

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs...



NEWSLETTER February 2007

Letter from the President

Dear Fellowship Members and Friends -

"Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be done and not some future day or future year. It is today that we fit ourselves for the greater usefulness of tomorrow. Today is the seed time, now are the hours of work, and tomorrow comes the harvest and the play-time." - W. E. B. DuBois

Indeed, today is the time to come together within this season of cold, surrounded by the landscape that is mostly dormant, and lacking all the colors of Spring. If you choose the quietude of Winter to become reflective, and if you are affected by the lack of colors out there, then I have these words for you. Perhaps the absence of all of nature's colors that we love is not only a memory and memorial to what has been, but an encouraging promise to what colors are soon to be found. Considering the memories of longtime members of this Fellowship, there is a rich and strong history, throughout which many people gave so much for a good cause and for each other. As the seasons have changed, so has this Fellowship, though more gradually. We have the colors from past memories and we have the colors we want to see. We have the friends we have known for so long and we have new friends. We discover that each person we develop a relationship with brings new kinship, new understanding about life, and opportunities for each of us to transcend our implied personal boundaries. This is the real "growth" our Fellowship can use more of. Every word spoken, every action taken with a connectedness to a greater possibility will help us as we develop this new growth that has all the colors of yesterday and tomorrow.

The volunteer moderator for the UUA, Gina Cou-ter, in a meeting with UUA President William Sinkford,

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February Programming... ...at a glance:

February 4:

"Our Loving Fellowship: The Journey for Today and Tomorrow"

February 11:

"Black Unitarian Universalists of the 21st Century."

February 18:

"Fellowship Development, Change and the Future--How Do We Proceed?"

February 25:

"Who Are U(U)?"

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs is published monthly. **To submit material for the newsletter please do so by the 20th 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.

February Program Calendar:

Sunday, February 4:

10:00 a.m.: "Our Loving Fellowship: The Journey for Today and Tomorrow"

Stacy A. and George K. will facilitate this program as we review the results of the January questionnaire/survey and present the overall results, including the "Comments" section. Your input is important for this discussion which will be a listening session as well as a survey presentation.

4:30-6:30 p.m.: UUFYS 50th Birthday Bash and Intergenerational Event!

Sunday, February 11:

10:00 a.m.: "Black Unitarian Universalists of the 21st Century."

Presented the Reverend Doctor Yvonne Seon, Director of the Bolinga Black Cultural Resources Center of Wright State University. Dr. Seon has the distinction of being the first African American woman to be ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister. A reception will follow Dr. Seon's presentation.

Sunday, February 18:

10:00 a.m.: "Fellowship Development, Change and the Future--How Do We Proceed?"

We will be dividing into small groups to discuss change and our feelings about it. Bring your thoughts and creative input as you project your vision of our fellowship into the future.

Sunday, February 25:

10:00 a.m.: "Who Are U(U)?"

Presented by the Reverend Frank Carpenter, minister of St. John's Unitarian Universalist Church in Cincinnati. All faiths make claims about what it means to be human, claims about who you are and what is your destiny. Are you alone? How

do we work together to work out our future together?

For Information on the 8:30 AM Spiritual Discussion Group see PAGE 3.

February 11th program Dr. Yvonne Seon

Dr. Yvonne Seon, Director of the Bolinga Black Cultural Resources Center of Wright State University will present, "Looking at What it Means to be Black, Unitarian and Universalist in the 21st Century". She has a place in Unitarian Universalist history as the first African-American woman to be ordained into the Unitarian Universalist ministry.

That was in 1981, at All Souls Unitarian Church in Washington D.C. The late Reverend David Eaton performed the ordination. Doctor Seon started the Sojourner Truth Congregation of UU's on Capitol Hill. While there, she was elected president of Capital Hill Group Ministries, a community partnership begun in 1968 in the aftermath of the rioting that followed the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

She spent 1961-63 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo working as the chief administrative officer for the Inga Dam Project--then just a concept in the process of being realized. In November, she was honored by the African Scientific Institute for "Leadership and Courage leading to the 1st Inga Dam". She comments that helping emerging nations in Africa achieve independence is very much a part of who she is.

Dr. Seon enjoys writing, and is currently working on a book of poetry entitled *Totem Games*. She is looking forward to finding more time to write as she transitions into her new responsibilities at the Bolinga Center.

Religious Education

Youth Religious Education in February

- Childcare will be provided for our youngest children in the Nursery by Ashante R. and Lauren W. using the “Celebrating Me and My World” curriculum.
- The Younger Group will be finishing up the Old Testament and starting the New Testament.
- Blythe P. continues to lead the youth in a Coming of Age program using nature activities, crafts and ritual to help them continue developing values and a strong sense of identity.

Adult Religious Education in February

The **8:30 AM Sunday** Spiritual Discussion Group will be focusing its February discussion on Unitarian Universalist spirituality. The 8:30 AM Spiritual Discussion Group is a great opportunity for anyone interested in discussion and dialogue on various topics of interest to the members of the Fellowship. The topics for February are:

- February 4th: **How to explain the UUA to others. Who are we?**
- February 11th: **UU Spirituality.**
- February 18th: **How to practice as a UU. Individual practices.**
- February 25th: **What will the UUA look like 100 years from now?**

Plans to add additional Adult Religious Education programs are in the works. If you have any ideas please send them to: David K. or Kathy R.

Religious Education News

A belated thanks to Sharon R. for helping to straighten up the Younger Group room in December. Thanks also to Peter W. for the many photos he’s taken of the children at work and play over the past months. A special thanks to Eliza W. for her past service on the Religious Education Committee and her willingness to assist with special projects!

David K.
Co-Director of Religious
Education

Special Thanks to the following for their support of Religious Education:

Sharon R.

Peter W.

Eliza W.

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wanted to address his concerns about our unique religious denomination. I have met Ms Couter, and have watched her work. She is brilliant, loving, and knows how to get at the heart of any matter. She told president Sinkford and all of those present, "How should we associate together and embody our promise to move from comfort to covenant, from corporation to association, from consumption to service, from criticism to appreciation, from privilege to solidarity?"

Read those quoted words again and tell me what you think she is talking about. I think it is a good "reality check" for a religion that has the means and opportunity to lose track of what the deeper reasons are that bring people to Unitarian Universalism. I also think she is not suggesting that any congregations simply stop trying to have a better organizational structure or cease spending money on their building, books, trainings, etc. She is asking big questions that are wide open for positive responses without being apologetic to the known negative factors that hold back Unitarian Universalism and its member congregations. So, with that, I ask you, " what are the colors, the promises, the visions we can have for our Fellowship?" Now is the time.....

In Faith and Fellowship,

Stacy A.

UUFYS 50th Birthday Bash and Intergenerational Event!

Plan to attend this festive intergenerational potluck birthday party on February 4, 2007, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. We'll be celebrating the Fellowship's 50th birthday as well as the birthdays of everyone in attendance. (A special note to sports fans: we will also have television access to the Super Bowl!) Plan to bring photos and mementos of your life to share with other celebrants, as well as your favorite music and food. If you'd like to help with decorations or other party plans, please contact the following Board and RE Committee members: Kathy R., David K., Debbie D., Joy F., Debbie J., Jim O., or Blythe P.

GENTLE REMINDER

Out of respect for the speaker during our services, and to keep distraction to a minimum, we hope that any issues requiring a signature/sign-up, such as "clipboard items" be reserved for consideration AFTER the Sunday programs. Congregants may refer to such documents or sign-up sheets when they gather in the gallery for refreshments after the service. Thank you for your consideration.

The UUFYS Board & Program Committee.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Plans for February and Beyond

We encourage everyone to join us in one or more of the upcoming activities. The Peace Vigil is getting more and more of us every Sat. at Noon at the corner of Livermore and Xenia Ave. If you cant stand for 1 hour bring a chair or come by with hot chocolate and coffee for our freezing activists. Our annual Interfaith Community Forum is Tues. Feb. 20th at 7pm at the First Presbyterean Church. The topic is "Religion and Politics: Enmeshed or Separate?" Our 3 panelists are from Antioch, Wilberforce, and Cedarville.

Please encourage any college students you know to come. Sign up to bring food to feed the college students before the Forum. Come at 7pm and participate. The advocacy for government aid to Darfur goes on at the Emporium Saturdays at 11am, and hats are still sold to raise money for UUSC aid to Darfur. On Thurs. Feb. 15 at 3pm join us for an Open House at the Coretta Scott King Center on Antioch campus to celebrate Coretta's birthday and meet Dana Patterson, the new Director. Please become a member of the Social Justice Committee of UUF Yellow Springs, We meet 3rd Sunday after services.

Current members are Ann T., Lucia L., Marianne W.I, Elizabeth D., Chris K., Peter W., Bill M., Al S., Sylvia Carter D., Hardy B. and Joan C. and anyone else who comes. We need your help!

What's Been Happening

At our UU we continue to present educational programs at our SoJus Sundays to advance our thinking and actions abut international peace and our global village. We are trying to counter the prevalent gov't and media themes of "us" and "them". Programs on Immigration law, the Women of Islam, and the Real Iran, Sudan, Rwanda, Palestine, Isreal and China help us know our neighbors and work harder at peaceful resolutions. "Dont call me enemy until you know my name".

Locally we were involved with the Peace Vigils, postcards to legislators for aid to Darfur, planning and attending Kwanzaa and MLK Jr Day March and Celebration , the Blood Drive , the March on Washington, and the showing of the video: "The Ground Truth".

Internationally we helped the Women's Group *Allah Fourou Sassako* (May God advance us) of the rural township of Gueskerou in Niger (West Africa) by starting an NGO, which loaned the 31 women money to buy lambs, raise them, and sell them for major holidays. The women will pay back the loans allowing other women to borrow. The original group will continue raising lambs with their profits. Thanks, UUF.

FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

Your Finance Committee (FinCom) is working on guidelines which members of the congregation can use when they plan fundraising activities, whether for charity or for special Fellowship activities not anticipated in the current budget. Three general ideas are listed below. We will be fleshing out these guidelines over the next few months and would really appreciate your input as to the details.

- Avoid competing with our annual spring stewardship campaign (pledge drive).
- Discuss procedures for handling cash, checks, and tax receipts with FinCom.
- Obtain committee sponsorship (usually Social Justice or Religious Education, but could be others).

Thanks for your help with this. Charlotte B. for Finance Committee.

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.



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P.O. Box 480

Yellow Springs OH 45387-1480