

For Immediate Release

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### **December 7 Equality Project Event will focus on World AIDS Day Education and Awareness**

FOND DU LAC—In acknowledgement of World AIDS Day, the Equality Project’s Dec. 7 event will focus on HIV/Aids education and awareness from 6-8 p.m. at Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 19 3rd St., in downtown Fond du Lac. The Equality Project is a monthly gathering to educate, support, and take action to achieve equality for LGBTQ+ persons. The evening begins with a 6 p.m. potluck, and will continue from 6:30-8 p.m. with a program featuring educational content about HIV and AIDS. All Fond du Lac residents who stand on the side of love are invited to attend.

“HIV and AIDS are no longer the swift death sentences they once were—and that is due to education on prevention and significant breakthroughs in medication to treat the illnesses,” said Christopher Szymczak, OCUUF Equality Project coordinator. “But, HIV/AIDS isn’t yet wiped out. That’s the intent of World Aids Day—to continue educating people until HIV/AIDS transmission ends. We want to do our part to further education here in Fond du Lac.”

The Thursday evening program at OCUUF will use a series of short videos to share information on the history of HIV/Aids, including the significance of the AIDS quilt, which serves as a memorial for loved ones who died of AIDS during the past 25 years. Other topics will include: living with HIV; preventing the transmission of HIV; talking to a partner about HIV testing; and ways and places to get tested for HIV.

Like the local Humanity Project, with its goal of getting past race as a barrier, The Equality Project aims to remove gender and sexuality as barriers in understanding each other, and to improve relationships across the community. Upcoming Equality Project events include a holiday party on Dec. 28. More dates will be forthcoming in 2018.

“We have embraced radical hospitality,” said Open Circle President Lisette Aldrich. “Open Circle is a welcoming and safe place for all folks, a sanctuary. This supports the core idea that first grabbed me in my religious education in my childhood: Love One Another.”

Unitarian Universalists strongly believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and the spiritual practice of welcome is a very important part of UU faith communities. For 25 years, congregations have worked hard to make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people are full members of UU faith communities. Being welcoming means striving for radical inclusion, and creating spaces that honor every part of individuals’ identities, backgrounds, and experiences.

Open Circle Sunday services are at 10 a.m.

Follow Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Open-Circle-Unitarian-Universalist-Fellowship-115997188421362/> and on the web at <http://www.ocuuf.org/> . Also follow The Equality Project on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/equalityprojectfdl/>.

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