



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

Association of Universalist Women

Meet Member Mary Djerf



Mary was definitely on the cutting edge of the story, "Married woman gets educated and affects countless lives besides those of her family." Mary always wanted to be a teacher. In Duluth she was fourth in her large high school senior class, and attended the Duluth Teachers' college for a year. In later years, as a graduate of the University of Minnesota, she made Phi Beta Kappa. Along the way

March 2010: From the Editor

Kathy Urberg



It's March, the icicles are melting, and the seed catalogs are arriving. By the end of the month spring will officially have arrived. Think Spring!!

WOW! The AUW Spring Retreat filled up just a little more than a week after registration started. A waiting list has been started because there are always a few women who need to cancel at the last minute. You can put your name on the waiting list by going to the AUW website and clicking on the retreat page. If you have registered and find that you cannot attend, please email Suzann Willhite at s.willhite@yahoo.com by April 1 for a full refund.

AUW Friendship Groups connect women of the church with each other in groups that often develop into a supportive network of women that also have fun together. Not every group works. Some disband after the initial 8 - week commitment, while others have been meeting since the groups first started four years ago. Carol Gilbert, in her advice to the two new friendship groups that just started, said that her first two friendship groups had not worked out, but the third time was the charm. Her advice was not to give up. If the first or second group doesn't work, keep joining and trying.

Friday Get Connected

March 12:

This event is open to all. Phyllis Stenerson will lead a discussion

she married, raised Carol and Craig, found interesting jobs at the University and did substitute teaching at Richfield High School. Taking advanced classes in reading allowed her to teach Reading/Study Skills at Normandale Community College. Her minor in counseling was helpful when she developed the workshop "Changing Horizons" for adults who were facing changes in their lives.

She and husband Harold Djerf avidly pursued dance classes and motor-home trips. She gives high praise to Harold for his positive support in their life together. Mary's quest for a church home that felt right brought them to First Universalist in 1968. Church members in zip code 55423 formed a friendship group. When the church moved to DuPont, this Daytimers Group served as a support group for those who had strong attachments to the Girard church.

Mary is now part of the

on her work-in-progress, whose working title is "Believe We Can Transform America - a framework for developing and communicating a progressive narrative to tell America's story of inclusion, justice and opportunity for all and sustainability for our planet." Phyllis has expanded on her work in the Spiritual Progressive movement to develop a framework for study, dialogue and action on some very big questions of our time: What does democracy in America really mean? What will the world be like for our grandchildren? No answers or solutions, but lots of food for thought and conversation. This framework is intended to be a tool for vibrant citizen participation in democracy. Information, including the framework along with articles, excerpts and quotations illuminating components of the framework, are posted online at www.ProgressiveValues.org with links in the left column. Phyllis has long been involved with the Spiritual Progressive movement.

The group will meet from 7:00-9:00 pm in the church library. 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 due to the annual Spring Retreat on April 9-11.

May 14: We will discuss the book "Committed" by Elizabeth Gilbert, author of "Eat, Pray, Love". The meeting is from 7:00-9:00 pm in the Library. Light refreshments will be served. For questions, call Jeni Klotz at 612-721-1483 or email jklotz1@cs.com.

The book is new and available only in hard cover. Reserve a copy of the book at your favorite library soon.

team that folds the Liberal. She visits her second husband Don Wilson at the care center each day, and they read his memory book composed of his World War II letters. Carol and her family live nearby, and Mary's days are filled with her many interests. It seems right that the beautiful view of Wood Lake is hers each day for she has brought the beauty of friendship to so many.

Help Wanted

Volunteer for the Retreat

If you are coming to the retreat, 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

Mini-Retreat



Belly dancing, drumming, and writing helped thirty-one women find joy on a bright Saturday in February. Karen Herring, the literary minister at Unity Church in St. Paul, gave the keynote address at the mini-retreat. She talked about finding joy and possible sources of joy in our lives. She then asked us to write down the things we do, or think we might want to do, to put more joy in our lives. We then wrote or danced or drummed

for 90 minutes. When we gathered again to close, we each lit a candle at the front and spoke briefly about something that gave us great joy. Occasions for joy are all around us, if we look for them.

AUW RETREAT: The Journey ... Together

Thank you to all who signed up to come to the 2010 The AUW Retreat.

Registration is now closed. It's time to get ready for the Journey . . . Together.

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)

Save the Date

May 1: Mother Daughter Banquet

May 21, AUW Annual Meeting



THE JOURNEY . . . TOGETHER

11TH ANNUAL AUW RETREAT

APRIL 9 - 11, 2010

Registration February 7 - 28, 2010
See AUW website, www.1uauw.org for details.



JOIN!

Every long journey begins with small steps.
--Ann Reed

ANN REED

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Need to cancel your Retreat Registration? We will miss you, but please let us know of your cancellation by April 1 to receive a full refund. Email Suzann Willhite at s.willhite@yahoo.com

Social Justice Campaigns

Social Justice

AUW has long supported three priorities for programming: community building, spiritual practices and social justice. After celebrating AUW's centennial in 2005, the board launched a careful evaluation of social justice priorities to support going forward. Two priorities emerged with widespread support, Reproductive Rights and Voting Rights.

Voting Rights

History of the group: The 2004-2005 celebration of AUW's first hundred years featured many leaders in woman's 72-year struggle for suffrage, finally achieved in 1920. Alarming voter suppression and irregularities in the elections of 2000 and 2004 made us fear the right to vote was in jeopardy for many Americans. We said, "Not on our watch" and launched a group working to restore confidence in our election systems. Because Minnesota elections are the gold standard for the nation, we have partnered with UU State Advocacy Networks, including MUUSJA, to work regionally and nationally to educate and encourage action by UU's to improve election systems at the state and federal level. We focus on two priorities:

- Protect the right and access to voting for all citizens.
- Ensure that votes cast are counted and reported accurately.

Our accomplishments include passing a Responsive Resolution at the 2007 UUA General Assembly (GA) and an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) at the 2009 GA, increasing awareness and urging national action on election reform. We have also held workshops at the 2009 GA and at the 2007 and 2008 Prairie Star District meetings, and numerous educational programs around the metro area. We hope Congress will soon take action on pending legislation supported in our AIW.

Please join us for our workshop at the 2009 General Assembly in Minneapolis, on Thursday, June 24, 4:30 - 5:45 pm: *Honoring the Inherent Worth of Voters for 36 Years*. Hear from Unitarian Universalist Secretary of State, Mark Ritchie, how Minnesota has successfully used election-day voter registration since 1974 to help achieve the nation's highest voter turnout. In Presidential election years, 15-22% of voters register at the polls and the Senate recount and the League of Women Voters Minnesota reaffirmed voter fraud is a myth.

Watch for an educational program this spring presenting facts and fiction regarding Photo ID for voters, likely to be a political issue in statewide campaigns this year.

Our next planning meeting will be held Saturday, March 6, 10:00 am-12:00 noon in Room 206 at First Universalist Church. Newcomers are welcome. FFI: Jennifer Jewell Thomas jjt@jjthomas.net or Carol Johnson 612-825-3322.

Reproductive Justice: Sacred Choices

The AUW Reproductive Justice: Sacred Choices Campaign hosted 50+ attendees at the film and intergenerational discussion "I Had An

Abortion" February 19! Evaluations were positive and emphasized the need for more discussion among people of different sexes and ages around the spiritual implications of Choice.

If you missed that event, another way to support the campaign is by attending **ProChoice Lobby Day** at the MN Capitol on Thursday, March 4.

We know that teen pregnancy and teen STD rates have been rising after a short respite.

We know that funding for Family Planning Services that serves 27,000 low-income MN women annually will be seriously limited by Gov. Pawlenty's proposed 20% cut. Did you know that for every \$1 spent on family planning, the state saves \$5.40? And healthy women contribute to healthy families and healthy communities.

So our job on Lobby Day will be to persuade our legislators to support a mandate for Comprehensive Sexuality Education in MN Schools and to support state financing for Family Planning Services for low income families. It, too, is the work of our church.

For more information and to register go to www.NARAL.org ProChoice Lobby Day 2010.

For carpooling from 1st U for the whole day OR just for the noon rally contact Cathy Apostle, 952-941-0642, caquilt51@aol.com.

Words to Ponder, *brought to you by Jeni Klotz*

When We Stumble and Find It

We all have our favorite themes,
the ones we say over and over
in a thousand different tongues.

Mine is the moment which
changed my life forever.
Not the one I planned for
or expected, but the one which simply
happened.

It could have been a revelation
speaking from a cloud of fire.
It could have been
a rare accomplishment, election
descending like a dove after
some many years.

It was none of these.
Merely a moment,
the one I keep returning to,
feeling along the wall for the
hidden latch
which will spring open
and reveal the undefined.

by Dorothy Walters.

AUW Calendar 2010: March through May

March

6: AUW/MUUSJA Voting Rights Campaign: 10:00 am - 12:00 noon, Room 206 at First Universalist. Newcomers are welcome. FFI: Jennifer Jewell Thomas jjt@jjthomas.net or Carol Johnson 612-825-3322.

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

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

April

9 - 11 Annual AUW Retreat at Koinonia.

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

May

1 Mother and Daughter Banquet

14 Friday Get Connected: Discussion of the book Committed by Elizabeth Gilbert from 7:00-9:00 pm in the library. Light refreshments will be served.

24 Women Who Read Book Group: Returning to My Mother's House, Gail Straub HOST: Ann Kay, 5120 Lee Way, Minnetonka, 952-934-7238, Co-host Dimi Karas

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.

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