in the Vision of the 3Rs: 1. relocating/remaining/returning to the abandoned places of Empire; 2. reconciling peoples, particularly focused on racial, ethnic, and class reconciliation; 3. redistributing our resources in and with the community at large.

We carry out this Vision with the 4 Paths of Becoming a manifestation of the Church Universal: 1. Missional service throughout the week; 2. Communal relationship growing; 3. Personal growth/discipleship; 4. Worship

Our Spiritual Practices to sustain this work includes our calling people to:

1. Daily Prayer/Meditation
2. Weekly, at least, Worship (with us and/or with others)
3. Monthly check-in/accountability one on one or in a group setting on one’s spiritual well-being.
4. Annual Retreat with us or with another group
5. Plan and work toward a Lifetime Pilgrimmage Goal
6. Daily acts of random kindness justice and beauty

Also holding forth the practice of B.E.L.L.S.

Bless at least three people a week (one someone you know, one someone you encounter but do not know, one either of the other two groups)

Eat Together in Meal Fellowship at least three times a week

Listen. Be still for one hour during the week in meditation or prayer.

Learn. Be engaged in some study or learning and sharing what you are learning, face to face or online, at least once a week.

Service. Work with us others for the Common Good.

**Unitarian Universalists of Goldendale (Washington)**

Interviewed and confirmed. Waiting for application. They let me now they will be bringing it to General Assembly. Bless them. They are not a techy group at all. They have 12 core members who have been meeting for years in a very, very tiny town. Their identified purpose is to provide liberal, UU sanctuary for their children in a very conservative city. They are now hooked into Emerging Ministries and therefore other congregations in their region. Our plan for them this year to get two members trained in Our Whole Lives.