



Creating community, deepening our spirit,
bringing our UU faith to action on behalf of women

Association of Universalist Women

Mini Retreat February 2010: From the Editor

Kathy Urberg

It is coming up soon! The Mini Retreat will be on Saturday, Feb 20 from 12:30-4:00 pm in the social hall. The keynote speaker will be Karen Hering from Unity church St Paul. The topic is JOY. There will be four breakout sessions designed to increase your capacity for joy right then and there. You can choose among drumming, belly dancing, journaling, and joy as a spiritual practice. The sign-ups started January 25 and will continue until the limit of sixty participants is reached. The cost is \$10 and child care will be provided. Please send your request for child care by February 10 to



Check out our NEW and IMPROVED website [right here](#). You can both join the AUW and pay online. Registration for the AUW Retreat starts February 7, and registration and payment will both be online. We are a little slow, but we are getting ourselves into the 21st century.

Take a look at the article on friendship groups, especially if you haven't tried one. Join and deepen your bond to other women and to the church.

February is the dead of winter, the time when we begin to wonder if spring will ever come. What better time for a Mini-Retreat on Joy! Treat yourself to an afternoon that will rejuvenate your spirit and keep you going until spring arrives. It is only \$10: Such a bargain!

Want to meet new people and become a more integral part of the community of women in the church? It's easy - just volunteer. You too can become a church lady! Just remember, "We are not your mother's church ladies." Check the "Help Wanted" column each month for opportunities.

Friday Get Connected

February 19: *I Had an Abortion*. See the movie and join in an intergenerational discussion. Food will be served. The time is 7:00-

Jeni Klotz, 612-721-1483 or email jklotz1@cs.com.

New Friendship Groups Starting

The new friendship group kick off will be on Sunday, February 21st in the Chalice Room from 12:30-1:30 pm. There will be a brief overview of how the friendship groups have been functioning. Then everyone will meet together with the members of their new group. There will be an "experienced" friendship group participant who will meet with each new group. She will be a resource to answer questions and help the group get their meetings scheduled. It is important for people to bring their calendars so they can sign up to host a group and also lead one of the friendship group

9:30 pm in the social hall. Each year over a million abortions occur in the U.S. This powerful, poignant, and fiercely honest film tackles this taboo topic with personal narratives and intimate interviews, cutting across race and age. *I Had an Abortion* personalizes what has become a vicious and abstract debate.

We need your help getting out the word to mentors, young adults, parents and their children, and your friends who are interested in promoting comprehensive sexuality education and reproductive justice. Invite them to come.

March 12: Phyllis Stenerson will lead a discussion on Spiritual Progressives. Phyllis has long been involved with this movement and is working on writing a book about the group. The group will meet from 7:00-9:00 pm. Light refreshments will be served. For questions, call Jeni Klotz at 612-721-1483 or email jklotz1@cs.com

April: There will be no Friday Get Connected in April. Women are encouraged to register for, and attend, the annual Spring Retreat on April 9-11.

Social Justice Campaigns

AUW/MUUSJA Voting Rights Campaign Report

The Voting Rights team is building on the Action of Immediate Witness ([AIW](#)) they helped pass at the UUA General Assembly (GA) in Salt Lake City last June. Our goal is to pass federal legislation requiring every state to use secure paper ballots and manual audits as Minnesota does. The primary bill by Rep. Holt of New Jersey has been stalled due to healthcare reform but we hope the upcoming 2010 elections will get it moving soon.

We are pleased that our program for the 2010 UUA General Assembly (GA), titled Honoring the Inherent Worth of Voters for 36 Years, was accepted. It will focus on how Minnesota has used election-day voter registration since 1974 to achieve the nation's highest voter turnout with short waits, minimal voter suppression and no voter fraud. MN Secretary of State Mark Ritchie and senior election official Carol Johnson will be the featured speakers,

sessions.

Registration forms are available at the AUW table after church and from the coordinator. The forms need to be turned in by Thursday, February 11th. Turn them in at the AUW table at church or send them to Susan Schonfeld at schohicks@juno.com. Susan will group people together PRIOR to the February Kick-Off, based on the times indicated for availability on the registration sheet. Any special requests must be specified on your registration form.

Help Wanted

February 19th Friday Get Connected movie: Help is needed the night of the event for set up and clean up, serving pizza, and donation of desserts. People are also needed to facilitate intergenerational discussion at your table after the

Our next planning meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 6, 10:00 am-12:00 noon in room 206 at First Universalist Church. Please join us for a report on our AIW progress, plans for GA and ways you can participate. Contact Jenny Thomas jjt@jjthomas.net or Carol Johnson (612-825-3322) for more information.

Sacred Choices Committee says good-bye to Exec. Director of Mn RCRC

It was a bittersweet day for the Minnesota Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice as they honored outgoing executive director Kiely Todd Roska. AUW member Jody Beresford presented a silk wall hanging to signify Kiely's journey as a leader in reproductive justice. Written on the silk art near the RCRC logo was "Sexuality is a Sacrament". Jody Beresford had just completed four years serving on the RCRC board. There were endings but also a very promising beginning as co-chairs Kelli Clement and Rev. T. Michael Rock announced that they have found an interim director to help lead Mn RCRC through the next transition. Thanks to Jenny Thomas for hosting this event.



Current Co-Chairs of Mn RCRC; Rev. T. Michael Rock and Kelli Clement, with Kiely.

meeting. Contact Sara McMullen 612-729-2028 or email mckru@comcast.net.

Volunteer for the Retreat

When you register, please volunteer to help. These committees need help: Decorations, Welcoming, Rituals, and Set-Up and Clean-Up committees. Contact Suzann Willhite at s.willhite@yahoo.com or 612.554.4008 to volunteer.

Voting Rights

Get Involved! Our campaign needs volunteers to: Improve our Voting Rights webpage. Help with redistricting based on the 2010 Census and felon enfranchisement issues. Help MUUSJA with its three GA programs. Contact Jenny Thomas jjt@jjthomas.net or Carol Johnson (612-825-3322)

AUW RETREAT: The Journey ... Together

Eager to Register for the AUW Retreat?

Registration for the AUW Retreat (April 9 - 11) begins Sunday, Feb. 7 and closes Sunday, Feb. 28. Sign up at the AUW Table in the Social Hall or on-line at our AUW Website. Space is sure to fill up fast, so register early. Who would want to miss "The Journey . . . Together" and folksinger Ann Reed as keynote?



JOIN!

*Every long journey begins with
small steps.*

--Ann Reed

ANN REED

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

THE JOURNEY . . . TOGETHER

11TH ANNUAL AUW RETREAT

APRIL 9 - 11, 2010

Registration February 7 - 28, 2010

See AUW website, www.1uauw.org for details.



For the latest retreat information and to get started on the journey, click [here](#)

Portrait of Two of the Many Friendship Groups



Unnamed Group: Our friendship group has been meeting since the first round of groups was organized four years ago. Originally eight, two women dropped out in the first few weeks. Our group then ranged in age from the 20s to the 60s. We are Lesbian and straight, married and single, vegetarian and meat eating. Sadly, our 20-Something went into the Peace Corp after two years and the median age of the group went up considerably. We have bonded intensely through divorces, the deaths of significant people, big birthdays and both serious and silly times together. We choose a topic each month for discussion the following month. It is great to have a monthly opportunity to catch up on the lives of four very interesting women. But the intention to explore our personal spiritual journey with other women also engaged in a spiritual quest makes this group special and different from other casual get-togethers with friends. I hope these women are part of my life for many, many years to come. The members are Suzanne Willhite, Nancy McCall, Jill Anderson, Kathy Urberg, and Mary Melia. ~ Kathy Urberg

We lovingly refer to ourselves as the **Tuesday Night Church Ladies** and have been together for 3 years now. In the beginning we didn't really know each other and have journeyed as a group through some major issues in all of our lives. I know that on Church Ladies Night we will laugh, sometimes cry, catch up on each other's lives and enjoy a delicious meal. In short - I don't know what I would do without my "Church Ladies"!

We have some rituals.... We start each meal with a special blessing and close with singing "Go Now in Peace". A few days before each gathering someone sends out a "Thought Provoking Question" via email. Something to ponder, to let simmer and then to share our insights about. Sometimes the question is deeply spiritual, other questions may be seasonal, political or about personal growth. Members are Nora Whiteman, Kathy Coskran, Welcome Jerde, Sue Scott, Susan Mainzer, and Shirley Olson. ~ Nora Whiteman

Words to Ponder, brought to you by Jeni Klotz

For the Darkness

For the darkness of waiting
Of not knowing what is to come
Of staying ready and quiet and attentive,
We praise you, O God

For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you

For the darkness of staying loving
In which it is safe to surrender
To let go of our self-protection
And to stop holding back our desire,
We praise you, O God

For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you

For the darkness of choosing
when you give us the moment
to speak, to act, and change,
and we cannot know what we have set in motion,
but we still have to take the risk,
We praise you, O God

For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you

For the darkness of hoping
In a world which longs for you,
For the wrestling and laboring of all creation
For wholeness, and justice and freedom,

We praise you, O God

For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you

Litany

Adapted from the Anglican

prayed April 18, 1986

AUW Calendar 2009: February, March and More

February

11 Deadline for turning in registration for new friendship groups

19 Friday Get Connected: Film and discussion, *I Had An Abortion*, 6:30 to 9:30 pm in the Social Hall.

20 Mini Retreat: A workshop on Joy, 12 to 4 pm in the Social Hall.

21 New Friendship Groups Kick Off: 12:30-1:30 in the Chalice Room.

22 Women Who Read Book Group: Broken For You by Stephanie Kallos HOSTS: Everyone - in Church Social Hall/Library, RSVP via email or call Nancy Browne, 651-636-6002.

March

6 AUW/MUUSJA Voting Rights Campaign: 10:00 am - 12:00 noon, Room 206 at First Universalist

12 Friday Get Connected: Spiritual Progressives with Phillis Stenerson, from 7:00-9:00.

22 Women Who Read Book Group: Oryx and Crake, Margaret Atwood HOSTS: Nancy Browne, 1480 Applewood Ct. W, #121, 651-636-6002.

April

9 - 11 Annual AUW Retreat at Koinonia. Registration begins February 7.

26 Women Who Read Book Group: The Compassionate Carnivore, Catherine Friend HOSTS: Adele Hersey, 4412 Grimes, Mpls, 952-926-2486, co-host Helen Ellenbecker

The newsletter editor is Kathy Urberg. Email her at auw.firstuniv@gmail.com with "newsletter" in the subject line. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, please click "Safe Unsubscribe" at the bottom of this message.

To view the HTML version of this newsletter, please set your browser for HTML.