



## Volunteer Opportunity

### Help out at the Hub!

Help staff the Hub after each service. Work with a board member to provide information about AUW, upcoming events, membership and more. You sign up for only one service on any given Sunday. Look for sign-up at Hub in mid February. Volunteers need to start in March.

## Friday Get Connected

Friday Get Connected is an informal gathering to discuss thoughts and ideas, laugh, learn and have fun. We meet in the Library from 7- 9 pm. Light refreshments and childcare (on request) will be provided.

**March 2 'Start seeds outdoors now (yes, now!) using the "winter sowing" technique'.** Master Gardener Sue Schiess will explain how it works and which plants do best. You'll build a teeny-tiny cold frame



## From the Editor

Well I don't know what season it is anymore, so I'm just going with early Spring. Hopefully that doesn't mean we get snow in May. My cat Simon has finally

decided it might be okay to come out from under the comforter on my bed to lay in the occasional sun he finds on my living room floor.

AUW is shifting in to spring as well with the Spring Retreat coming up, the Good Friday march at Planned Parenthood and lots of involvement with Ascension Place. Look in this issue for a little history about the first spring retreat as well as how you can get involved with Ascension Place, the Voting Rights campaign, and the Reproductive Rights campaign.

The board is also looking for AUW members to help staff the Hub on Sundays.

Enjoy early spring or late winter. Whatever you choose to call it!

## Social Justice Campaigns: Voting Rights

Newcomers are encouraged to join our working group on Voting Rights. **We meet the 3rd Saturday of each month at First Universalist, Room 204, from 9-11 am.** So mark your calendar and join us when you can: 3/17, 4/21, 5/19, 6/16, 7/21, 8/18, 9/15, 10/20. (Call Jenny's cell if you can't get in the building 612-386-5724).

We are working to educate UUs and our community about the harm that would come from the proposal to require registered voters to present a state-issued photo ID, with their current address, when they vote. It would make it harder to vote for as many as 700,000 Minnesota voters without a current ID or who use Election Day Registration which may be eliminated. **It's a special burden on women who not only need a birth certificate**

and sow a seed or two.  
(Materials will be provided.)

**April 6 Come hear women artists whose work is on display in the Social Hall** talk about their art and their artistic process. They will talk about their journey as artists and explain what the pieces they have in the exhibit mean to them. Patricia Foulkes and Heidi Hoy are confirmed at this point.

**Questions?** Contact Judith Grittner at 612-839-2280 or [judithgrittner@mac.com](mailto:judithgrittner@mac.com) RSVP is not necessary. Just come!

**but may also need marriage and/or divorce papers to get a State ID.**

Stop by the HUB on Sundays to get literature and a button, "I Oppose Voter ID" (suggested donation of \$1 to fund printing more buttons). Wear it on your lapel to invite discussion and help educate others about the issue. This harmful measure will be stopped one conversation at a time. You can make the difference. Please note: A UW/MUUSJA was a state leader in demonstrating a Photo ID is unnecessary in a report published in November, 2010 that showed cases of ineligible voting are non-existent for voter impersonation, the only issue a photo ID could prevent. While not needed to secure our elections, a Voter ID would make it much harder to vote for the more than 11% of citizens who don't have a current Minnesota State ID with their current address. FFY: Carol Johnson 612-825-3322 or Jenny Thomas [jjewell.thomas@gmail.com](mailto:jjewell.thomas@gmail.com)

## Social Justice Campaigns: Reproductive Rights

On Feb 10th 35 people attended the Reproductive Rights Intergenerational film night and watched The Fragile Promise of Choice. Cathy Pernu shared with the group that currently reproductive rights are being taken away in some states. Rev Kelli Clement gave a blessing and also words of encouragement to keep working to fight any further erosion to reproductive choice and that this issue is also an issue of faith. **A UW would like to have a strong presence at the Good Friday pro-choice march at Planned Parenthood on April 6.** If you are interested in car pooling from church to march from 10am-12pm call Cathy Apostle 952-941-0642. Plan on leaving church at 9:30. More info at <https://secure.ppaction.org/site/advocacy>.

## Ascension Place



A UW has a long history of supporting women's services in the larger community. Recently, we have become more active with Ascension Place, a unique organization that provides emergency shelter for women and their children, transitional housing for women, and permanent supportive housing for women who face barriers of mental illness, chemical dependency and domestic violence. Nancy McCall, long-time A UW member, serves on the

Ascension Place board, and helped us learn more about the outstanding services AP provides.

**Ascension Place has welcomed our involvement and our connection with them has been mutually**

**exciting and gratifying.** The list of our projects with AP continues to expand, but here are a few of the ways we have worked together:

1. Painted rooms at Ascension Place and Next Step Housing -- part of our Day of Service.
2. Collected cleaning and household supplies for Next Step Housing.
3. Organized furniture donation for Next Step Housing.
4. Organized a Mother/Daughter project and donated flowerpots and plants.
5. Provided a "massive amount" (Ascension Place's words!) of work around the Ascension House building, trimming, pruning, weeding, and planting.
6. Provided "tons" (again, AP's description) of stocking stuffers, toys, and books for the kids at Ascension Place.
7. Collected much-needed women's winter coats and boots for AP residents.

**We've asked Ascension Place to give us more ideas about how we can be of service. We (as an organization, or individually) could help them with any of the following:**

1. Serve as a host for the monthly resident birthday parties, with all supplies provided by AP. (Day or evening)
2. Work in the AP "Mall," helping sort and organize clothing donations so residents are able to "shop" among the donations.
3. Organize additional supply drives. For example, in the warmer months, donations of children's swimsuits are much needed. Twin sheet sets, deodorant, towels and washcloths, and women's and children's underwear are always in short supply.
4. Become a tutor, working one hour/week, mentoring an individual child. (A six-month commitment is required.)

Won't you consider joining many A UW members in our continuing support of Ascension Place? It is a great opportunity to make a real difference in our community, to help the A UW mission for community service flourish, and to work side by side with A UW sisters.

Please contact Evelyn Browne, [ewbrowne@aol.com](mailto:ewbrowne@aol.com) or Tracy Yue, [tkstyutu@gmail.com](mailto:tkstyutu@gmail.com) for more information.

### **Day of Service**

We had an energetic team of about ten volunteers paint the main community room and the two telephone booths at Ascension Place as part of our Day of Service. We covered over some really ugly old and chipped paint, and brought new life to the rooms. Feedback from the residents was that the new look was quite lovely. Many thanks to our volunteers!

## **The First A UW Women's Retreat: A Little History**



The upcoming Retreat on April 13-15 is our 13th! During the first few years, no one imagined it would continue, let alone grow to become the most anticipated weekend of the year. Here is a remembrance from long-time A UW member Mary Junge about the 'birth' of our beloved Retreat tradition:

In the fall of 1999, the then-current president of the A UW board, Janet Keysser, recruited a small group of women to start dreaming. Our group of seven began gathering almost weekly.

What would it be like, we wondered, if we could be a part of a women-only, woman-led gathering for even a couple of days, away from our harried lives? What would it be like if we could be still

enough to listen to our deepest wants and needs? What would it be like to listen to wise women speak to us? What would it be like to encourage and nurture each other?

It seemed risky in so many ways. There was a very real financial risk for the AUW board -- for example if we did not get enough registrants, we would still have to pay for our reservation at Koinonia Retreat Center. There was the risk of not foreseeing what would be needed. There was the risk that the women we were hoping to serve would not like the programs planned. What if we did not plan well, or failed in logistics?

There were no great leaps for our planning group but there was a series of small leaps- from one hope to the next. Each week another detail was raised and discussed and handled. We discussed what a keynote speaker might do for us, and recruited the Rev. Dillman Sorrells from Rochester, plus three chaplains, too: Mary Samuels, Shelley Dugan, and Roberta Haskins.

At some point AUW was awarded a grant of which some of the funds could be used to subsidize the first women's retreat. With a lower registration fee, women began signing up to attend.

Though our doubts remained, we kept meeting and planning right up to the retreat on April 30, 2000.

The first retreat was a grand success, though never without problems. Like a yogurt starter culture, the next planning committee could draw whatever they needed and create a new retreat experience for the next year. The retreat in 2001 was even better than the first, and with each year new wonders have emerged (and new problems, too, of course). It goes on and on and on.

**Now we are coming around to our 13th retreat. Look what can come from dreaming.**



## Words to Ponder

Consider the life of trees.

Aside from the axe, what trees acquire from man is inconsiderable.

What man may acquire from trees is immeasurable.

From their mute forms there flows a poise, in silence,  
a lovely sound and motion in response to wind.

What peace comes to those aware of the voice and bearing of trees!

Trees do not scream for attention.

A tree, a rock, has no pretence, only a real growth out of itself,  
in close communion with the universal spirit.

A tree retains a deep serenity.

It establishes in the earth not only its root system but also  
those roots of its beauty and its unknown consciousness.

Sometimes one may sense a glimmer of that consciousness, and with such perspective, feel that man is not necessarily the highest form of life.

~ Cedric Wright

## Calendar

### March

**2** Friday Get Connected: 7-9pm in the Library: Start seeds outside now using the "Winter Sowing" technique

**17** Voting rights working group 9-11am. First Universalist room 204

**22** Women Who Read: 1pm in Church Library: **Room** by Emma Donoghue.

**26** Women Who Read: 6:30pm. **Room** by Emma Donoghue: Hosts, Liz Permar and Carol Gilbert: 7340 Fremont Ave., Minneapolis 612-869-2756. **Potluck. Please RSVP so the hosts know how many to expect.**

### April

**6** Good Friday Pro-Choice march at Planned Parenthood

**13-15** Spring Retreat: Koinonia Retreat Center

**19** Women Who Read: 1pm in Church Library: **A Gate at the Stairs** by Laurie Moore

**21** Voting Rights working group 9-11am. First Universalist room 204

**23** Women Who Read: 6:30pm. **A Gate at the Stairs** by Laurie Moore: Hosts, Adele Hersey and Suzann Willhite: 4412 Grimes Ave S Minneapolis 952-926-2486. **Potluck. Please RSVP so the hosts know how many to expect.**