

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of La Crosse Newsletter September, 2004

Sunday Services: Program at 10:00 AM Refreshments at 11:15 AM

Services Site: The Pump House 119 King Street

Fellowship Mailing Address: PO Box 2676, La Crosse, WI 54602-2676

Message Center: 608-796-9993

Web site: www.uulacrosse.org

Upcoming Programs: All services begin at 10:00 AM and meet at the Pump House.

First Service of the New Fellowship Year: September 12th: “Rock and Water

Ceremony”. Join us as we re-convene following our summer sojourns. Bring a rock or some water from a place near or far that holds meaning for you. **UUF Program Committee Chair Cindy Ericksen** will lead the service.

September 19th: Keeping Faith: Our

Liberal Religious Tradition. We all have faith in something. When we lose or question that faith, we can find meaning once again in tradition. As an evolving, “living tradition,” Unitarian Universalism offers values, practices, and customs that can bring great meaning to our lives. **Fellowship member Eric Severson** will help us look at our liberal religious tradition and how it can help transform our world and ourselves. **Note: There will be a fire drill following this service—see page 6 for details.**

September 26th: “The Moral and Ethical Issues of Dealing with Prisoners of War”

Professor Richard Kyte, Director, D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership at Viterbo University, will address the following issue: “A nation that claims to base its practices on Christian values must take seriously the Biblical injunction to “love one’s enemies”. What is the practical significance of that injunction for our society today as we engage in struggles over religious and political ideologies?”

October 3rd: “A Meditation on Generosity” The Reverend Dean Staffanson, **UU Community Minister,** will lead this service. The Reverend Staffanson writes: “What does the fellowship mean to us, and how do we support it? My message today will be informed by the 12th Century wisdom of Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (Rambam), whose eight-step Ladder of Charity charts an elegant system of giving ‘with compassion and common sense’—and shows us what giving can give us in return. I will be drawing from the text, Rambam’s Ladder—A Meditation on Generosity and Why It is Necessary to Give by Julie Salamon.

Message from Board President Bob Huff:

“Members and friends of the Fellowship, please mark your calendars now for the “Celebrating Our Abundant Gifts” luncheon scheduled after our October 3rd program from 11:10 AM to 1:01 PM. Come prepared to enjoy some fun skits, songs, camaraderie, and great food while we express our appreciation for each other and our wonderful Fellowship. The program will be presented by Fellowship Members **Kathy Schnitzius, Madeline Kepner, Kim Cobb, Ann Beechler, Becky Post, Cindy Ericksen, others to be named later, and myself.** Dean Staffanson adds, “Let’s support this—because it is going to make a difference in our lives and in the community.”

Note: The next meeting of the Program Committee will be on September 12th following the service.



Music News

Below is the choir schedule for the next two months. Fall is always a good time to try something new, so if anyone has been wondering what it would be like to sing in the UU choir, try it out! If you need more information, call Becky Post at _____ or Eric Kraemer at _____.

Sunday, Sept. 19 -- Choir will sing "We Dare to Question." Rehearsal at 9:00 AM.

Wednesday, Sept. 22 -- Evening choir rehearsal at Pump House, 7:00 PM.

Sunday, Oct. 3 -- Choir will sing "This Little Light of Mine," "Every Time I Feel the Spirit," and "We Shall Not Give Up the Fight." Rehearsal at 9:00 AM.

Sunday, Oct. 17 -- Choir will sing "Though I may Speak with Bravest Fire." Rehearsal at 9:00 AM.

Wednesday, Oct. 27 -- Evening choir rehearsal at Pump House, 7:00 PM.

Religious Education News

Ann Beechler, DRE, & Kim Cobb, RE Chair

The fellowship board and RE committee have been working throughout the summer to plan a great year for our students. We have selected curriculum for the different classes, and are working on getting a wall built in the large room downstairs to create another classroom space.

The board has approved funding for a part-time Director of Religious Education (DRE) and I (Ann) am quite honored to have been hired for this position. The nature of the position is one of support for teachers, record organization, and communication with the fellowship.

The first change I have to announce is that our older students will be selling bagels this year after Sunday services to raise funds for field trips. We will no longer need a volunteer to bring a snack. The students will appreciate your support.

We will continue with the same groups for students as in the past: Caring & Sharing for infants through 1st grade, Acquiring for 2nd thru 5th graders, Inquiring for 6th thru 8th grades, and our High School group. We will have paid teachers each Sunday in the Caring & Sharing and Inquiring groups. The other groups are taught by volunteers from our fellowship. Please let Kim Cobb, the RE committee chair or myself know if you are interested

in working directly with our children. I will be sending a letter to families with students in the RE program, sharing with you more of the details of the plans for our program this year.

Our R.E. program has flourished throughout the years because of many long volunteer hours. The list of names is far too long to list. You all are appreciated.

Membership Committee News

Madeline Kepner, Chair

INVOLVEMENT FAIR:

Have fun at our Involvement Fair following the October 17th Sunday service. Each committee and activity will have a space to entice you to discover how you, too, can participate in the Fellowship. Prizes will be awarded for the best display and the best snack.

Remember that we have Joys and Sorrows forms either by the Sunday bulletins or at the Membership Table. Please help the Caregiver of the Month to be informed about members and friends who should be contacted so we can be a caring church family. Contact Madeline Kepner

Social Justice Column

A Personal Report on the Study/Action Issues Selection at the 2004 UUA General Assembly
Ray Starrett

In late June I had the good fortune of being able to attend two days of the UUA General Assembly. A highlight of that experience was participating in the Study/Action Issues (SAI) selection process. At each GA, the delegates select a single social justice related SAI from a pool of issues to be a subject of study and action for two years. This year's SAI will then be brought to the 2006 GA for consideration as a UU Statement of Conscience on the subject.

Three SAIs were presented with written and oral arguments for each. They were identified as: (1) Civil [same sex] Marriage Equality; (2) Oppression of Women Worldwide, and [the combined issues]; (3) Threat of Global Warming/ Stopping Mass [species] Extinction. Each of these issues has significant social justice ramifications. I had no voting instructions from our Fellowship, but I did have my conscience to follow and tried to do so.

Social Justice Column—Ray Starrett (continued)

Most of the information and arguments presented regarding each issue were familiar to me, and they would be to most of you. I'll not try to duplicate much of that. Copies of the arguments can be found online at www.uua.org/ga. What I will do is present an overview of how I evaluated these issues.

The aspects of each SAI to which I gave primary attention were: the number of people most directly affected, the detrimental effects on those people, the degree of responsibility UUs might have for the problem, the probability that UU study and action would make a significant difference, and the detrimental consequences of non-action. Below is a brief summary (with some hindsight) of how I tried to apply these aspects to each SAI.

1. Civil Marriage Equality:

The number of people who would be directly affected by the issue of same sex marriage in the US is not large. Of course, the relative number directly involved in this issue does not make it just nor minimizing the detrimental effects caused by the lack of equal opportunity for marriage. While not generally life threatening, one can find examples of people with health problems being in a life-threatening situation for lack of health insurance that would have been available through a marriage partner. Because this issue is currently a "hot" topic, it would seem that UUs have a particular opportunity to make a significant contribution to current legal and opinion battles. For a religious organization to emphasize the arguments that identify marriage as a civil institution in contrast to a religious doctrine are both much needed and should make a difference in establishing legal equality.

2. Oppression of Women Worldwide:

The oppression of women in most first world and some second world countries has been substantially reduced in recent years. But still, the oppression of women in much of the world has changed little, even in some countries with women's rights laws on their books. Thus, there are literally millions of women living in deprived, humiliating, life threatening conditions. The situation is all the more sad because those developing countries where women's rights and opportunities for education, economic participation, and political expression are protected do tend to improve living conditions for all of the population. The UU voice in this issue would be a significant addition to the many voices around the world arguing for equal rights for women. However, that voice is still often viewed as that of an "outsider" critical of local social customs. It would help if UUs and others were able to persuade our government to provide, instead of withholding, funds for women's health care and contraceptives.

3. Threat of Global Warming and Stopping Mass [species] Extinction: The life-threatening effect of global warming is truly global and massive to humans and other species. While the loss of life on a massive scale is not imminent, I believe that time is approaching. With a substantial portion of humanity already without clean water and severely malnourished, even minor disruptions in the lives of the impoverished due to local flooding or extended drought brings about the loss of lives. And, two of the major life threatening effects associated with global warming predictions threaten water and food supplies. Coastal flooding is expected due to ocean levels rising, which contaminates local wells and crop lands, and displaces people from their homes. Also expected is markedly increased decertification due to drought and increased agriculture pumping, which will exacerbate the ground water depletion already underway in many areas of the world. The loss of crop land will drive desperate attempts to maintain food production with additional fertilizer and irrigation. Poverty will become an increasingly important element in selecting the non-survivors, as they will not be able to afford the escalating costs of diminishing resources. In a similar vein, other species in direct competition with humans for survival will be at increasingly high risks of extinction.

Considering causative responsibility for the given situation in each of the three SAIs, it seems to me that American UUs have contributed relatively more to the problem of global warming than to either of the other SAI. I suspect that most UUs consumption habits are typically American, and thus to be counted with the greatest per capita greenhouse gases contributors in the world. That behavior pattern is a negative, but it also gives us more control and more responsibility for study and for action. I have some thoughts about significant action, but I will save them for another time. I believe that a failure to act on global warming puts life on our planet in considerably more danger than either of the other two SAIs. But at the same time, I acknowledge the other SAIs as important and am glad they are also getting needed attention.

I cast the UU La Crosse Fellowship vote in support of the Global Warming/Mass Extinction SAI. That issue was selected as the 2004 SAI in the second round of voting with 540 votes to 456 votes for Civil Marriage Equality.

Note: The next Social Justice Committee meeting will be on Sunday, September 19th following the service.

Midwest Leadership School

Jean Novack, Secretary

Kim Cobb, Chair of RE Committee

At Midwest Leadership School, we were informed and inspired in a variety of ways designed to increase our effectiveness as leaders of our community. For 29 years there has been a Leadership School sponsored by three Midwest UU districts, including Central Midwest. We attended the first of two summer 2004 camps, housed at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin.

We joined 22 other participants from eight states and a nine-member staff, six of whom were unpaid volunteers from previous summer camps. The participants represented a wide variety of personalities and beliefs, including at least one with "a personal God" and one who "never attends church services". Ages ranged from mid-twenties to about 80, predominantly female (17 to 7), with a variety of positions in their churches - committee chairs, RE directors, current and pending officers. A few were from very small churches (50 or fewer members) often referred to as fellowships, many from intermediate-sized churches and several from somewhat larger ones.

Scheduled activities ran from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM with a two hour break (often used for "homework") from 1:00 to 3:00. All participants were expected to appear at all activities. During class times, we had getting acquainted/energizing activities, and lectures about UU practices, UU history, UU principles, theology, personality style preferences that may influence group interactions, principles of conflict management, and feedback from small group activities.

We were assigned to three small groups, each with four to six members and a staff advisor/observer. We met daily with our OD/ Organizational Development and Credo groups, and for a brief intensive day with our Worship group.

In the OD (Organizational Development) group we had different assignments each day. For example, on one day each member donated \$10 (real cash) and proposed a recipient; the group then decided which recipient would get the money and arranged to deliver it. In Jean's group, suggested recipients were the Heifer Project, Villa Anita in Mexico, the Candella project in Mexico, FINCA (makes loans available to single mothers starting a business), the starving people in Sudan, and a Venezuela project that provides vitamins directly to pregnant mothers to prevent cleft palate. The Venezuela project won with our \$60 providing over \$1200 worth of vitamins. Other OD

sessions included deciding how to deal with "Jane the Pain" (a disruptive congregation member), and preparing a skit for presentation at the final evening's social hour that illustrated the week overall.

One of the crucial components for each of these daily meetings was the process debriefing, led by a faculty observer. The observer noted instances of positive behaviors (listening, taking turns, validating contributions of other members) and absence of negative behaviors (like talking over, interrupting, ridiculing, rushing to evaluation). Each participant had the opportunity to reflect on how they felt about the decision making process. We were also able to observe how different Myers-Briggs personality types influenced group dynamics.

The Credo Group was designed to help us articulate and share the beliefs that guide our decisions. We were given homework assignments at the end of each evening gathering to guide our thinking for the next day. These assignments were really a series of "questions" to be discussed within the group; e.g., to describe a profound religious experience, to share the guidelines by which you lead your life, and to select up to eight people (preferably UUs) to a dinner party at your house. At the end of each Credo Group, a process evaluation was carried out, similar to that used in the OD group. An additional challenge for each Credo Group was to provide the refreshments for one of the evening social hours.

We had worship services every evening. The staff presented the opening and closing services, which focused on moving rituals of entering and leaving this special community. For other services, four students were identified around 5:00 PM and challenged to present a service the following evening. The groups came up with a wonderful variety of services, all using the same space in creative ways. All involved substantial participant/ congregation participation - including the creation of a real maypole dance. Themes included new beginnings, loss, joy, thankfulness for daily blessings, takeaway learning from leadership school, and the obligations of gratitude. Each service was critiqued the following morning, with due attention to the processes used in creating the service, feelings of those who presented the service, and responses from the congregation.

We are thankful that our congregation is committed to supporting its leaders through funding this kind of learning experience.

AdventUUrers News:

Liz Spangler

Mark your calendars for the soup, sandwich, & cinema nights at Franciscan Spirituality Center:

- * Sept. 16th. "Strangers in Good Company"
- * October 21st. "Winged Migration"
- * November 18th. "Raise the Red Lantern" and
- * December 16th. "Kandahar"

Please call ahead if you plan to partake in the 5:30 PM meal. The fee of \$6.00 is for the soup & sandwich.

We often go to the plays at the Toland Theater on the UW-L campus. Madeline Kepner is in charge of tickets for these. In the past, we have watched bird migration at Reiks Lake near Alma, Wisconsin, rode the huge merry-go-round in Kellogg, Minnesota, enjoyed a sleigh ride and supper at the Black Oak tavern near Stevenstown Wisconsin, toured the botanical gardens in Madison, Wisconsin, and viewed the Villa Louis in Prairie du Chen. We have also gone to plays at the La Crosse Community Theater and in Lanesboro, Minnesota.

We invite you to offer suggestions for AdventUUrers outings. This group is for all ages. We invite our new people especially to join us. It is a good chance to get to know one another. Call Liz S for information and for ideas for activities. Liz Spangler, or e-mail

Covenant Groups

Bob Huff

Covenant groups are small relational groups that provide the opportunity for people to connect on a deeper level. The defining purpose of a Covenant Group is to bring people into the right relationship with each other. Each group and its facilitator will determine time, place and frequency of meeting. Groups consist of eight to ten people who will discuss topics that address issues such as living, dying, community, forgiveness, meditation, spirituality, UUism, etc...

Groups open with a reading from UU source, a check-in for folks to share what's going on with them, a major activity or discussion, and a closing. There is a covenant of how to treat each other and the group agrees to do some service for the Fellowship or larger community annually. The group would meet from September/October to May.

If you have an interest in either attending a group or facilitating a group, please contact Bob Huff at

, or

Announcement from Program Committee Regarding Announcements, As Well As Joys and Sorrows

Cindy Ericksen, Chair

The Program Committee continues to work toward improving our Sunday services. This summer at our retreat, we looked at the various elements of the service and how each could be improved. One area that continues to be problematic is announcements. We feel that announcements are an important part of keeping everyone informed and building community. However, we also realize that when done during Joys and Sorrows, or at the end of a moving service, it can negatively impact the mood of the service. In consultation with the Board, we have developed a policy that we hope will meet all these needs.

Starting in September, the facilitator will make announcements while the collection basket is being passed around. Each week we will have time for two to three announcements. All announcements need to be sent to Greg ahead of time, to ensure that we do not have too many in any particular week. We would also like the announcements to be in the bulletin, so we encourage you to e-mail them to Greg by Wednesday night. Greg will make sure the facilitator has all the announcements prior to the service.

We have also realized that sometimes it is confusing whether something is a Joy or Sorrow or an announcement. Our consensus is that Joys and Sorrows are things that affect us personally. Sometime world events or actions of politicians affect us personally. On those occasions, we feel it is a Joy or Sorrow. On the other hand, if it is an announcement about a political rally or action, it is an announcement.

We hope this new policy will help all of us stay better connected and enjoy the service more. As always, feel free to offer your input to anyone on the committee.

Monthly Caregiver

The Caregiver sends cards and flowers to Fellowship members and friends as needed, and helps pass on the word if someone needs cheer or support. If you know of any member who is ill, has suffered a loss, or is having a rough time and could use cheering, please let the Caregiver know.

Caregiver for the month of September is Lisa Metz-Belzer. You can reach Lisa at
or phone

Newsletter News

Christopher Townsend

The beginning of a new program year seems like a good time to bring you up to date with what has been going on with this newsletter.

Since December of 2003, Ron Malzer has been helping with compiling and editing the newsletter. We started out on a trial basis, unsure what would be the best way for us to work together, but by now, we have worked out a system that allows us to work together. Under our new system, Ron will receive newsletter submissions, and edit and compile a near finished draft of the newsletter, when Ron has completed his work with the newsletter he will pass it on to me. I will do final proofreading and editing on the newsletter, add the calendar and "Contact us" pages, and make any last minute additions or changes that come in. I will continue to handle getting the newsletter photo copied and sending out the e-mail newsletters.

Since putting the newsletter together requires quite a bit of time concentrated in about a one-week period, having someone to split that work with is very helpful. Ron has also been very helpful in adding his ideas and energy at a time when my own energy for the newsletter was wearing down. A big advantage for the Fellowship in having two people involved with the newsletter at this level is the increased reliability in being able to publish the newsletter. For example through Ron's efforts, the newsletter stayed on schedule this summer despite a lengthy period of problems with my home computer.

The only real change members should experience is that from now on, they should send newsletter articles directly to Ron Malzer at

(Don't panic if you forget and something to me, I will forward it to Ron.) Comments or questions about the newsletter may be directed to either Ron or me, and of course, you should be sure to include Ron whenever you praise the newsletter.

I would also like to take this time to remind you of an alternative to receiving the paper version of the newsletter. The newsletter is sent out by e-mail as an attachment in PDF format for those members who request it. Receiving the newsletter by e-mail saves the Fellowship money by reducing photocopying and postage costs, and saves our volunteers some folding time. You get the newsletter sooner (usually on the Saturday before print newsletters are available at the fellowship) you can read the newsletter on screen, print part or all of it on the paper of your choice

(try saving scrap paper and printing it on the back). If photos are used in the newsletter they may be available in color in the e-mail version, and internet and e-mail addresses will usually be clickable in the e-mail newsletter. The e-mail newsletter always includes exactly the same articles as the print version. If you would prefer to receive the e-mail newsletter, subscribe by sending an e-mail to me at

A number of folks from outside the Fellowship have complimented our Fellowship's newsletter. It could not be as successful as it has been without our many member contributors who take the time to send articles, announcements, book reviews, or suggestions. Thanks to all of you for your contributions.

Fire Drill Planned

Jean Novack

Safety is a very important matter, so we will practice a fire drill on Sept. 19th. Please familiarize yourself with the exits and review procedures. **Do not** use elevators.

Please assist those who need help with stairs. Take the most direct route outside. Keep talking to a minimum and listen for instructions. An emergency procedures manual is available. It has diagrams on how to assist people who cannot walk.

People with children in religious education should go directly outside and meet in the north parking lot outside exit 2. Children are to remain with their RE instructor until all are accounted for before being released to their parent. Adults not meeting children are asked to meet in the west parking lot.

Make sure everyone you came with or sit near is accounted for. There are four people with two-way communicators to help locate missing people. Wait for the all clear signal before returning inside for refreshments.

Any questions? Contact Jean Novack, who is organizing this fire drill, at

Member Joys and Concerns

Our congratulations go out to **Wendy Mattison** on the recent birth of a grandchild and to **Dawn Hart** on the celebration of her 40th birthday.

We extend our deepest sympathy to **Ron Malzer** and family for the death of Ron's Uncle.

UUA News

UUA President Sinkford Arrested while Protesting at Sudanese Embassy (Washington, DC -- August 26, 2004)

UUA President William Sinkford was arrested yesterday in front of the Sudanese Embassy in Washington, DC, as part of an ongoing protest against genocide in the Darfur region of western Sudan. The demonstration followed a special worship service at All Soul's Church, Unitarian. In his sermon, Rev. Sinkford said, "This is a day of conscience. We come to stand in solidarity with persons who are suffering, who are starving, who are dying, who are being raped...Although there are many things we cannot change, we can change what is happening in Sudan."

Among those arrested with Rev. Sinkford were actor/activist Danny Glover, TransAfrica Forum president Bill Fletcher, Salih Booker and Emira Woods, also from TransAfrica Forum. Thirty UUs from the Washington, DC area participated in the public demonstration, including about ten ministers. The August 25th embassy protest was part of the "Sudan: Day of Conscience" actions organized by the Save Darfur Coalition. In early August, the Rev. Sinkford was one of the initial signers of the Coalition's Unity Statement Sinkford urged congregations to get involved, saying, "If we can help our leaders understand the dimensions of what is unfolding in Darfur, thousands of lives can be saved."

For the complete story, including photographs of the demonstration, please visit the UUA home page at www.uua.org. For other useful information: Save Darfur Coalition: www.savedarfur.org; Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/darfur/>; and the United Nations News Center: <http://www.un.org/News/>.

UUSC News

International pressure is needed to end humanitarian disaster in Sudan

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is appalled at recent reports of ethnic cleansing in Darfur, Sudan against the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa peoples. The Sudanese government, backed by the Janjaweed Arab militia, has been accused of carrying out a systematic and deliberate campaign of terror against civilians in this western region of Sudan, on the border of Chad. The United Nations has described the current crisis in Darfur as "the world's greatest humanitarian disaster." For more information, including action items on what you can do to help, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article071604.html>

Support the growth of democracy in Burma

UUSC and its colleague organization, EarthRights International, have been working together to defend the Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA), a law which enables U.S. multinational corporations to be held accountable for the roles they have played in human rights violations in Burma and elsewhere around the world. On behalf of EarthRights, we are sending a message to our members and supporters about a way they can support democracy in Burma. By participating in an EarthRights Round-Up party, UUSC members and supporters can help EarthRights raise money for their lawsuit against U.S. company Unocal for abuses committed while constructing a gas pipeline in Burma, as well as for EarthRights' work to defend the ATCA.

For more information about the Round-Up program, visit <http://earthrights.org/sept20roundup>

India elections signal positive changes for UUSC partners

The stunning victory of the secular Congress party during recent elections in India dealt a blow to the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that was welcomed by all progressive and secular forces in the country.

UUSC's partners in India report that it will be liberating for the minorities and oppressed people with whom they work. In addition, voting in this surprising election was all done electronically—no small feat in the world's largest democracy.

To learn more about the recent elections in India, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article072904.html>

Open Eye Documentary Film Series Cathy Van Maren

Would you be interested in seeing some great documentaries, learning more about issues and being moved to action? I would like to have a nine-film subscription-paid monthly documentary series. When possible, a local non-profit will help lead an informal discussion after the film. Subscriptions would pay for cost of facility and film. If there is money left at the end of the series, subscribers would vote to distribute it among local and regional nonprofits that work on issues of peace, justice, environment and/or part would be set aside to fund small grants for local or regional documentary filmmakers. For more information, visit www.mwt.net/~cvmaren/index.htm or, e-mail: cvmaren@mwt.net.

The Seven Principles and Living Traditions of the Unitarian Universalist Association

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- ◆ The inherent dignity and worth of every person;
- ◆ Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- ◆ Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- ◆ A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- ◆ The rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- ◆ The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- ◆ Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspire us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanistic teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;

Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

