

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs...



NEWSLETTER August 2007

President's Message — OUT IN THE OPEN

When I started attending the UU Fellowship two and a half years ago, I had a very rosy picture of Unitarian-Universalism. After a journey through Catholicism, Protestant ministry and ten years of Buddhist and Taoist practice, I felt that an open, safe sanctuary in a liberal Fellowship was just the thing I needed. As I have become more involved in both the Fellowship and various UU District programs, including the Leadership Training at Beloit, it has become clear to me that there is a very basic split in both the Fellowship, and in Unitarian-Universalism in general. So let's say it out-loud: there is a Humanist-Theist dichotomy causing great pain and division across the denomination. This division does not have to rend friends from friends and decent human beings from decent human beings. I therefore encourage us all this year to do research and to discuss, openly and IN FELLOWSHIP, the "living traditions" that are the basis of this denomination. Anger and fear come from ! ignorance and with our intellectual tradition, ignorance should never be a factor in our approach to Unitarian-Universalism.

If this split is not healed, I fear that both our Fellowship and Unitarian-Universalism itself will miss an opportunity that history has handed us to provide a safe place for other people who do not wish to be controlled by dogma but who nonetheless desire a spiritual home. If the word "spiritual" is offensive, understand that I define it in Chinese Qi Gong terms: "Shen" is an integral part of the complete human being. The total human being is a continuum of body, mind and spirit. In this sense then, Shen is a humanist term. And Humanism is one of the Living traditions informing our practice. Only spirit can unite. Its absence is simply a void. Take time to look at the pictures of the young men and women working on this building so long ago and ask yourself: Did THEY have spirit.

— George K.

August Programming... ...at a glance:

August 5:

"Are We Really Made in God's Likeness?" By Blythe P.

August 12:

"Kilowatt Hour:" This program, presented by Elizabeth D. and Peter W.

August 19:

"Diversity: The Diary of a Mad Black Woman," presented by Nyra D.

August 26:

"A Course in Miracles: A Radical Spiritual Path," presented by Bill R.

August Program Calendar:

Sunday, August 5

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "Catechisms and their problems."

10:00 AM: "**Are We Really Made in God's Likeness?**" Fellowship member Blythe P.

presents her answer to this question and poses some of her own.

11:30 AM: A potluck luncheon follows the program.

Sunday, August 12

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "The problem of Evil."

10:00 AM: "**Kilowatt Hour:**" This program, presented by Elizabeth D. and Peter W., will feature a film that addresses some solutions to our country's energy-related problems. It shows everyday Americans finding ways to harness power from wind and sun. Discussion will follow.

Sunday, August 19

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "Giving validation."

10:00 AM: "**Diversity: The Diary of a Mad Black Woman,**" presented by Nyra D. Despite the odds and having all the clichés working against her, Nyra has achieved success in life. She will share stories from childhood to the present. Nyra may make you laugh or make you cry—it all depends on the energy you bring.

Sunday, August 26

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "Swamplands of the soul: What is the soul's agenda?"

10:00 AM: "**A Course in Miracles: A Radical Spiritual Path,**" presented by Bill R. Bill, a longtime student of the Course, will talk about the spiritual path embodied in this lengthy three-volume work channeled from 1965 to 1972 by a professor of clinical psychology with the help of her department head. Most interesting from the viewpoint of the Judaic-Christian world is that the inner voice that dictated it claimed to be Je-

sus. Bill will cover how the Course came about, its metaphysics and theology, and its central teaching of forgiveness.

Coming in September

Sunday, September 2

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "Valid and invalid metaphysics."

10:00 AM: "**Water Ceremony and Ingathering,**" produced by Mitzi M. This program will feature our traditional end-of-summer ritual of combining water, collected from near and far, in a communal container. Members and friends—kids, too—are invited to share something about their summer activities and about the source of their water.

11:30 AM: A potluck luncheon follows the program.

UUFYS Executive Board

President: George K.

President-Elect: Mary D.

Past President: Stacy A.

Treasurer: Louis S.

Secretary: Debbie D.

Members-At-Large: Martha G. & Marianne W.

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs is published monthly. To submit material for the newsletter please do so by the **15th** of each month. Please submit material as non-formatted text in your e-mail or as an MS Word attachment in 12 point font with no formatting (bold, italic, etc...).

Send material to David K. at:
tau.athanasios@gmail.com

Covenant Group Signups

The Small Group Ministry program started in our Fellowship with a pilot group in September, 2004. We have just completed our third year of covenant groups with at least 1/3 of the Fellowship members and friends involved. It is time to consider joining the covenant group experience starting the week of September 10th, 2007. To help in understanding what covenant groups are and whether that experience is for you please consider the following:

1. A covenant group is a dialog between group members meaning we share from our own experiences, are willing to listen to others, and expect to learn from others. It is where we seek bonds with each other, explore our own spiritual journey, and strengthen our sense of community. Those seeking a therapeutic counseling experience are better served in another type of group. We listen but don't give advice or "fix" the person.
2. Each group writes its own covenant which is a promise and a commitment we make with each other.
3. Each member is responsible for attending all sessions, being on time, participating as fully as possible, keeping what is shared confidential, and leading one of the sessions.
4. Lastly, for most of those participating in the groups it has been a time of renewal, acceptance, and vitality.

There will be ongoing opportunities to experience a sample covenant group beginning on Sunday, August 19, following the service. There will be an informal lunch available for those who wish to take part. Anyone interested in finding out more about covenant groups, including former group members who wish to share input, please contact Judy W., Mary C., Stacy A., or Dick R. for information and to let us know if you will be there so we have some idea for lunch preparation.

Sign up sheets will be available in the foyer starting in August along with a list of commonly asked questions and answers about Small Group Ministry. Be sure to include the days/evenings when you will be available. At this time there are four facilitators available to lead groups in the Fall.

“If it is language that makes us human, one half of language is to listen. Silence can exist without speech, but speech cannot live without silence.”

Mary C.

Fellowship survey about space needs: Martha G. reviewed the survey results, which were based on 42 responses from about 100 surveys distributed. She noted that most responses to questions were fairly evenly split and that many members are concerned about how to create the most usable space with a minimum of work, time and money. With this goal in mind, George K. will e-mail Rubin B. about consulting with the architect and obtaining a quote about possible renovations. Decisions about possible uses for the apartment and other Fellowship spaces will be made in consultation with the B&G Committee and the Co-Directors of Religious Education. Additionally, the numerous heartfelt member comments about the inclusion of Fellowship children and youth in Sunday services will be passed on to the RE program.

June 10th 2007 UUFYS Annual Meeting Minutes

- The meeting was called to order by Stacy A., President at 10:33 a.m.
- Charlotte B. certified a quorum exceeding a minimum of 30% of the membership.
- Election of Officers: Judy W., Past President presented the slate of officers as follows:
 - **Mary D.**, President-Elect (3 year term)
 - **Debbie D.**, Secretary (2 year term)
 - **Marianne W.**, Member at Large (1 year term, filling Debbie's uncompleted term)
 - **Martha G.**, Member at Large (2 year term)
 - **Peter W.** and **Mary C.**, Leadership Development Committee.
- Jim R. moved that the entire slate be elected as read; Blythe P. seconded the motion. The slate was unanimously elected.
- Stacy A. recognized all the volunteers who had helped maintain the Fellowship operations, programs, building and grounds during the past year.
- Vision of our Fellowship: George K., our new President, likened Unitarian Universalists to "key droppers" – folks who asked key questions about human existence and who tolerate differences, especially differences in ideas. His challenge to UUFYS members and friends for the coming year was to increase communication among ourselves and the outside community, increase our learning about UU history, and increase our personal knowledge about UU spirit and spirituality.
- Next Martha G. presented a survey "Addressing our space needs" for members and friends to complete. Survey results will be compiled in early July and will guide the Fellowship board and other leaders as to a future course of action to deal with overcrowding.
- Charlotte B. of the Finance Committee presented the 2007-2008 budget initially set at \$69,900. This was scaled back due to a reduced pledge amount (\$45,192 vs. a projection of \$57,200), lack of income from the apartment (usually \$5,000/year), and significantly reduced Tar Hollow profits (\$300 in 2007 vs. about \$2,000 in previous years). It was noted that pledges are about 76% of the revised budget and some of the expected shortfall will be made up with a surplus from the 2006-2007 budget (from unexpected revenue and unspent committee funds). Charlotte moved that the revised budget for fiscal year 2007-2008 in the amount of \$59,700 be accepted. Judy seconded this motion, which was passed unanimously.
- Input from members: Sydney W. spoke in support of contributing to the Building Fund.
- The gavel was transferred from Stacy to George who spoke of Stacy's many contributions to the Fellowship over the past year.
- Closing song and Recitation of the Covenant. The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie D., Secretary

NOTE: The above minutes of the meeting was submitted in time for the July edition of the newsletter. It's omission was an oversight my part. — David K.

Unitarian Universalist Blogs:

By David K.

What is a Blog?

Definition: Blog is short for weblog. A weblog is a journal (or newsletter) that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption. Blogs generally represent the personality of the author or the Web site.

Here is a list, albeit not a comprehensive one, of various Blogs of interest to Unitarian Universalists. I read several of these on a daily basis, and have included some of them that I enjoy:

The Chalice Blog:	http://chalicechick.blogspot.com/
The Eclectic Cleric:	http://eclectic-cleric.blogspot.com/
iMinister:	http://iminister.blogspot.com/
The Lively Tradition:	http://thelivelytradition.blogspot.com/
Peacebang:	http://www.peacebang.com/
Beauty Tips for Ministers:	http://www.peacebang.com/beautytipsforministers/
Boy in the Bands:	http://boyinthebands.com/
Monkey Mind:	http://monkeymindonline.blogspot.com/
Philocrites:	http://www.philocrites.com/
The Chalice Blog:	http://chalicechick.blogspot.com/
The Post Modern Preacher:	http://www.postmodernpreacher.com/
Wandering Monk, Reluctant Gyrovague:	http://seekerswanted.blogspot.com/
Fortitude of Spirit:	http://fortitudeofspirit.blogspot.com/
Unitarian Universalist Christians:	http://www.uuchristian.org/
Facilitating Paradox:	http://facilitatingparadox.com
UU Mom:	http://uu-mom.livejournal.com/
View from the Mountains:	http://viewfromthemountains.blogspot.com/
UU Enforcer:	http://uuenforcer.blogspot.com/
The Socinian:	http://www.socinian.blogspot.com/
Liberal Faith Development:	http://liberalfaith.blogspot.com/

From David K.:

Religious Education is a wonderful transformative experience. I've seen this transformation in our youth, and this experience should be shared. The Coming of Age program was and is a beautiful way to teach our youth not only about themselves but also about others. Religious Education at Yellow Springs Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is not just about our youth, although they are an essential part of the R.E. program, but about everyone. Everyone at our Fellowship can and should benefit from Religious Education. What is needed is volunteers, fresh new ideas, and a willingness to promote the transformative quality that is "Religious Education."

Having people willing to serve on the Religious Education Committee, those with children in the RE Program and those interested in Adult RE programming, is one way YOU can help! Another means of helping Religious Education at our Fellowship is to offer to teach a class or a program for adults, or to help with youth teaching. There are many opportunities for service within Religious Education, and while serving on a committee can be dry and tedious work, teaching or facilitating a program can be a very refreshing and rewarding experience!

From Kathy Robertson:

RE is looking for a low lying small table to serve as an "alter" for our UU chalice in the younger group room. Please let Kathy R. know if you have such an item to donate by calling her at 937-431-1517.

Religious Education Notes...

Coming of Age Program: A Labor of Love.

Within minutes of meeting Blythe P., you'll realize that she is an artist, pagan, and feminist. After attending UUA training about coming of age (COA) programs in Philadelphia with her daughter Kitty, she utilized her training and various personal dimensions as she leapt into creating a COA course for our youth. As those who attended the recent Sunday service on our COA program know, Blythe spent countless hours over the past year planning, organizing and leading activities such as arts and crafts, nature walks, lively discussions, a weekend retreat, team building at a ropes course, creating a labyrinth at Tar Hollow, and writing wisdom books for our youth signed by members of UUFYS. In many of these activities she was ably assisted by David K. and Sharon R. who were very generous with their time and talents. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Blythe for taking on the challenge of creating an engaging, meaningful Coming of Age program for our teens. Thanks Blythe for your fearlessness, creativity, and dedication!

Debbie D.
Mother of a COA youth & former RE Director

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

William Butler Yeats

Job Opening:

Administrative Coordinator, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs

The UUFYS is seeking an **Administrative Coordinator**; job description follows.

Applications including a letter of interest, resume, and references should be sent by mail to the attention of the Personnel Committee, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs, PO Box 480, Yellow Springs, OH, 45387; or by email to gardinmartha@yahoo.com. Closing date for applications is Saturday, August 25.

OBJECTIVE: To perform routine and complex support functions for the administration of the UUFYS, board and members.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Handling incoming and outgoing phone calls.
- Bookkeeping: writes checks and enters financial data such as pledge records
- Collects receipts for payments and maintains financial files
- Produce weekly announcements and Order of Service
- Newsletter distribution: labeling and mailing
- Communications: E-mail notifications to members; advertisement layout and communication with media; membership telephone tree
- Mail collection and distribution
- Maintains name-address data of members; updates, prints and distributes member directory
- Keeps building rentals calendar; handles rental fees
- Oversees supplies purchasing
- Maintains files and records
- Routine data processing, copying, and distribution
- Performs complex and confidential clerical and secretarial duties
- Interacts with membership in a friendly, professional manner. Demonstrates tact and courtesy in maintaining good relations with board, staff, committee members and general membership.
- Attends pertinent meetings and/or training courses

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Graduation from high school or equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Accounts payable, payroll, secretarial and/or clerical experience desirable. Ability to produce finished reports according to generally accepted standards of business practices.
- Ability to understand and carry out complex oral and written instructions.
- Ability to work independently as necessary.
- Excellent problem-solving skills.
- Proven computer skills required.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with Board, staff, and membership.
- Ability to handle confidential information regarding Board agendas, membership and personnel issues.

The Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association

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

- The inherent worth and dignity 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 right 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 inspires 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;
- Humanist 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.



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs

P.O. Box 480

Yellow Springs OH 45387-1480