



# Island Passages

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND

P.O. Box 1076, Freeland, WA 98249 • 360-321-8656 • [www.whidbey.com/uucwi/](http://www.whidbey.com/uucwi/)

## February 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 4:00p -5:15p Service: When is War Moral?	2 8:30a World Events Discussion Group 9:30a Social Action Committee meeting at Trinity 2:00p Membership Committee meeting	3	4	5	6	7 7:00p Movie Night: My Brilliant Career (p. 3)
8 2:00p Choir practice 4:00p -5:15p Service: Elie Wiesel: Wisdom Out of His Life and Thought	9	10	11 7:30p Worship Committee meeting	12	13	14
15 4:00p -5:15p Service: Preaching The Relativist Gospel	16 8:30a World Events Discussion Group at the Lighthouse Cafe	17 7:30p Book Group (p. 3)	18	19	20 newsletter deadline	21 9:00a -11:00a North End Coffee Klatch (p. 3) 5:30p Services Auction (p. 3)
22 2:00p Choir practice 4:00p -5:15p Service: The Ninety-Nine Names of God	23 8:30a -10:30a Board of Trustees meeting at Trinity	24	25	26	27	28
29 4:00p -5:15p Service: Death 5:15p Building Committee Update	Additions and updates can be found on the calendar on the congregation's web site: <a href="http://www.whidbey.com/uucwi/">http://www.whidbey.com/uucwi/</a>					

**February 1st — When is War Moral?**  
**with guest speaker Michael Lilliquist**

Just War Doctrine is a set of criteria, used for centuries by many Christian thinkers, to determine when a war is a justified and moral course of action. Does this ethical and moral approach to the practical and political problem of war offer any insight? Within our diverse American community, which includes many non-Christians, can we agree upon what a Just War would look like? When, if ever, is institutional violence (police action, war) justifiable? When, if ever, is failure to act militarily another kind of moral failing?

Michael Lilliquist is a life-long Unitarian who is currently a member of the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship. His favorite color is green, he likes dark beer, and his pet peeve is ignorance.

*Facilitator: Joann C.; Refreshments: Barb H.*

*Membership Representative: David M.*

**February 8th— Elie Wiesel: Wisdom Out of His Life and Thought**  
**with guest minister**  
**the Reverend Peg Boyle Morgan**

Elie Wiesel lived through one of the worst fanaticisms of humanity. As a holocaust survivor, author, professor, and Nobel prize recipient, Elie's life and his reflections offer personal and political lessons for the challenges facing each one of us in this 21st century. This morning we will look at his teachings on sharing our stories, on fighting indifference, and on protesting.

Peg is completing her second year as Minister at the West Seattle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. She was ordained in 2000 by University Unitarian Church in Seattle where she served two years as their Assistant Minister for Pastoral Care. Prior to UU ministry, Peg served as Executive Director of Mercer Island Youth and Family Services for 27 years. Peg is married and has two grown sons. When not "ministering" she loves going to Landmark

Theatres' movies, traveling, gardening, and being with trusted friends.

*Facilitator: Carol B.; Refreshments: Peggy B.*

*Membership Representative: Baird B.*

**February 15th — Preaching The Relativist Gospel**  
**with guest speaker Walter Andrews**

In a day when "moral clarity" and Manichean discourses of absolute good and evil are all the rage here, there, and everywhere, Walter Andrews has taken it upon himself to preach the good news of relativism, skepticism, and naturalism to relativism's beloved community. A brief romp, with detours, through some intriguing philosophical ideas from "Rubbish Theory" to Richard Rorty's "final vocabularies."

Walter has been Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization at the University of Washington since 1968 and a member of East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue for 36 years.

*Facilitator: Bill G.; Refreshments: open*

*Membership Representative: Roy B.*

**February 22nd — The Ninety-Nine Names of God**  
**with the Reverend Kit Ketcham**

The Reverend Ketcham will speak about how the construct called God has evolved over time and why we Unitarian Universalists may have some difficulty with God-language.

*Facilitator: Francie W.; Refreshments: open*

*Membership Representative: Malcolm F.*

**February 29th— Death**  
**with guest minister**  
**the Reverend Alan Merson**

The Reverend Merson will deal with death and how we in America handle it. Something of an update on Jessica Mitford's *American Way of Death*, plus death's shrunken profile in the coverage of Iraq, and a more personal discussion

of how each of us deal with our mortality. As before, he'll be engaging members in this colloquy.

*Facilitator: Malcolm F.; Refreshments, open*

*Membership Representative: Margo D.*

## Congregational News & Events

### **Movie Night: February 7th**

This month we'll watch *My Brilliant Career*. This 1979 film, directed by Gillian Armstrong and starring Judy Davis and Sam Neill, is the story of a strong-minded young woman growing up in 19th century New South Wales, determined to be her own person. We'll meet at the home of Dave and Mavis C. Please RSVP to let them know you're coming.

### **Book Group: February 17th**

The group will meet on Tuesday, February 17 at 7:30 pm at the home of Dave and Mavis C. to discuss *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie. Note: This is a change from the originally scheduled book. "Part historical novel, part fable, part love story, ..... it is a testament to the transformative power of literature." Please let Mavis know if you are coming.

### **North End Coffee Klatch: February 21st**

We're growing! In January, 10 folks showed up for over two hours of socializing and solving all the world's problems. Coupe's Bakery is a great place for coffee and goodies and endless conversation. Join us from 9-11 on Saturday, Feb. 21st and bring a friend.

### **Service Auction: February 21st**

Going, Going, GONE — to those who come to the auction on Saturday, February 21st. You'll have a chance to buy wonderful services such as fabulous dinners, and items such as paintings and fruit cake. There are so many items still being hatched as I write this, you'll have to come to believe the incredible variety and talents of the people in our congregation. Oh, did I mention the spaghetti dinner? You'll be feasting on gourmet spaghetti, bread, salad,

wine, sparkling cider, and dessert. Yum! It's part of the fund-raising of the auction, and costs \$10 per person, or \$20 for a family. If you can't come for the dinner, show up at 7:00 pm when the auction will be starting. The dinner and auction will be at Trinity, in the sanctuary. Hors d'oeuvres will start at 5:30 pm. Tickets will be available at the Sunday Service starting February 1st, or you can reserve them through Sarah R. Limited seating, so get your tickets early.

If you are going to be gone the date of the auction, ask a friend to bid for you and set a limit. The preview catalog should be online and at the service before the auction.

If you haven't yet turned in your donation sheet, please do so as soon as possible — a sheet is included in this newsletter on pages 5 and 6. Questions? Ask Sarah R.

### **Building Committee Update: February 29th**

Following the service on Sunday, February 29, the Building Committee will meet in the sanctuary with an update on the site plan for the church property. So please have some coffee, etc. and join us about 5:15 for a brief review of our current site plan thinking, and we will take questions and comments.

~ Roy B.

### **Caring Connections**

Our friend and former accompanist, Jean H., had a fall last Sunday and broke her hip. She had surgery that night and is doing well. At the moment, she is in Whidbey General Hospital, but I am sure she will be somewhere else by the time you read this. Please check with one of the Caring Connections members to see what her needs might be and how you could help. Cards are always fun to get. We continue to work on our idea of putting out a simple directory of services. If you have services you can offer or ideas to share, please let one of us know. The planning of potlucks and other sharing times are also on our agenda. Any ideas are welcome. Our next meeting is February 6th at 10:30 am at Carol Bingman's home. All are welcome.

~ Carol B.

## From Our Minister

Dear Islanders,

February is a big month this year, and not just because it has 29 days! Though Leap Year has its own fascinations, scientifically and romantically, February is the month our Unitarian Universalist Pacific Northwest district, aka PNWD, has its Annual General Meeting.



The AGM, as it's fondly called, is an opportunity for UUs from all over the PNW to come together in a celebration of faith, of action, and, of course, the inevitable business that must be conducted by delegates from our congregations.

This year is particularly exciting — and, yes, the AGM is an exciting place for ministers and laypeople alike! We are meeting in Victoria BC at the Empress Hotel, with our compatriots from British Columbia.

Our UUA president, the Reverend Bill Sinkford, will be our keynote speaker — and he's a great preacher! There will be a parade of banners at Friday night's opening ceremony, and I hope both Vashon Island Unitarian Fellowship and the UU Congregation of Whidbey Island will bear our banners proudly in that parade.

Saturday is a mélange of workshops, business meetings, and fun. My former cohort from Portland, Niya Standish, and I will present a workshop entitled *Movement and Music for Children*, teaching songs and movement which strengthen our children's sense of UU identity to RE teachers and DRE's across the district and Canada.

A banquet Saturday night, a dance, and Sunday worship bring us all together for socializing and worship, an experience never to be forgotten. The Reverend Dr. Marilyn Sewell of First Unitarian in Portland will be our worship speaker, and she too is an excellent preacher. If the First Unitarian Choir comes with her, the worship service will be incredible.

So dig out that copy of the district newsletter CHANGES, if it hasn't gone to the recycler yet, and make your reservations and registration now. You'll never regret going to an Annual General Meeting. It might even become a favorite habit for February!

In the faith,  
Kit

## Financial Realities

It might seem that putting on a service is not an expensive proposition — but that is not the case! All of the following are expenses: rental of the space, musicians (other than congregation members), photocopying, child care, church coordinator and CRE staff, newspaper advertising, refreshment costs, and the speaker fee. The total is over \$600 per service. And that number would be higher if we included the value of the volunteer time invested — the facilitator, membership rep, refreshment people, choir/musicians, etc.

## Re-invigorating Democratic Processes

UUCWI has (very willingly) agreed to be part of a research program whereby we will explore ways of revitalizing democracy. Democratic processes have slipped away in past years, says the investigator, Ned Crosby, and his research is on how to reverse this trend.

Dr Crosby — from the Pt Townsend UU congregation — will hold two 12-person meetings with us. The first will collect ideas on the revitalizing possibilities, and pick our favorite. The second will be to compare our favorite with his concept, and discuss comparative merits and implementation. This Citizens' Forum concept is being applied worldwide on a range of social and political issues.

We expect the two sessions will be held here in February — exact dates are not yet set; each will last about 90 minutes. Interested in being part of this? Depending on how all this goes, the project may continue, on a volunteer basis, to engage a wider group. Contact Malcolm Ferrier, please, if you'd like to be part of this — but note there may be a few restrictions on participants to ensure a good mix.

P.S. UUCWI gets a \$500 honorarium for our participation.

~ Malcolm F.

# Services Auction Saturday, Feb. 21!! Auction Promise

Due by Sunday, February 8, 2002

Please explain in detail what you would like to offer. Include (when applicable) the date, or date range for which you are offering the service, items or event, advance time notification needed, number of people item is for (e.g.. lasagna that will serve six), total number of buyers you desire (e.g. a dinner in my home for ten people), length of time of service (e.g.. four hours of yard work), and any other additional information to make your offering as clear and as interesting as possible. Please use a separate Auction Promise sheet for each service/item. Copy this one, or get extras on our web site, at church on Sundays, or call Sarah.

Name of Service or Item \_\_\_\_\_

Description of service/item \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Donor(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum Bid \$\_\_\_\_\_ Per \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum Quantity \_\_\_\_\_

Item will be available  the night of the auction  on date indicated  to be arranged

Will sample be on display?  Yes  No

Good Faith fair market value of your offering (to conform to IRS regulations) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to be contacted about this via  E-mail  Phone

# The Services Auction

Saturday, Feb. 21.....is only a bit more than a month away! Join with other UUCWI folks to trade services or items all for the good of the church coffers. This is a real auction - complete with auctioneer and bidding paddles. You can give and buy things that keep on delivering fun times and great ways to connect....Time to get creative and think up some great service or item that will be fun to give.

Here are some ideas to help you think up a marvelous way to offer something special just from you. The best items are ones that are a favorite activity or passion of yours and/or they involve getting together with others.

- Centerpieces
- Apple Lavender Jelly
- Beautiful Dahlias planted in your yard
- Birds & Brunch
- Cottage Room
- Clam Bake
- Elegant Brunch
- Extraordinary Mariner's Tickets
- Soothe your Muscles
- Firewood
- Five glorious months of cottage flower bouquets
- Four Hours of Yard Work
- Golf lessons
- Guided Meditations specifically for you
- HEARTLIGHT Meditations
- Watercolor Painting
- Lavender Planted for you
- Music Lesson
- Weekend @ Waterfront House
- Photographic Portrait
- Trail Ride (horse & pony) & Tea
- Pottery Classes
- Relaxing full-body massage
- Sailing Dinner
- Slippers
- Sea Kayaking Basics
- Square Stoneware Pottery Baking/Serving Dish
- Trio of Homemade Jam
- Warm chili dinner on a blustery night
- White Water Raft Trip - A
- Wine

Ok, you get the idea? Now come up with your own version and get ready to have fun.

Send your completed form to Sarah R or bring them to her on a Sunday. Call or e-mail Sarah for information, donation forms, and volunteer opportunities. .

## Why People Join a Congregation

By Dave C.,  
UUCWI President



Why do people make their first visit to a congregation? What makes them stay? The statistics that follow give some insight. They are from “A Survey of Adult New Members in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” by J. P. Marcum and C. A. Woolever, quoted by Herb Miller in *The Parish Paper* V. 11 No. 7, Jan. 2004.

- 43% of new members attended the first time because another person mentioned the congregation or invited them.
- 23% of those surveyed cited convenience; they lived near it or happened by.
- 8% had other personal connections.
- 7% took the initiative themselves.
- 4% grew up in the congregation.
- 5% saw an ad or announcement.
- 10% gave other reasons.

Almost 90% of first-time visitors were searching actively for a new congregation. The message reasonably inferred from these data is: Unless members make an effort to ask persons they encounter to come, only half as many people will join their congregation.

Of those who do join, fully 76% were contacted after their first visit. It doesn't seem to matter what the nature of the contact was, just that somebody noticed and cared enough to follow-up and encourage coming again. Congregations that organize to ensure friendly follow-up report 20% or more of first-time visitors join, compared to a national average of 10%.

A number of reasons for attending a second time are cited by those who eventually joined. “Quality of sermons” was ranked most influential by 65% of those surveyed, followed with “friendliness of members” by 61%. (Multiple responses were allowed on this question.) The worship experience and sense of divine presence were listed by 49% and 30%, respectively. 24% cited music, 11% the beauty of the sanctuary, 10% the quality of the religious education program, and 12% other reasons.

These answers corroborate that hospitality is important, but also indicate that programs need to be attractive. The UUA-PNWD advises that consistent, high quality programs are required to assure continued attendance and growth. It is important to have program elements that appeal to all members of the family.

While we don't know the size of the survey sample, and Presbyterian demographics may not reflect accurately what UUs can expect, these data seem consistent with my personal observations and experience. When Mavis and I came to UUCWI the first time we were warmly welcomed. Smiling people talked to us and introduced us to others. When we returned, people remembered us. It made a very deep impression; we had intended to “shop around” systematically, but decided not to; we had found a “home” in this congregation. For us, the values were in the message, the music, and the sense of being accepted in a community of like-minded persons. Others I have spoken to placed emphasis on finding values-based children's activities. Many have cited their joy at finding a community actively engaged in social justice issues and other ways of making the world a better place.

Why did you join UUCWI? What influenced your decision to come? To return? To stay? It won't be a scientific survey, but I will publish another column giving your answers as closer-to-home anecdotal evidence. Please send a brief paragraph with your thoughts to Dave's email (or hand it to Mavis or me) by February 16. You'll be anonymous when I quote you unless you tell me I may use your name. If you, dear reader, are not a member, please tell us what you are looking for that would induce you to join!

## Sermons Online

Several recent sermons from our services are on our web site at the bottom of the Ministry page: <http://www.whidbey.com/uucwi/ministry.html>. These include all of Kit's sermons to date and some from other recent speakers. If you miss a sermon, or if you want to read one again, see this page. If you don't have Internet access, ask our webmaster to print you a copy.

### **Come Sub On A Sunday: It Could Be Fun (or at least not lethal)**

I was amazed and delighted recently to find that I had spent a successful Sunday afternoon with the youngsters at our church school and survived unscathed, untraumatized and relatively unstressed. I even had fun! Don't get me wrong: I like kids just fine, I'm just never around them. So, after volunteering to sub for the CRE teacher on a day when Kit was speaking, I admit to entertaining some less than positive afterthoughts. "I'm sure they'll all be hyper" I fretted. "There'll probably be food fights and I'll have to spend the whole time chasing kids who run in circles and throw food.'

On the day in question I, of course arrived with a project far too complex for the time allotted. I was pleasantly surprised to find the youngsters worked quickly and well together, lent a hand with things I couldn't get to, and helped each other when needed. I was downright amazed when they pitched in to clean up afterwards, and thanked me for coming! Altogether a truly eye-opening experience.

So if any of you reading this have a secret passion (building bat houses, Chinese calligraphy, celestial navigation... whatever) I urge you to reach Craig and step in some Sunday afternoon. You may have more fun than you think, our CRE teachers can get a well deserved day off, the youngsters attending will learn something new, and there is at least a 50/50 chance you, too will survive unscathed and untraumatized.

~ Elaine W.

### **Planning your Charitable Giving**

We all have the perpetual problem of responding to requests from charitable groups. All of them seem worthy, and we generally end up feeling guilty at not being able to respond to them all. (Of course UUCWI takes precedence, and it's a joy to give there!)

A good way is to sit down and plan your year's giving. You'll be more likely to give to causes where your heart is, give what you can afford, and investigate some charities. All being well, you'll arrive at your personal, satisfactory

giving plan for the year.

The Social Action Committee is planning a two-hour session one evening or Saturday afternoon to work through all this. Kindly let a committee member have your input and they will plan the details (maybe near income-tax day?). Who knows, you might even enjoy being more in command of your charity budget, rather than being irritated by these requests all year long.

~ Malcolm F.

## Member News & Notes

### **Featured Artist**

Nola A. is one three artists being featured during February at Gaskill/Olsen Gallery on First Street in Langley. The opening of the floral show will be Saturday the 7th from 5:00 to 8:00.

~ Nola A.

### **UU Jewelry for Sale**

If you need an inexpensive or expensive gift for a UU for Valentine's Day, please see Hildred C. during coffee hour or call her at 360-679-1040 (the number was incorrect in the January newsletter). She has studs and clips, earrings, necklaces small or large from the UU Service Committee, and pewter pendants from the Church of the Larger Fellowship. She also has some sterling silver which she bought at the Spokane GA and \$5.00 very colorful chalices for your lapel from the Salt Lake City GA. The prices range from \$1.00 to \$50.00. She is not making any money on any of these — just reducing her stocks.

~ Hildred C.

### **"I Have a Dream"**

*This article was written for this newsletter by Baird B., November 28, 2000 It seems relevant today.*

It has been 40 years since Martin Luther King Jr. articulated his dream for America that galvanized the tens of thousands gathered before the Washington Monument, and it resonated with all of America. It was a message of hope. It was a dream of our country that

didn't judge people by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. It was a call to action to give substance to the dream.

Here on Whidbey Island our UU Church is faced with almost insurmountable problems. How will we give voice to our liberal ideals and Seven Principles? How will we find the resources to sustain our ministerial leadership? How to bolster our fledgling Religious Education Programs? How do we construct a meeting place of our own and a meeting time of our choice?

Thank you, Dr. King, for inspiring us to dream, for hope and for the chance of action.

~ Baird B.

### **Everyday Unitarian Miracles**

*reprinted from the December, 2000 Newsletter*

I love my little church. I used to be a church janitor in my early college years. I throw these skills into each Sunday Service. But I still go to church looking for the miracles that were held out to me as a child. Oh, yes, I became an atheist (or was it an agnostic?) But that was more for show, braggadocio and an assertion of independence rather than deeply held conviction. I just didn't want to be made a fool of with all those weird stories.

There are miracles close at hand. Look across the strait to the Port Townsend Quimper Congregation or a little further West to Sequim and the Olympic Fellowship. They both started with congregations the size of ours and now have land and buildings to call their own. Are they really different from us? How did they get away with it? What is their secret? Is it a miracle?

Our long-range plan calls for us to be in a facility that we can call our own in two years. Will we wait for a thunderbolt to strike? Is it now time to challenge the best in us and see whether or not we are worthy of such miracles?

Let's take the Sequim Story because I have just inquired about it. (The Quimper story is equally impressive.)

They have 63 members, a budget of \$32,000 and a very small CRE. They have a 1/3rd time minister and want to go to a half time minister.

For some time they have had two acres of land costing \$60,000. A year ago in November an 81-year-old congregant said that before he died he would like to see a Unitarian Church built. He was willing to give the church \$50,000 if this was matched by the congregation. He wished to be anonymous.

Unusual gifts poured in. A father-in-law from Texas sent \$10,000. There were \$1,000, \$5,000 and a \$10,000 gifts so that by spring there was \$100,000 in hand. Some of this was in the form of three-year pledges but the fact is that most have already been paid. \$30,000 came from outside the congregation because of the excitement that was generated.

A member of the congregation had a CD worth \$80,000 and was happy to lend the principal to the church at 7% over 25 years

A Rod Stewart loan from the PNWD for \$50,000 over 25 years at 5% interest brought the total to \$270,000 plus the land.

The roof is on this 2700 sq ft building. This is not the 3,200 square foot sanctuary of their final plan but is a place of their own in which to worship after its completion and dedication in the spring.

Let's plan to attend the dedication service and see what God hath wrought.

~ Baird B.

## Other Bits & Pieces

### **Project Vote Smart Tour**

Project Vote Smart is presenting a speakers' tour to illustrate current political campaign trends, various campaign strategies and the impact these campaign tactics have had on the electorate and our democratic process. Also included is a short video on the most outrageous campaign commercials from around the country and outlines reliable resources that can be accessed free by all to cut through the campaign rhetoric and "Get the Facts" about the candidates in your area. For more information, visit their web site at <http://www.vote-smart.org/> or call their free voters research hotline at 1-888-VOTE-SMART.

~ submitted by Malcolm F.

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of Whidbey Island**

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**Minister:** Kit Ketcham (206-931-6709)

**Chaplain:** Al Grapel (678-0919)  
Both our minister and our chaplain are available  
for rights 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 Snow, [uucwi@whidbey.com](mailto:uucwi@whidbey.com)  
or at 4350 Witter Road, Langley 98260. Short faxed  
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appropriate. Time-sensitive late items will be  
posted with the announcements and/or on the  
calendar on our web site.

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