

**IN THE BUUF, The Newsletter of the  
BUFFALO UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP**

**JANUARY 2020**



***Compassion, Humanism, Idealism***

*Our regular meetings are held at the Buffalo Community Center on the second Wednesday from September through May and begin at 7 p.m. Please enter through the rear door.*



**NEXT MEETINGS**

- Wednesday, January 8**      Duncan Fowler will present the new BUUF website.
- Thursday, January 16**      BUUFalo Gals meet at 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, February 12**      Erin Walsh will present “You Are What You Eat, in a Nutshell (pun intended). Body health, global eating, Slow Food, climate change, cultural quirks, and “-isms” These days, our stated food choices easily become a statement about our personal beliefs and values. There are disciples in many camps: Paleotarian, Pollotarian, Pescatarian, etc. Even a non-choice has a title – flexitarian. If these sound like the names of religions, you’re probably more accurate than you realize.
- Thursday, February 20**      BUUFalo Gals meet at 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, March 11**      A speaker from Wright County Community Action will describe rural poverty in our area. WCCA is based in Maple Lake and has a thrift shop and food shelf in Waverly.
- Thursday, March 19**      BUUFalo Gals meet at 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, April 8**      Maija Zaeska will speak on “Why is the Bel Canto style becoming more popular?” This style of music was made popular by the famous three tenors. Now *Il Volo*, a group of three younger tenors, is continuing the tradition.
- Thursday, April 16**      BUUFalo Gals meet at 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 13**      Annual Business Meeting – discuss budget, meeting dates, programming, etc.



**BUUFalo GALS**

The women of the BUUF meet the third Thursday of each month for lunch and conversation. Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 16 at 11:30 a.m. Please let Louise Markve know if you plan to attend so we get a big-enough table! Phone her at (763) 682-4616 or email [loumar937@gmail.com](mailto:loumar937@gmail.com).



**BUUF TREATS**

As we gather for our regular meetings, we enjoy spending some time socializing and eating! Thank you to these folks who have signed up to bring treats:

- |           |                 |             |               |
|-----------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| January 8 | Louise Markve   | February 12 | Marie Smith   |
| March 11  | Pattie and Bill | April 8     | Polly O’Brien |



**INTERESTING STUFF FROM THE JANUARY 2020 ISSUE OF MIDAMERICA MESSENGER,**  
**the newsletter of the UU MidAmerica Region...**

**UU THE VOTE** – The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), our national organization, has a new, values-based electoral justice effort officially launching this month. UU the Vote supports UU congregations and other UU organizations with resources to mobilize voters, counter voter suppression, and engage in spiritually-grounded, values-based issue conversations with voters in our communities during the 2020 election year. This is a grassroots campaign that relies on grassroots support. There is a team-building toolkit, videos, newsletter, and other items to get you started. A nation-wide zoom call will launch the program on Sunday, January 12 at 3 p.m. In Minnesota, MUUSJA (Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance) is coordinating the effort.

**MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2020:** Saturday, April 18, 2020, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockford, Illinois. Keynote speaker will be Taquiena Boston, Special Advisor to the UUA President for Institutional Inclusion, Equity and Change. This event will be live streamed for those who can't get to Illinois.

**2019-2020 Common Read:** The UUA's Common Real Selection Committee announced the choice of *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. In 2020, the United States will approach the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the much-mythologized encounter at Plymouth between colonists and those native to the land, and the UU General Assembly 2020 (in Providence, Rhode Island) will speak to the truths that contradict the mythology. NOTE: Marie owns this book, currently on loan to Beverly Anderson.

**Minnesota UU Climate Justice Circle:** A convening call will happen Monday, January 6, 7 p.m.; Saturday, January 25, Climate Conversations Ice Harvest 2020 at Richardson Nature Center in Bloomington; February 7 and 8, Talk Climate Institute at St. John's University; March 22, Water Is Life Day nationally; April 17, Peter Mayer Earth Day concert at First Unitarian Society in Minneapolis; May 22, Biodiversity Day nationally. More information on MUUSJA's website: [muusja.org](http://muusja.org).

**Interfaith Alliance for Gun Safety:** Sunday, January 26, kickoff event to mobilize congregations to work together to prevent gun violence in Minnesota. Information at <https://protectmn.org/event/faith-is-stronger-than-fear>.



*excerpted from the Winter 2019 edition of UU World...*

**Why Do We Take an Offering?**

In most Unitarian Universalist congregations (and many other religious traditions) there is a moment during the worship service when a basket or plate is passed to collect money. This is called the offering...

So why do we take several minutes every Sunday to collect money? We do it because it's an important ritual. UU theologian James Luther Adams (1901-1994) even called the offering a "sacrament of the free church." Sacrament is a pretty strong word that normally refers to a sacred rite like baptism or communion. Does calling the offering a UU "sacrament" mean that, for us, collecting and spending money is one of the most sacred things in our faith?

Well, yeah. It does, and it is.

Rituals such as baptisms and communion are about transformation. They're about becoming a part of something greater than ourselves and taking our place within our communities. When UUs pass the plate on Sunday to every hand present, it's an act of saying who we are and what we believe in. It's a ritual we use not only to transform the world but to transform ourselves. That's why every person at the service is invited to be a part of it.

What happens with the money that is collected is another expression of who we are. The funds are not spirited away to a higher governing body. Decisions about how the money is spent are made locally and democratically by the congregation. When the collection is split for philanthropic purposes – as is the practice of many congregations and communities – the decision of which organization we share with reflects our beliefs and values.

As a ritual that's part of a UU service, the offering is a time for us to come together to become a part of something greater than ourselves. It's a moment of transformation, interconnection, and UU identity.

*This piece was written by Liz James, a member of the Saskatoon Unitarians, on the Canadian prairie. She runs the UU Hysterical Society on Facebook at [facebook.com/uuhystericalsociety](https://facebook.com/uuhystericalsociety) and blogs at [lizjameswrites.com](http://lizjameswrites.com). (Please note these web addresses are not links – you have to type them into your computer yourself.)*