



MINISTER'S REMARKS

ON MY MIND

We have suffered two grievous losses and held two memorial services in recent weeks. They were both good good-byes with lovely music (thanks to Mel and Joan) and moving words (thanks to all who spoke,) but the memorial service is not the end of the ordeal for those who have lost a loved one. I wonder how many of us grieve the loss of a beloved right now. Perhaps all of us.

There is a sacredness in tears.

They are not the mark of weakness, but of power.

They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues.

*They are the messengers of overwhelming grief,
of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love. — Washington Irving*

Almost all animals on the planet exhibit signs of grief when their companions leave them. We do not know if human grief is more or less arduous than it is for other species. What we do know is that grieving is the most difficult thing we do. Grief changes us as nothing else can — quickly, irrevocably. For me, grief is like meeting the terrible angel, the implacable one who drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden and who stands at the gate with a flaming sword, barring re-entry. The Garden is the time of innocence, before the death, and we cannot go back there, except in our dreams and occasionally in memory.

Some people have done remarkable and admirable things in the wake of great loss — transformed grief into deeper love, gratitude, and courage. Others wall off the pain and stay out of that room. Still others honor their loss by withdrawing from society, building shrines in their hearts and worshipping there. Conventional wisdom would judge the latter paths less productive and healthy than the first. But I'm not convinced of this hierarchy of ways to deal with death. It seems to me that they are just different, rather than more or less good. What helps one may not help another. We all honor our losses in our own ways.

I'm thinking that the right words or gestures at the right time can be a blessing. You may have noticed the new CareNotes about death and grief. They are there for the taking. I'm going to bring some books to the library area (behind the pianos) for you to look at, check out, and add to. Anything that has helped you — bring it to share with others.

Grief is a long process. Is there anyone else (besides me) out there who would like to gather, perhaps once a month, to share stories of life and loss, coping ideas, etc.? Please sign up on the Welcome Table in Patterson Room, or email me at revinreso6@yahoo.com or call (815)990-8200 and let me know what days and times work for you.

Love to all, Armida

Rev. Armida will be on retreat Feb 2 - 4. Email and telephone will still work.

CO-MODERATOR'S REPORT

2016 is over and now it's time to look ahead at what the future holds for the U U Church of Stockton. The board is working on goals that were set at the retreat in August. Most of the physical goals have been addressed. What we are working on is increasing membership, Sunday attendance, and participation of members and friends. We're developing a survey of members and friends that will help us identify what the congregation wants and expects from a Church. Other goals are officially becoming a welcoming Church. Creating a list of Liberal High Holy Days. Needing someone to help with technology issues. And staying involved, sharing ideas with the 6 northern Illinois U U Churches.

Proposed Budget 2017

Income

Contributions Plate	\$3,000.00
Unrestricted Gifts	\$2,000.00
Fund Transfer	\$6,000.00
Fun Raising	\$3,500.00
Pledge Income	<u>\$60,500.00</u>
Total Income	\$75,000.00

Expenses

Committees	\$2,500.00
Service Partners	\$1,500.00
UUA/MDWT	\$3,960.00
Dues	\$40.00
Administration	\$14,000.00
Maintenance B&G	\$15,500.00
Guest Ministers	\$4,500.00
Minister (TCM)	<u>\$33,000.00</u>
Total Income	\$75,000.00

WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

February Worship Services

I know that we're all waiting for spring. However, as the ground hog says, we've got a bit of a wait ahead of us. So as we wait, let's do it together. Be sure to come to church on each Sunday and be inspired by our services and the friendship of fellow UUs.

Here's what we've got coming up:

Sunday, February 5 Anastasia Aldridge will give us her perspective from years of experience in the social services field with her remarks entitled, "Meet the people in need right here in our community." Before Hour, 9:15 a.m. in R.E. space: Orientation for new members and the merely curious. Everyone welcome to come and learn about UUs.

Sunday, February 12 Rev. Armida's topic will be "Dethroning Aphrodite", a look at how and why "Love" is both wondrous and problematic. How appropriate for Valentine's Day! Before Hour: in R.E. rooms at 9:15 a.m. Stockton/Freeport Soul Matters; everyone welcome.

Sunday, February 19 Three of our own members, Sheila Haman, Leslie Hawley and Nancy Schuldt will focus on 3 first ladies rather than on their husbands on this President's Day.

Sunday, February 26 Rev. Armida's remarks, "Small Is Not Great" will give us her perspective on small town life and why the wish to be "great" may not be so, . . . well, great. After Hour: Game Day! Stay for lunch and play with us!

Looking ahead — Sunday, March 5th, 10:30 a.m. Dan Metzger returns to the pulpit. Before-hour, at 9:15 a.m., Armida will facilitate Adult Religious Education, "Roots and Wings," in which we will examine the family systems that are our roots and the inspirations that provide us wings. See you in church!

CHURCH NEWS

Orientation for New and Prospective Members Thinking about joining UU Stockton? Not thinking about it, but curious about UUs? Come to a brief orientation on Sunday, February 5th at 9:15 a.m. in the R.E. space to meet some of our members and our minister. Coffee and decadent donuts will be here!

Monday, Feb. 13th at 6:00 p.m. Board of Trustees. General business and discussion about Patterson Room roof —flat again, pitched, sod??? Interested visitors welcome.



Many thanks to everyone who continues to support the Freeport Area Church Cooperative with donations of personal items and toilet paper. Though our donations have been increasingly generous the FACC always runs out of these all-important items quickly as there is great need in our community. Please continue to give generously and know how much our contributions are appreciated!

Game Day Sunday, February 26

Let's do it again!! We had a great time the first time, so let's play again on February 26th! The games will begin after coffee hour. We'll have cards and word games available for playing. If you have a favorite card game please share!! It's a great way to spend a cold, winter afternoon. All ages and abilities are encouraged to attend!! Hope to see you there!

Schubertiade 2017, Sunday, February 5th, 1 PM. Please join us for the first-ever Schubertiade in Northwest Illinois. Sponsored by Animato Musical Arts Studio. Event will be held at the UU Church, 219 N. Pearl Street, Stockton. Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton, IL Admission is Donation with proceeds to benefit the renovation of the AMA Studio Stockton Performance Space.

"I would like to explain the vision behind the AMA Studio Stockton Performance Space; To create a space in the village of Stockton solely dedicated to the Arts. A place for students to perform and hone their craft. A space where professional artists can share their performances with us. A space where we can have classes. A space where people in the community can gather to hear music, poetry, open mic nights, see visual art and meet the artists, share a glass of wine and lively conversation, a cup of coffee and interesting discussion. A space for The Arts." — Lisa Nadig

Sunday, February 19, 2017

Installation of Rev. Erik David Carlson

Bradford Community Church Unitarian Universalist
5810 8th Avenue, Kenosha WI 53140
10 am service, reception to follow.

Rev. Dr. Michael Tino will be delivering the address.

Clergy and seminarians of all faiths are invited to robe and process.

<http://BradfordUU.org>

The Bismarck-Mandan UU Fellowship and Church is supporting the protesters of the Dakota Access Pipeline that is proposed to go under the Missouri River just a few miles away from Standing Rock Nation. If you've been following the news on the Dakota Access Pipeline, you are aware of The Sacred Stone Camp near Standing Rock. A group of citizens led by Native Americans is protesting the Dakota Access oil pipeline, which is routed to cross the Missouri River just north of Standing Rock Reservation. All pipelines eventually leak as they age and thus will contaminate the water of the Missouri River. Hundreds of people are coming from all over the country to express their concerns with the pipeline. This pipeline was originally proposed to cross the Missouri River a few miles north of Bismarck, North Dakota but was nixed because of possible water contamination. Please see this article (first paragraphs) from the Bismarck Tribune newspaper http://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-and-regional/pipeline-route-plan-first-called-for-crossing-north-of-bismarck/article_64d053e4-8a1a-5198-a1dd-498d386c933c.html Our Bismarck-Mandan UU Church is a drop-off site for donations for the Sacred Stone Camp to support concerned citizens on site; a list of needed supplies can be found at www.sacredstonecamp.org.

UUs Counter Bigotry in the Spirit of the Sharps Many of us sat down and watched Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War. It's not often that a Unitarian minister and his wife get featured on a PBS documentary with a national television audience. The Sharps have an incredible story of resistance, sacrifice, and courage in their efforts during WWII to rescue Jews, dissidents, and refugee children. For congregations wishing to go further, check out "Defying the Nazis - UU Action Project" which includes a congregational study action guide, resources to counter bigotry faced today, and a map that displays congregations doing work related to these efforts. (Waitstill Sharp served as minister at our UU congregation in Davenport, Iowa, from 1954-1963.) In the MidAmerica Region we have several congregations working to counter bigotry faced today. In Oak Park, IL, Unity Temple is partnering with RefugeeOne to host refugee families from Burma and Cote d'Ivoire. To learn more contact the Unity Temple Refugee Response team at immigration@unitytemple.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS WomanSpirit Conference, February 3rd - 5th, in DeKalb, IL The Rev. Linda Slabon and the women of the UU Fellowship of DeKalb invite the women of your congregation to attend the WomanSpirit Conference: Just Women, Just World. This year's conference features two leaders in the field of inspirational justice: Sister Simone Campbell and the musical duo, Emma's Revolution. Let us work together to alleviate oppression and create a more just community. For registration and more information see: www.womenandreligion.org On Saturday evening, Feb. 4 at 8:00 p.m. Emma's Revolution will give a special evening concert open to all the community. Award winning musicians, Pat Humphries & Sandy O. have had their music celebrated by Pete Seeger, Holly Near and the Dalai Lama. Tickets may be purchased online at <https://dekalbcountytickets.ticketforce.com/> for \$22 in advance (\$18 student or low income) or \$25 at the door. Schubertiade 2017, Sunday, February 5th, 1 PM. Please join us for the first-ever Schubertiade in Northwest Illinois. Sponsored by Animato Musical Arts Studio. Event will be held at the UU Church, 219 N. Pearl Street, Stockton. Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton, IL Admission is Donation with proceeds to benefit the renovation of the AMA Studio Stockton Performance Space. "I would like to explain the vision behind the AMA Studio Stockton Performance Space; To create a space in the village of Stockton solely dedicated to the Arts. A place for students to perform and hone their craft. A space where professional artists can share their performances with us. A space where we can have classes. A space where people in the community can gather to hear music, poetry, open mic nights, see visual art and meet the artists, share a glass of wine and lively conversation, a cup of coffee and interesting discussion. A space for The Arts." — Lisa Nadig

Good Grief — Dealing with the death of a loved one is a long and rigorous process. Sometimes it helps to be with people who know how you feel and others who have weathered this particular storm and can attest that you will survive it. We could meet once a month for the next 4 months. Please sign up on the welcome table in Patterson Room or email or call Rev. Armida revinreso6@yahoo.com or (815)990-8200.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

ATTENTION: THE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE WILL ALWAYS BE THE 20TH OF THE MONTH AT 5 P.M. PLEASE GET YOUR NOTICES AND ARTICLES TO TED (TKDAVENPORT@HOTMAIL.COM) OR MARK AND SHEILA (HAMAN@ATT.NET).

UU CHURCH OF STOCKTON PROPOSED 2017 BUDGET

Income	2016 BUDGET	2017 PROPOSED BUDGET
Contributions	3900	4000
Interest	75	75
Fund Raising	4812	5500
Chalice Lighter Grant	3500	0
Pledge Income	66000	60425
Total Income	78,287	70,000
Expenses		
Committees	2550	2540
Service Partners	1800	1500
UUA/MWD	3960	3960
Building & Grounds	5050	7000
TCM Rev. Erik	29425	00
TCM Rev. Armida	12000	33000
Administration	17160	20000
Search	4500	00
Guest Ministers	1600	2000
Total Expenses	78,045	70,000

CHURCH CANCELLATION PROTOCOL

With winter just around the corner, it's time we advise everyone on the policy for cancelling church. It's the co-moderator's responsibility to call off any church function in the event of bad weather or any unforeseen situation where we can't have a scheduled service of any type. For future reference, this procedure will be in place and these television stations will be contacted. From the Quad Cities: 8-WQAD, 6-KWQC, 4-WHBF. From Rockford: 23-WIFR, 17-WTVO, 13-WREX. The safety of our members and friends is paramount, so use good judgement when the roads become unsafe for travel. Feel free to contact the co-moderators with advise or questions. Mark Haman (815)777-0493 and Ted Davenport (815)238-8781

SOUL MATTERS

The second gathering of Soul Matters will be on Sunday, Feb. 12th. Linda Weeder led the gorup in January and we had some great discussions and thought sharing. We want to keep the group going - and GROWING!! The discussion will begin at 9:15 in the R.E. area and is *open to all*. We'll have coffee and snacks available. Please look at the discussion topic and materials at the end of the newsletter under Soul Matters beforehand. But, if you don't have time for that, come anyhow. We'd love to have your input!!

Soul Matters/Spirit Journey February 2017

**What
A**



**Does It Mean To Be
Community of Identity?**

*Afraid that
hide our
from our
we hold
you are.”*

*our inner light will be extinguished or our inner darkness exposed, we
true identities from each other. In the process, we become separated
own souls. We end up living divided lives, so far removed from the truth
within that we cannot know the “integrity that comes from being what
~Parker Palmer*

We agree with Parker Palmer that our society has separated us from our souls. Hell certainly exists; it's the state of having to hide ourselves. Bottom line: we want our congregations to be places where you don't have to pretend. There is no greater spiritual warning than one Kurt Vonnegut lifted up: “We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be.” Friends, this identity work isn't a game or merely a pastime. It's unquestionably life and death stuff.

And here's the kicker: our faith wants you to stop hiding and live fully, not just for *your* sake, but for *our* sake as well. We are all struggling to escape our slices and connect to our hidden wholeness. Seeing you be real gives us permission to be let our true self out of the dark! Your brave honesty about your contradictions, allows us to proudly strut around in our multitudes! We save each other by being true to ourselves.

Spiritual Exercise

Option A: A Reunion with Your Former Self. A sociology professor picked up his camera and took pictures of interesting looking people around town, capturing not only their images but also their stories. Thirty years later he hunted them down to show them those old pictures and give them a reunion with their younger self. Check out pictures of these “reunions” here: <http://twistedstifter.com/2016/11/reunions-by-chris-porsz/>. **Dig through your old photos and find 2 pictures of your “younger self” that best represent your core identity at that time.** Then spend some time thinking about what you would say to and ask that younger self if given the chance: How would you thank him or her? How would you apologize? What warnings would you offer? What encouragement would you give? **Bring your two photos to the group and come ready to share which 1-2 of the questions above best helped you re-connect with your younger self.**

Option B: The Artist Who Helped You Find You

“Artists are always in the vanguard of social change...The music proclaimed our identity; it made every statement we truly wanted to make.” ~Dizzy Gillespie

Art and artists help us find our way. They provide mirrors and containers for our identity. Seeing their work, we see ourselves. Hearing and reading their work, we remember who we are. So hunt down and bring into your group one of the books, songs, paintings, photos or movies that has helped you find (and hold onto) yourself. Come ready to share the story of your first encounter with that piece of art.

Session plan

Chalice Lighting

5min

Who am I? My answer: I am everyone whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine. I am anything that happens after I've gone which would not have happened if I had not come. Nor am I

particularly exceptional in this matter; each 'I', every one of the now-six-hundred-million-plus of us, contains a similar multitude. I repeat for the last time: to understand me, you'll have to swallow the world.
~**Salman Rushdie**

General Check-In

20min

Question: *What events in the last month have confirmed or shifted your identity?*

Exercise - Each person share their responses. After sharing, discussion.

20min

Conversation - a question that "grabs" you, and answer.

40min

1. **Which of your contradictions needs celebrated as a wonderful multitude?!** (*"Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes."* ~*Walt Whitman*)
2. **Is it time to pick a new group to tell you who you are?** (*"Who we are is a direct function of who we are with. We are relational creatures."* – Rev. Kenn Hurto)
3. **Has your struggle become your identity?** (*"Don't let your struggle become your identity."* ~*Unknown*)
4. **Is your identity longing for more alone time?** (*"Privacy is crucial to the sense of self."* – Oliver Stone)
5. **Have you become who you pretend to be?** (*"We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be."* ~*Kurt Vonnegut*)
6. **Are you living only a slice of yourself?** (*"It's never been more asked of us to show up as only slices of ourselves in different places."* ~*Courtney Martin*)
7. **Are your Valentine's Day plans about more than filling your sweetheart's stomach with good food?** Did you remember to make sure they also celebrate the part of their identity you love the most?

Check-Out - What's your take-away about "identity"? Gratitude for this time? **5min**

Closing Words:

The nitrogen in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth, the iron in our blood, the carbon in our apple pies were made in the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of stardust. ~*Carl Sagan*

CALENDAR – FEBRUARY 2017

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Monday, Feb. 13th at 6:00 p.m. Board of Trustees. General business and discussion about Patterson Room roof —flat again, pitched, sod??? Interested visitors welcome.

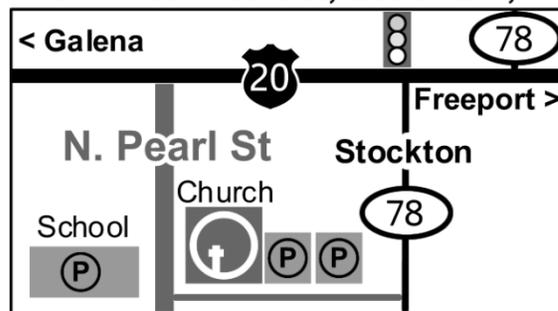
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CHURCH INFORMATION

219 N Pearl Street, Stockton, IL



Wheel chair parking and elevator access is available from the rear parking lot.

SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 AM

CHILD CARE EVERY SUNDAY AT 10:30 AM

REV. ARMIDA ALEXANDER, MINISTER

UUCHURCHOFSOCKTON.ORG



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

219 N PEARL ST, STOCKTON, IL 61085