



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs

Newsletter

February 2005

Love is the spirit of this Fellowship, and service is its law.

To dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another, this is our covenant.

We welcome people of all personal and family lifestyles.

February Calendar

Feb 6 Sunday 10:00 am *First Sunday Program:* "Wealth and Poverty." Is there a relationship? What is poverty and what causes it? What is wealth? Is it something only a few can attain or is it something we already have? Do we have a classist society? Join in a discussion, led by Amanda Calder and Lindie Keaton, that will enrich all who participate.

10:15 Sunday School – Unitarian principles thru music, stories and crafts. Childcare under 5 years.

12:00 noon Potluck LUNCH. Hosted by Finance committee, the program will discuss our current fiscal fitness and some changes needed before the annual meeting on May 1. Bring your questions, food/ beverage to share and table service.

Feb 13 Sunday 10:00 am "African-American Music: The Roots of Jazz" Steve Schwerner, retired Antioch College professor, will speak to honor Black history. For 17 years, he hosted the WYSO program *Alternate Takes*.

10:15 Sunday School

12:00 noon Board meeting

Feb 20 Sunday 10:00 am "...And Service is Our Law." Colin Altman, chief of the Miami Township Fire and Rescue, will talk about his experiences as a firefighter and paramedic. He will also give his vision for the future of the MTRF. As part of the program, the Fellowship will express its gratitude for the service rendered by the MTRF to the community generally and to our membership.

10:15 Sunday School

Feb 27 Sunday 10:00 am "Who and What Forgives." Being cut off in traffic, treated rudely by a store clerk, mugged, cheated by unscrupulous businesses – all merit some degree of response. But often our rage outstrips the act, and our desire for revenge moves beyond justice to cruelty. We too easily allow the State to kill others on our behalf and we become coarsened in the process. In this sermon, Richard Venus, minister of the Miami Valley UUF, will discuss how we might respond to the suffering caused by others.

10:15 Sunday School

11:30 am Soup and bread lunch

March Calendar

Mar 6 Sunday 10:00 am - First Sunday - In honor of March as Women's History month, the program will be "Women in My History" – (just the good stories) - presented by men of the UUFYS.

10:15 Sunday School

6:00 pm Potluck Dinner – Hosted by Member Services committee, the evening features high school senior Hilary Livingston's slide show of her work in Africa with The Malawi Children's Village. Hilary is seeking donations of first aid materials, to ship to the children.

Social and Faith Groups and Activities

Feb 9 Wednesday 12:00 noon - Women's Luncheon - Hostess are needed for February and March. Call Mitzi for info and to volunteer.

Feb 10 & 24 Thursday 12:00 noon – Men's Lunch – Everyone is welcome at the restaurant lunches. Call Harold for info.

Feb 13 Sunday 2:00 pm Our day to sing hymns at Friends Care. Join in providing cheer and tunes.

Feb 15 Tuesday Dinner and forum for Antioch students, sponsored by the Interfaith Network. See Social Justice article.

Feb 16 Wednesday 7:00 pm – Study group on origins of UU principles. Call Stacy to sign up.

Feb 20 Sunday 12:00 noon Bus trip to Underground Railroad museum in Cincinnati. See Social Justice article below.

Feb 24 Thursday 7:30 pm – The 4th Thursday drop-in discussion group resumes at the meeting house. Call Harold Fishbain for info on which article from World magazine we will discuss.

Every Sunday 8:45 am - The fellowship Choir practices before the service. All singers are welcome – we especially need sopranos and altos now.

Exciting New Study Group Starting

A class on the origins of Unitarian Universalist principles will begin on Wednesday, Feb 16th, at 7pm in the meeting house. Other class times may be added to accommodate people's schedules. If you are interested but not able to attend the Wed night classes, the reading material is available by request for home study. Contact Stacy at 767-7943.

I've learned that a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

Fellowship Business

It's Summer! (kind of) – by Susan Gartner

The UUFYS Program Committee is looking ahead to Summer Sunday programming and needs your help. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the Fellowship listing all the Sundays from June 5 to August 28, 2005, and we need you to sign up to produce, present, play music for or otherwise help continue our programming through the summer..

Please submit your program ideas and preferred date (or dates) to Susan Gartner (767-2170) or Judy Williams (376-3459) for approval. The Social Justice Committee will be responsible for the 2nd Sunday each month. By signing up, you will be responsible as Program Producer for your Sunday's program. All topics must be consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles. You may elect to be your own Service Leader (emcee) for that particular Sunday or ask that someone else lead the service. Feel free to experiment with new ideas and rituals. Is there a practice you wish would be incorporated into Sunday morning programs? This would be a good time to try it out! Mitzi Manny, Minister of Music (767-1988), and Susan Gartner are available to help with music and/or hymn selections. Susan is also available for help with programming ideas or elements.

Program ideas for the 2004-2005 calendar have come from a wide range of congregants. Sometimes just the smallest spark of an idea produces the most thought-provoking program. Do your own program, pair up with a friend or two, or collaborate with someone you don't know but wish to know better. Start planning now and watch summer Sundays grow into a beautiful garden of community and creativity!

Attention All Members!

The Member Services committee has recommended a change in the current membership policy. Please consider the proposed changes outlined below and give your input to the committee or the board. If further changes are needed, we would like to incorporate them prior to the May 1 Annual Meeting, when the proposal will be presented for a vote.

What Is A Member?

Membership in our Fellowship is defined in the bylaws and the membership policy, which currently describes three categories:

- Voting members, whose financial support is at least equal to the current Voting Membership Dues established at the Annual Meeting (currently \$100),

- Nonvoting members, who contribute a lesser amount, or choose not to be voters,
- Friends: persons who “wish to maintain a connection with the Fellowship without the responsibilities of membership.”

What Is the Problem?

Over the years we have experienced several problems associated with these definitions, including:

- People with limited resources may not be able to afford the current dues level, and may be reluctant to ask for an exception based on their substantial service to the Fellowship (an option offered in the policy).
- People with ample resources may feel that a \$100 contribution is sufficient, not realizing that a per capita share of our operating budget would be closer to \$400.
- The distinction between nonvoting members and friends is no longer clear (if it ever was).
- The administrative burden of tracking movements in and out of these three categories is disproportionate to the value of doing so.

What Changes are Proposed?

- Delete the nonvoting membership category. The congregation would consist of members (who have the right to vote) and friends (who do not have the right to vote and are not counted in the census). Newcomers who have made a contribution but not yet committed to membership (pledged and signed the membership book) would be listed as friends. Former members who have not made a contribution during the current also year would be listed as friends.
- Delete the minimum dollar dues requirement for voting status (currently \$100). The pledge payment would signify the individual’s wish to continue to identify him/herself as a member of the Fellowship.
- Members be asked to support the budget to the extent that they are able. Any contribution of record be accepted as a renewal of membership for the fiscal year. This change would remove the need for persons to apply for, or the Board to grant, voting status to persons of limited income.
- Count only financial contributions (not pledges) toward membership status.
- Encourage a service commitment from all who are able.

For More Information:

- Pick up a copy of the complete text of the proposed changes (in the entry lobby).
- Attend the “Fiscal Fitness” potluck at noon on February 6.
- Attend the member input segment of the Board meeting at noon on February 13.
- Attend the Member Services committee meeting after the potluck on March 6.
- Contact Charlotte Battino at 767-1854 or at rubin.battino@wright.edu.

News from Religious Education – by Debbie Downey, RE Director for Youth

February RE programs: On Sunday mornings the Younger Group (ages 6-10) and Older Group (ages 11-14) will continue learning about Unitarian Universalist principles through music, stories, and craft activities. Childcare will be available in the Nursery for children five and younger.

Thanks to the following Fellowship members who generously contributed their time to preparing for the RE potluck, open house and games night on January 2nd: *Stacy & Zyrian Arnett; Deb, Steve, Aaron & Brenda Jones; Mindy Mlod and Matthew; Betsy Morton; Patty, James & Kara Owens; and David, Alex, & Will Turner.* The candlelight potluck was a rousing success with folks staying afterward for a few hours to play games and socialize together!

Thanks also to *Mindy Mlod* for teaching throughout the month of January in the Younger Group and to *Dick Fowler* for volunteering to help with the Older Group in January.

New Teacher: Please join us in welcoming *Raina Daniels*, the new teacher for the Younger Group (6-10 year olds). Raina is an Antioch College student majoring in Social Science. She has taken many education courses and participated in a number of school-based co-op jobs. For instance, she has been an assistant teacher at a couple of Montessori-based schools, teaching at the kindergarten through eighth grades. She is particularly interested in youth empowerment, health issues, and “isms.” She is not a UU, but attended a UU church in middle school with a friend and is comfortable with our denominational principles. Please help Raina feel welcome in our Fellowship community.

Social Justice Committee News and Plans – by Chris Kinter

Here we are, moving into the middle of winter after the Holidays and the disappointments of the fall. Where do we look to invest our time to make our community, country and world a better place? We know handouts won't improve the lot of those oppressed in our world, and that programs intended to empower those who lack power have been proven to be the most effective. One of the freedoms we as Unitarian Universalists must live up to, is not to just talk with friends and co-workers about the issues invisible in the mainstream news, but to work on those issues and make a difference. We must make the time to seek areas of our communities that require a helping hand that falls into our call for service.

-- Though it may be the middle of winter, Home Inc has started to build their latest affordable home on Dayton street. The wall raising went without a hitch last week and as weather allows, volunteers will be needed to roof and do other jobs in the house's construction. Please check with Ann Taylor at 767-1971 or Al Schlueter at 767-7468 for volunteer opportunities with Home Inc.

-- Another opportunity is with Solidarity Ohio. This group was formed in response to the passage of Ohio Issue 1, the Defense of Marriage Act. This group meets in our building and is looking for more volunteers. Their two areas of focus are education and changing the system and laws. Several UUFYS members are already involved and this is a good way to get to know a section of our community outside our normal social circles.

-- The plate collection for February will be for PFLAG, which stands for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Those of us fortunate enough to attend this past summer's Sunday programs learned a great deal involving the rights and issues of the gay, bisexual and transgender community. PFLAG works for education to open minds and create understandings to eliminate one type of oppression that afflicts our world today.

Important upcoming social justice dates for February:

-- February 15, Tuesday night. The Yellow Springs Interfaith Network is sponsoring a lasagna dinner and forum for Antioch students -- the dinner is for the students and the forum is open to the community. The topic is "Death Penalty: Justice or Murder?" Anyone interested in providing a dish call Chris Kinter at 767-1723.

-- February 20th - Social Justice and Antioch's office of Multicultural Affairs will provide a bus to transport students and community to the Underground Railroad Freedom Museum in Cincinnati. The bus leaves at 12:00 noon SHARP and returns at 6:00pm. For Fellowship members planning to go from the morning service, a light lunch will be available. Seating is limited, naturally, so don't delay. For information or to sign up, please call Joan Chappelle at 767-7056.

Five Ways to Live Unitarian Universalist Values in the New Year

1. Learn more about the 2004-2006 Study Action Issue on global warming. [See www.uua.org.]
2. Become involved in a covenant group/small group ministry in your congregation. [Talk to Judy Williams or Stacy Arnett.]
3. Become a more active lay leader in your congregation. [Join a committee or talk to Mary Kosheleff.]
4. Talk to other Unitarian Universalists and share information and learning. [Attend training seminars and General Assembly; see Mary Kosheleff.]
5. Nurture your spirit - read a Skinner House or Beacon Press book! [Go to www.uua.org and choose "book store."]

Covenant Group Report – by Patricia Olds

The pioneering UUFYS covenant group finished its commitment to eight sessions in December. I was asked to write a brief report. Mary Cargan and Judy Williams convened a group of nine participants in September. Mary and Judy had participated in similar groups at regional UU meetings and gave the rest of us an overview; then each of us told the group something about our self and explained our hopes for the sessions. At the second meeting, we “covenanted” to stay together in an atmosphere of mutual learning and support and then developed our ground rules. We followed them fairly well and learned to listen without interrupting. Most participants found the experience helpful in getting to know and understand each other better. They described it as "a chance to be myself."

During the autumn and early winter we gradually became friends, sharing family memories and pictures, making collages to express various parts of our personalities. We followed curricula used by other congregations; we had two weeks to ponder assignments and questions. One of the most helpful sessions for me was when we were asked what we love. Other questions were "Tell a story of your first memories of one of your loves" and "Are you at peace with the things that you love to do or be?"

My disappointments with the adventure were (1) some participants did not do their homework; and, (2) although one of our rules was "support risk taking", I did not sense much of that. True friendship is risky. We decided to continue meeting until June. We may present a Sunday morning program if a spot can be found.

UU Niagara Experience – July 17-20, 2005

The First UU Church of Niagara is organizing a chance to experience the wonder of Niagara Falls and some great educational opportunities in the company of UUs from around the country. It's a lifetime opportunity to encounter the Falls up close from every perspective, even from a tethered balloon, and explore the rich history and natural wonders around the Falls. Visit their web site <http://www.uunex.net/> or email info@uunex.net or phone (716)-791-4453.

Do You Know Our New Members? – by Dick Fowler

The gentleman in the coat and tie and the lady with the exceptionally pretty outfits are some of our recent additions to the Fellowship – but have lost no time in becoming important parts of it. Ron and Doris Seward (from Osceola NE and Topeka KA respectively) married in 1944 and have two sons and two daughters. They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov 24, which impresses this

interviewer. Both husband and wife had careers which involved public service. Ask Doris about supervising city budgets and Ron about computerizing a large court system in New York state – they are fascinating stories. They now live at the Masonic Home in Springfield and enjoy their Airstream vacations. We extend our warmest welcome to you, Ron and Doris. Our Fellowship profits from your presence.

UU “World” Magazine on Cassette Tape

Any member of a UU congregation with a vision problem is eligible to receive the “UU World” on cassette tape each month, free of charge. The tape includes all the articles, features and letters, frequently read by the authors themselves. The tapes are mailed at the same time as the magazine so you will be just as current as the rest of the congregation. If this interests you or someone you know, contact Jean McKenney or Devorah Greenstein at the UUA. Phone 617-742-2100 or email jmckenney@uua.org or dgreenstein@uua.org.

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P.O. Box 480

Yellow Springs OH 45387-1480