



The Wy'east Beacon

A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Whoever you are,
Wherever you come from,
You are welcome here.

[Wy'East' — Ancient name for Mount Hood]

March 2008

Reveries ♦ ♦ ♦ By Rev. Susan Maginn

“Something exciting is happening around here! ...You!” That’s how I opened a recent letter to 12 newcomers to Wy’east who are becoming members on April 6th. But I realize this message is relevant for all of us, so I’d like to share the highlights:

Becoming a member at Wy’east is as simple as signing the membership book, but we believe that becoming part of a spiritual community is anything but simple. It is a life changing experience for you—and for Wy’east. Expectations of membership:

1. **Have a spiritual practice.** Something that you do regularly that cultivates who you are as a spiritual being. A spiritual practice can be many things, ideally something that inspires and grounds you, connecting you with the holy and sacred as you experience it.
2. **Pledge a monthly amount to support Wy’east.** Our Treasurer (Joanne Foulkrod) or Rev. Maginn can give you a pledge card. You can arrange bill pay through your bank, write a monthly check, or set up automatic withdrawal—whatever works for you. What we do at Wy’east is a collective effort. We don’t get funding from a district or national UU organization. Whatever happens here happens because we make it happen.
3. **Be of service to the Wy’east community.** Let’s find something that excites and challenges your own spiritual development. You can share something you already know how to do really well (music, finances, cooking, teaching, newsletter), or you can try something that is totally new to you. What are *your* dreams for Wy’east?
4. **Be of service to the wider world.** Awakening to the world around us is a central part of living a spiritual life. See how your life can witness to and even shape the concerns of the world around you.

Before you become a member at Wy’east, we want you to have three conversations, either in one-on-one meetings with Rev. Maginn or in a **New UU class** (next one is set for **March 8th from 3-5 p.m.**), such as: 1) **A Getting to know you** conversation, sharing your own spiritual journey and what excites you about being a part of Wy’east, 2) **UU History**, and 3) **Wy’east History and Organization**. On April 6th, we will have our spring **New Member Ceremony**. There will be a reception before the worship service, at 4:00 p.m., where new members will sign the book. We can’t wait to officially welcome you to Wy’east!

Susan

What’s Inside?

Annual Canvass
Dinner

... Page 2...

Easter Hunt!

...Page 3...

Spirit in Practice
Class

...Page 4...

Book Group

...Page 6...

Job Openings

...Page 6...

Sunday Services

...Page 9...



From the Board

Open the Doors

It's a funny thing about open doors, not only do they let people in, but they let people out too. For all the years I've been a Unitarian Universalist (and that's quite a few!) I have been listening to conversations about letting people into our congregations. How can we be more visible in our communities? How can we be more welcoming? How can we be more effective at keeping people coming through our doors after their first visit—or after their third or twenty-third? These are important conversations. I believe that Wy'east is pretty good about making visitors welcome. The way we take care of each other shows in the way we welcome guests. We talk to newcomers; feed them; and genuinely invite them back.

We are not as good about moving in the other direction—out the doors into the community and the wider world. That's not to say we are bad at reaching out. Our special collections have been a great success and many of us contribute to and work for causes from stopping the genocide in Darfur to protecting the environment of Oregon. But we could do better *as a congregation*.

As I write this column in mid-February, the Committee on Ministry is hard at work on the question of how we, as a religious congregation, could be more present in our community. Hopefully you've been able to attend one of these dinners to discuss what we might undertake as a "mission project" next year. Do we feel called to work on education, the environment, homelessness, child abuse, or something else? The possibilities are endless, but we need to focus on one thing at a time.

The side effect of doing good outside our doors is that it will get *us* outside our doors, together, and away from the easy course of spending most of our time with people like us. Instead, we'll be put in contact with people unlike us with whom we may, however, share values and goals. What about that committed Evangelical Christian who

believes that God calls him or her to protect Oregon forests? What about the Buddhist who works at the homeless shelter? Or the Muslim who works in an after school program? Those might be interesting people to get to know.

This year the theme for our annual pledge drive is "Open The Doors." In addition to launching a mission project, here are some of the important things we can do with the money we raise: enhance our worship, music, and religious education programs; and provide fair compensation to our minister, religious education director, and an office staff person; along with ongoing items like rent, copying, and childcare.

Please help the Committee on Ministry come up with a mission project for next year. Then join us in singing "Enter, Rejoice, and Come In" at the Annual Dinner on Saturday, March 15th. And please pledge generously to help us keep the doors wide open for people to come in, and for us to step out, in the coming year.

Barbara S.-T.
Board Moderator ♦

Open the Doors: Wy'east's Annual Canvass Dinner!

Join us on Saturday, March 15th at 5:00 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall, downstairs at Waverly.

We'll eat, rejoice, and offer our financial pledges for the coming year. This is an intergenerational event—children are most welcome—as are friends of Wy'east who are not yet members!

Please RSVP to Mark A. by March 10th. This year side dishes will be potluck, but not completely random, so please let Mark know what you'd like to bring. Main dishes are provided, so also tell Mark if you have any dietary restrictions.

It will be wonderful to celebrate together and to look ahead to another exciting year at Wy'east!

LRE

Lifespan Religious Education



Things are going really well for Religious Education at Wy'east. We have thriving classes with more children joining all the time. We have dedicated and enthusiastic teachers, and a congregation that appreciates its young people and includes them in worship every week. I am thrilled to announce that we also have a new RE committee with participants eager to be involved in maintaining and expanding a great program. We have several new members and new member education that Rev. Susan Maginn is leading, and a ten-week adult RE class called Spirit In Practice that will begin this month.

In the midst of all this good and exciting news, I also need to let you know that another change is on the way—I will be leaving in June. (The board of Wy'east is already beginning the search for a new Director of Religious Education (DRE), who should be on the job before next fall.) Many of the long time folks at Wy'east know that I became your DRE as a way of fulfilling my praxis requirements for ministry. My praxis will be done in June, and new challenges await me.

I have greatly enjoyed my time here working with the children and youth. You have welcomed me into your congregational family, and helped affirm my ministerial path. I have been able to enter into a new role here, as a ministerial student, practicing working with volunteers, teaching children and youth, and creating and leading intergenerational and adult worship services and rites of passage. You have been so affirming and welcoming to me and that has been an incredible gift. I have learned so much from you—about leading worship, about

religious education, and about the dynamics of a small and growing congregation. I hope to come back and do pulpit supply for you some time and will enjoy seeing this first congregation in which I was able to practice the identity of a ministerial student. I have learned much from you, and from your children.

As the time gets closer, I will be talking with the children about my leaving, and we will have a party in June to celebrate and say good-bye. The analogy I am using is that of a kindergarten teacher. My job was to be with them this year, and now it's time for them to learn from someone else. They get to go on together, while someone else comes in to teach them.

Speaking of teaching, please let me know if you are interested in teaching next year. We are blessed in that at least two of our teachers from this year will be continuing. No one will have to teach every week—we'll make sure you get to attend adult worship! But teaching our kids is one of the best things you can do for your own spiritual development and learning. The joy and love you receive is boundless. I know; I have been richly blessed.

Faithfully,

Marcia Stanard
Director of Religious Education ♦

Easter Canned Food Hunt!

On Easter Sunday, the children will be searching for cans of food, which we will donate to the Oregon Food Bank. Please bring in several cans of food by March 16th, so we can hide them before the Easter hunt the following week!

You can place your donations in the basket at the entrance to the sanctuary (where we put our ingredients for the soup Sunday each month).

“Spirit in Practice” Class

Our new adult RE class, *Spirit in Practice*, will begin March 4th. Scheduled to run on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8:30 p.m., this class will give congregants a chance to look at their own spiritual practices and expand them as desired. We are part of a field-testing of this new Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) curriculum, and as such, will be able to provide useful feedback to the UUA.

The class will be 10 weeks long, taking a week off for spring break (on March 25th). Marcia Stanard, our DRE, is looking forward to talking with Wy'easters about the different dimensions of spiritual practice, and learning about new ways of incorporating them into one's daily life. Marcia took an intensive class on this subject at Meadville Lombard this January and co-led a popular workshop about it at the District's Annual Meeting.

The UUA Web site description of the class states, “Developed in response to many Unitarian Universalist adults' desire to engage in life-giving spiritual practices, the ten workshops of *Spirit in Practice* provide avenues for deepening spirituality and affirming spiritual growth in the congregation. Participants are invited to reflect, share, and grow together, exploring ways to nurture their connections with the sacred in everyday life.”

Drawing on a model developed by the Zen Mountain Monastery in Mount Tremper, New York, for the training of its students, *Spirit in Practice* focuses on eight spheres of holistic and wholehearted spiritual practices:

- Personal spiritual practices
- Communal worship practices
- Spiritual partnerships
- Mind practices
- Body practices
- Soul practices
- Life practices, and
- Justice practices.

Each week, we will examine one of these spheres through story, sharing, listening and experiential

learning. Marcia is excited to teach this new curriculum and is looking forward to working with congregants in this venture. Please contact her at church for more information. Her email is listed in the directory. ♦

Music Matters



An important element of my vision for the music program at Wy'east is to build community through music. Whether that happens by strengthening our connections with one another during congregational singing, developing closer relationships in an ensemble setting, or receiving the musical gifts offered by members of our congregation, music provides ties that bond.

Reaching out beyond the walls of our congregation is another component of community building. Last December, Gene T, the Wy'east Chamber Player's violist, arranged for the string quartet to play at Rose Villa Retirement Community, where he resides. This outing provided an excellent opportunity for the Chamber Players to have a dress rehearsal prior to the Christmas Eve service at Wy'east, and to enrich the lunchtime atmosphere in Rose Villa's main dining hall and in the health center.

The Wy'east Chamber Players were invited back on February 14th to provide music for the Rose Villa Valentine's Day Chocolate Fest. “Gene and his String Quartet” drew in a larger than expected crowd at Rose Villa that day. There is nothing like personal connections and music to melt the heart. Amongst ourselves, we joked that we were there for the chocolate, but truly it is the chance to nurture human connections using music as a means of expression that brings us together.

Linda Jo R.
Music Director ♦

Chalice Circles at Wy'east

Chalice circles are small groups of Wy'east members and friends who get together for meaningful conversations and to support each other. Groups tend to meet once a month and are open to all. The following small group ministries are currently active at Wy'east:

* **Men's Support Group**, led by Mikio O., meets on a Wednesday evening from 7:15-9:15 p.m. at Mikio's house. Contact Mikio for the March meeting date.

* **Saturday Afternoon Chalice Circle**, led by Debra T. at her house, usually meets on the first Saturday of the month from 1-3 p.m. Contact Debra for the next meeting date.

* **Parents' Chalice Circle**, led by Laura R., meets at Waverly on Saturday mornings from 10-noon, next on March 1st. Childcare is generally available at the church during the meeting.

* **Young Adults' Chalice Circle**, led by Elizabeth S., meets on Saturdays from 2-4 p.m. Contact Elizabeth for details. ♦

From Parents' Chalice Circle

At our February meeting, the group talked about unconditional love and how it relates to our roles as parents, partners, and friends. We also talked about unconditional love towards ourselves and for humanity. One of our readings was from Pema Chodron's book Comfortable with Uncertainty:

Growing Up

Learning how to be kind to ourselves is important. When we look into our own hearts and begin to discover what is confused and what is brilliant, what is bitter and what is sweet, it isn't just ourselves that we're discovering. We're discovering the universe. When we discover the Buddha that we are, we realize that everything and everyone is Buddha. We discover that everything is awake, and everyone is awake. Everything and

everyone is precious and whole and good. When we regard thoughts and emotions with humor and openness, that's how we perceive the universe.

This opening to the world begins to benefit ourselves and others simultaneously. The more we relate with others, the more quickly we discover where we're blocked. Seeing this is helpful, but it's also painful. Sometimes we use it as ammunition against ourselves: we aren't kind, we aren't honest, we aren't brave, and we might as well give up right now. But when we apply the instruction to be soft and nonjudgmental to whatever we see at this very moment, the embarrassing reflection in the mirror becomes our friend. We soften further and lighten up more, because we know it's the only way we can continue to work with others and be of any benefit to the world. This is the beginning of growing up. ♦

UU Adventures in Eating



Join us for our First Sunday Supper on March 2nd after the service. Please bring a potluck dish to share. March 9th is Second Sunday Soup. Bring a vegetable to church and drop it off in the basket by the entrance. Mark A. and Gina O. will use it to make a tasty vegetarian soup for all to enjoy after church. Bread, salad, appetizers, etc. are always welcome too. On March 16th after the service and social hour, we'll head out for a Restaurant Adventure, location to be announced. If you'd like to take part, please tell Tode O. that day. He'll get a count and call ahead so our table will be ready. ♦

Come Read a Book with Me:

Saving Erasmus by Steven Cleaver



We've all had days like this: Andrew Benoit is a recent seminary graduate, wondering what to do with his life. He heads off to a new town, Erasmus,

worried about what his future will bring. OK, here's where your own reality probably starts to diverge a bit: Benoit walks into a laundromat, and meets the Angel of Death, stumbling out of a washing machine. The Angel of Death says that in one week he must destroy the town Andrew is moving to, unless Andrew helps the town find its lost faith.

The fact that the town of Erasmus has only one coffee shop, which serves only instant coffee, might be justification enough (for some of us) to write it off, but the Angel of Death has other things up his sleeve, literally and figuratively.

Publishers' Weekly named Saving Erasmus one of the top 150 books of 2007. According to PW, "Cleaver's offbeat, whimsical debut novel crosses the prophet Job with *It's a Wonderful Life* and shakes up the whole notion of faith fiction." I would add that the author is a friend and former boss, Quaker seminary graduate, and generally interesting person with unique and humorous insights.

The book is a quick, energetic read, filled with quirky characters and quirky humor (including a Unitarian reference). Saving Erasmus asks important questions about what it means to have faith, then lose it, and then try to "find" it again. And if you do find faith again, will it be the same as before? Whether you are new to Unitarian Universalism or a lifelong UU, I think you will enjoy wrestling with the ideas in this story, but just as the Angel of Death doesn't render his verdict until the end, wait until you finish the story to pass final "judgment."

You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll wonder, "Who wrote this strange book?"

Meet me for discussion and stories about the author on Wednesday, April 2nd from 7:15 – 8:30 p.m. in Hyde Hall.

(Saving Erasmus is available at the Multnomah County Library and most bookstores.)

Karl A.
Board Vice Moderator ♦

Job Openings at Wy'east

In the months to come, we will say good-bye to Marcia Stanard (see her column on page 3) and celebrate her as she moves one step closer in the very demanding process of becoming a UU minister. We have plenty of time, but we are starting the process now of finding a new Director of Religious Education. The new DRE will work 10 hours per week, starting in August 2008. We are committed to hiring someone outside of Wy'east. Please spread the word.

We are also going to be hiring someone to handle the many office needs at Wy'east. This position will be 3 hours per week and will require knowledge of financial management and basic publishing. Please contact Rev. Maginn for more details. ♦

Save the Date Reminders

Sunday, **May 4** – **Informational Meeting**
and Conversation in Preparation for the
Annual Meeting (right after the service).

Sunday, **May 18** – **Annual Meeting**,
Election of Officers, Adoption of
Budget, etc. (right after the service).

Worship Odds & Ends

Rev. Maginn is going to start posting **sound files** of her **sermons and prayers** on the Wy'east Web site—especially to support those people who are teaching children's religious education during worship. She usually does not write out her sermons, so a sound file is the best way to stay in the loop when you can't be at the service. We don't yet have the ability to record during worship services (let us know if you have ideas about how to make that happen!), so these recordings are ones that Susan does at home. Not the same as the actual service, but better than nothing!

There is often room in side pews (up front) during the worship service. If you can **sit up front**, please do. It will make room for others who are new, people with children (who may need to make quick escapes!), or people who want to discretely enter after the service begins. Thanks!

If your child wants to **light the chalice** during a worship service, please contact the lay leader for the month. In March, that's Rich H.

More Tidbits for New Members and Others

Get your name in the **directory** and on the Wy'east **email list** (not heavy traffic but a great way for us to easily update you about all sorts of good stuff.)

Register your **children** in the **religious education** program. Talk to Marcia Stanard at church to get this process rolling.

For a fun **introduction to Unitarian Universalism**, go to You Tube and watch a 10 minute video called "Voices of a Liberal Faith:" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wezp1W2HKIU>.

Rev. Maginn has a blog! Check it out at: www.rev-susan.blogspot.com. ♦

Save trees. Save time.

One of the ways I live my spirituality most actively is through my relationship to the environment. I believe we are part of a miraculous creation, and with it comes a level of responsibility. In recognition of the Unitarian Universalist 7th Principle, I see the "web of interconnectedness" in my daily activities and I try to take simple actions toward harmonizing my relationship with the earth. By working with intention towards this goal, I feel I'm embracing life and more fully celebrating this gift.

Each year, Americans receive about 100 billion pieces of junk mail, equivalent to 100 million trees' worth. According to the Consumer Research Institute, every American spends about 8 months of their life opening junk mail! Paper products comprise nearly one-third of all waste going into American landfills. Not only that, but production and disposal of this "junk" consumes more energy than 2.8 million cars. That's an incredible amount of waste for something that no one even wants. Here are 3 simple ways to honor the planet by reducing waste:

1. **Call 1.888.5.OPTOUT.** It's an automated call that takes about 3 minutes and removes you from credit card and insurance offer mailings.
2. **Contact the DMA.** Send a letter with your name, home address, and signature and mail it to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, P.O. Box 643, Carmel, NY 10512. Alternately, register your choices at www.dmachoice.org. These efforts should stop about 75% of unwanted mail.
3. **Stop unwanted catalogs.** Sign up today at www.catalogchoice.org and remove yourself from unwanted catalog mailings.

Jeff H.
New Friend of Wy'east ♦

Newsletter News

Submissions for the April newsletter are due by **7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 19th**.

Please send articles, meeting/event dates, poetry, book recommendations, favorite spiritual practices, etc. to: nyeast-news-editor@googlegroups.com. That's a **new email address**.

Also, note that Laura R. is stepping down as co-editor starting in April (to serve on the Religious Education Committee) and **new member, Sharai E., will come on board**. Welcome, Sharai, and thanks!

— Laura R. & Abbie W.

Contacting the Minister and Board of Trustees

Rev. Susan Maginn is available to talk with you if you are new to Wy'east or Unitarian Universalism, if you have any questions or concerns, need some support, etc. She does not have full-time office space so it's best to call or email Rev. Maginn to make an appointment. If you have questions for the Wy'east Board of Trustees, you can talk to any Board member (Barbara S.-T., Karl A., Joanne F., Mark A. and Jill D.) on Sunday afternoons at church. ♦

Denominational Doings

Two Web Sites on UU History

If you go to your computer and type "DUUB" into Google, you will receive a special online gift: entry to the Dictionary of Unitarian Universalist Biography. This achievement of the Unitarian Universalist Historical Society is a wonderful example of cooperative community among researchers, writers, and editors. Already hundreds of several-pages-long biographies of greater and lesser-known religious liberals, dating back to the year 1500, are ready for you. Many are by Alan Seaburg of Tufts and Harvard. Rev. Peter Hughes is the editor of this series. ♦

Conrad Wright's bibliography of major and minor works of Unitarian Universalist history from 1946 to 1995 is available free online. Just go to Google to reach the UU Historical Society and then click on "Conrad Wright's Bibliography." The Journal of Unitarian Universalist History, published by the Unitarian Universalist Society, makes this literary service possible.

Conrad Wright, the leading historian of liberal religion in America, is Professor Emeritus of Church History at Harvard. He is an ex-officio member of the UU Historical Society Board. Incidentally, a journal subscription accompanies your UUHS membership. Dues are: Individual \$25, Household \$40, Student \$15, payable to: UUHS Membership Office, P.O. Box 38, Duxbury, MA 02331. ♦

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

March 2 MY, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MESS YOU ARE

Much of life is a mess of unexpected visitors, those elusive emotions that relentlessly remind us that we are not the sum of our structured schedules. When we place such a premium on predictability and optimism, where do we go with those emotions that are not always so comfortable and containable? Service by our minister, Susan Maginn.

Service: 5:00 p.m.

Religious Education (Pre-K- 4th Grade): Children attend the beginning of the service, then go downstairs for class. Nursery care is also available for infants and toddlers.

First Sunday Supper: Bring a potluck dish to share following the service.

March 9 GIVING, CARING AND THE POWER OF "NO"

Janine Larsen, District Executive for the Unitarian Universalist Association in the Pacific Northwest, will challenge us to consider our true values by looking at how we choose to spend our time and our money. By clarifying why we choose to say "no," we can create a more powerful "yes" for the things that matter most.

Choir Rehearsal: 4:00 p.m.

Service: 5:00 p.m.

Religious Education (Pre-K-8th Grade): Children attend the beginning of the service, then go downstairs for class. Nursery care is also available for infants and toddlers.

Second Sunday Soup: Bring a vegetable to church for the soup. Bread or salads are appreciated too.

Youth Group (High School Age): 6:00 p.m.

March 16 CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? EXPLORING CALL

This intergenerational service celebrating Palm Sunday will look at those times when we are asked to do something difficult. What do we mean by call? What are we called to do? Led by seminarian Marcia Stanard, our Director of Religious Education.

Choir Rehearsal: 4:00 p.m.

Service: 5:00 p.m. (Please bring your canned foods today for next week's Easter hunt.)

Religious Education: No classes as the service is for all ages, but we'll have childcare for children under 3.

Social Hour: Join us for refreshments after the service.

Restaurant Adventure: 7:00 p.m. Location to be announced during social hour.

March 23 EASTER: SAY 'YES!' TO RESURRECTION

We made it! Spring is officially here. Come and celebrate the resurrection of the sun, the dryness, the green and the gifts of the spirit bursting to life all around us. Service by Rev. Susan Maginn.

Chamber Players Rehearsal: 4:00 p.m.

Service: 5:00 p.m.

Religious Education (Pre-K-8th Grade): Children attend the beginning of the service, then go downstairs for class. Nursery care is also available for infants and toddlers. The Easter hunt happens today!

Social Hour: Join us for refreshments after the service.

Youth Group (High School Age): 6:00 p.m.

March 30 SIN FOR YOU AND ME

Unitarian Universalism has a rich history of focusing on the positive qualities of human nature, 'the inherent worth and dignity of every person', as our First Principle says. But we all mess up, sometimes in a really big way. Let's dust off this concept of sin and see if it has something to teach us. Service by Rev. Susan Maginn.

Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal: 4:00 p.m.

Service: 5:00 p.m.

Religious Education (Pre-K-4th Grade): Children attend the beginning of the service, then go downstairs for class. Nursery care is also available for infants and toddlers.

Social Hour: Join us for refreshments after the service.

OofS=order of service

March 2008 — Calendar of Events

* Unless noted by an asterisk, all events are at the church.

Sunday	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1 10am-noon Parents' Chalice Circle
2 5pm Service & K-4 th Grade RE 6pm Potluck	3	4 7-8:30pm Spirit in Practice	5 10am OofS Deadline	6	7	8 3-5pm New UU Class
9 4pm Choir Rehearsal 5pm Service & K-4 th Grade RE 5pm 5th-8 th Grade Religious Ed. 6pm Soup Supper / Youth Group	10	11 7-8:30pm Spirit in Practice 7:15pm Worship Committee	12 10am OofS Deadline	13	14	15 5pm Open the Doors: Annual Canvass Dinner
16 4pm Choir Rehearsal 5pm Service for All Ages/No RE 6pm Social Hour / Youth Group 7pm Restaurant Adventure	17	18 7-8:30pm Spirit in Practice	19 10am OofS Deadline 7pm Newsletter Deadline 7:15 pm Board Meeting	20 7:30pm Relig Ed. Meeting	21 7-9pm Committee on Ministry	22
23 4pm Chamber Players Rehearsal 5pm Service & Easter Hunt 5pm 5th-8 th Grade Religious Ed. 6pm Social Hour / Youth Group	24	25	26 10am OofS Deadline	27	28	29
30 4pm Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal 5pm Service & K-4 th Grade RE 6pm Social Hour						

503-777-3704

wyoffice@qwest.net

http://weast.pnwd.uua.org



Wy'east Unitarian Universalist Congregation
3300 SE Woodward Street
Portland, OR 97202

Return Service Requested