

# *Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs...*



## ***NEWSLETTER January 2007***

### **Letter from the President**

Greetings.

As you read this newsletter, the Board is distributing a survey to all members of the congregation. The survey is important to our process of taking stock, beginning broader dialogue, and creating a Vision for our Fellowship. We have done a survey before, but that has been more than three years ago, and some things have developed since then. Everyone (congregation members) attending the 1st Sunday service in January will receive a survey, and the Board will distribute surveys to those unable to attend. If for any reason you are not contacted by a Board member, please call one of us and we'll deliver a survey to you. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

On a related subject, I am aware that throughout our congregation there have been many conversations about what the Board is doing (secretly or openly), what is envisioned for our Fellowship, what may be happening to our building, and so on. Let me say for the record that **NOTHING** has been decided or determined of great impact. What the Board wants is to openly address the issues of concern with the congregation. We will be asking for your opinions, wants, questions, and more and we will be using an open and democratic process. There is a lot to discuss about what lies ahead and who we want to be as a congregation. The process will succeed with the involvement of all of our members. The Board is here to assist the process, not determine the outcome. Therefore, let us act through love and trust, acceptance and open minds. See you soon.

In Fellowship,

Stacy A.

### **January Programming... ...at a glance:**

#### **January 7:**

*Frank Lloyd Wright's "Sacred Spaces"*

#### **January 14:**

*Rev. Ricardo Lewis*

#### **January 21:**

*"Tell Me Your Story and I'll Tell You Mine"*

#### **January 28:**

*"Why I'm a Unitarian Universalist"*

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 Kling at:](#)

**[tau.athanasios@gmail.com](mailto:tau.athanasios@gmail.com)**

## January Program Calendar:

### Sunday, January 7

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "Why are we afraid to die?"

10:00 AM: "**Sacred Spaces**", a program about Frank Lloyd Wright's churches and philosophies presented by Sonja Ostendorf, Director of the newly restored Westcott House in Springfield.

11:30 AM: A potluck luncheon follows the program. Bring your own tableware and a generous dish to share

#### Frank Lloyd Wright's "Sacred Spaces"

Did you know that the premiere architect of the 20th century was a life-long Unitarian? Among his treasures are 10 brilliant houses of worship. These sacred spaces transcend religious boundaries and demonstrate not only Wright's genius but also his devotion to nature, which he said, "is all the body of God we are ever going to see".

### Sunday, January 14

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "What does it mean when you 'Worship'?"

10:00 AM: **Rev. Ricardo Lewis.**

### Sunday, January 21

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "Ralph Waldo Emerson's relevance today."

10:00 AM: "**Tell Me Your Story and I'll Tell You Mine**", presented by Harold and Jonatha Wright who will tell about their work with Appalachian Ohio SOS (Saving Our Stories) and the importance of stories in our lives.

### Sunday, January 28

8:30 AM: Spiritual discussion group, "What is Good and What is Bad About Catechisms?"

10:00 AM: "**Why I'm a Unitarian Universalist**", presented by Reverend Richard Ve-

nus, minister of the First Universalist Church of New Madison, OH. Richard previously served for 14 years as the minister of the Miami Valley UU Fellowship in Dayton.

## Coming in February

### Sunday, February 4:

4:30 PM: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Birthday Bash and Religious Education Intergenerational

### Rev. Ricardo Lewis

Ricardo Lewis was born and raised in San Francisco, California, where he witnessed, the Summer of Love, the Black Panther Party, the rise of political power for the Gay Pride Movement, the fallout of the "Symbionese Liberation Army, the closing of the State Mental Institutions and subsequently the beginning and rise of homeless people on the streets of San Francisco! These and other events helped to shape his views of how ministry should take place. He is an ordained Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, who has battled his own demons; over coming alcohol and drug addictions and having faith that God could use his failures to help him reach others. Faith is what keeps him motivated and is why this scripture passage is one of his favorites; "Without *faith*, it is impossible to please God"!

Ricardo is currently pastor of Shorter Chapel AME Church, in Greenfield, OH, and has served as Pastor of Whitman Chapel AME Church, in Belpre, OH and has been a part of the ministerial staffs of churches in Oakland, CA, Springfield, Dayton, and Xenia, OH.

Ricardo is a graduate of Wilberforce with Bachelor degrees in Psychology, and Rehabilitation/Mental Health, and is currently completing a dual degree MDiv and MA in Counseling Ministries at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, and waiting for certification as a Chaplain by the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy.

A Father, Son, Husband, Brother, Uncle, an African-American Male, and member of the greatest race," The Human Race"!

# Religious Education

## January Religious Education Plans

- Childcare will be provided for our **youngest children** in the Nursery by Ashante R. and Lauren W. They are using the “Celebrating Me and My World” curriculum and will be focusing on the senses of hearing and touch.
- Kathy R. will be teaching the Younger Group this month. The children 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.

## Religious Education News

Thanks to the following volunteers who helped out with the RE program in December: Chris K., Debbie J., David K., Dave T., and Bill Ms. Also, thanks to Jim O. for buying snacks, Debbie J. for updating the RE bulletin board, and Will and Alex T. for hanging holiday banners.

Congratulations to David K. and Kathy R., our new Co-Directors of Religious Education! They start in their new positions on January 1, 2007.

David is a student of religious studies and philosophy at Wright State and plans to attend divinity school to become a UU minister. He has served in the U.S. Navy and has extensive experience facilitating groups. He also has an interest in photography. He is married to Toby, a Wright State student in Women’s Studies and Modern Language. Folks who know David well say that he “is very attentive to other people, and skilled in graceful interaction with them.” “He is able to politely debate a point intellectually without taking the opponent's comments as personal attacks. He seems to have a good appreciation of diversity, especially religious diversity, and is tolerant of a variety of viewpoints and behaviors.” David will be most directly involved with our youth and adult programs.

Kathy has been a longtime member of this Fellowship (26 years) and is also a member of the Dharma Center, the Buddhist program in Yellow Springs. She has spent her career working with Deaf children as well as those with other special needs, and older youth and adults. Those who have worked with her say that she’s “easy to get to know, open minded and a collaborator.

She’s cheerful, bubbly and has a sense of humor. She’s good with the kids and gives them a good balance between freedom and control. She’s helpful, pro-active and supportive.” Also, she “has the perfect match of skills and emotional support in a very soft, friendly and approachable manner that suits her working with the younger kids and those who care for them.” Kathy will be working with the children 12 and younger as well as our Nursery childcare providers.

### Debbie D.

Interim Religious Education Director (until 1/1/07) and Board Liaison to the Religious Education Committee

### UUFYS Executive Board

**President:** Stacy A.

**President-Elect:** George K.

**Past President:** Judy W.

**Treasurer:** Louis S.

**Secretary:** Kathryn V.

**Members-At-Large:** Joy F.  
& Debbie D.



## The Many Different Faces Of Religious Education



UUFYS 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash and Intergenerational Event!  
Mark your calendars now for February 4, 2007, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. for a festive intergenerational potluck birthday party. That's when we'll be celebrating the Fellowship's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday as well as the birthdays of everyone in attendance. 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: Debbie D., Joy F., Debbie J. Jim O., Blythe P. or Eliza W.



Photos by:  
David K.



# Maintaining Right Relations: Expectations and Remedies

## Introduction

- We build our fellowship on a foundation of love and covenant with one another;
- To freely explore our values and honor our diversity as a source of communal strength;
- To accept responsibility for our individual acts and promote justice and peace;
- To celebrate the joys of discovery, embracing the fullest measure of our humanity;
- To communicate with kindness and support;
- To serve with compassion and commitment;
- To openly share our laughter and tears; and
- To show reverence for the divine in all that is.

## Maintaining Right Relations: Expectations and Remedies

The well being, strength and reputation of our fellowship depend on a sense of community among the members, friends, and staff. This community thrives in an atmosphere of trust, respect and cooperation, for within such an atmosphere differences of opinion and their resolution can enhance a sense of close-knit harmony. However, differences or misunderstandings that go unresolved and descend into prolonged conflict can threaten the social fabric of our fellowship. We recognize that conflict may arise from time to time and that when it does, its management and resolution through compromise or consensus are paramount. This document is intended to identify the steps to be followed in our fellowship should unresolved conflicts arise.

We preface these guidelines with the commonsense wisdom that we should all affirm and adhere to Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes and our own fellowship mission and covenant. Fellowship participants are encouraged to exhibit behaviors that enhance the dignity and inherent worth of all participants by: expressing sincere appreciation; dealing directly with each other; speaking softly and kindly; being creative in problem solving; maintaining a sense of humor; actively listening and clarifying what we hear; letting others have their say; respecting boundaries and confidentiality; refraining from harmful gossip about others; allowing for human fallibility; and speaking honestly. Each person, regardless of his or her role in this fellowship, is expected to live according to this covenant within the context of his/her relationship with the fellowship community.

We all, as responsible members of this community have an obligation to address concerns which threaten the health of our fellowship. This should be done by using existing procedures and proper committees in order to provide each other respectful participation in the life of our fellowship. This document is a policy statement about conflict resolution that fits within a set of documents, some of which are still in the development stage. These include:

- Bylaws
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Employment Policies
- Membership Handbook that may include committee and membership responsibilities
- A referral list to find the names of committee chairs and members

## Definitions/Descriptions

*Board:* The term “Board” refers exclusively to the elected officers and trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs.

*Conflict Resolution Team (CRT):* This Team will be a standing committee of three members selected for their facilitation and mediation skills and for their knowledge of various aspects of church functioning. These members will be appointed by the UUFYS Board and will serve on an “as needed” basis.

CRT members will receive training, which will be an expense identified in the annual budget. Members will excuse themselves from any conflict for which they have an inherent bias based on the individuals or topics involved. (Additional committee members may be recruited if necessary.) If available, the entire committee will be employed in seeking conflict resolution; if this is not possible at least two of the three members will be involved. Generally, the entire committee will work together on conflict resolution. The CRT will report to the Board on the nature and outcomes of all conflicts for which they are called into service while respecting privacy and confidentiality. The CRT will determine a record keeping format that provides an abstract of events while allowing for privacy and confidentiality considerations.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

*Conflict:* A prolonged battle, struggle or clash between members that creates discord and strife. Ongoing conflict can result in an antagonism of ideas or interests that results in open hostility or divisiveness. Conflict is very different from disagreements in which the participants can “agree to disagree.”

*Consensus Process:* This is the process by which a group attempts to make decisions by unanimous agreement. Both the CRT and the Board will strive to operate by consensus.

If this is not possible, the group may revert to voting. A majority is then necessary for any action.

### **Conflict Resolution: Guidelines and Suggestions for Success**

We hope that most conflicts will be resolved by efforts on the part of individuals to live by our covenant and UU Principles. A primary method for doing so is by directly approaching the individual with whom they are having a conflict, and treating that person with compassion and dignity. At step 1 in the following table of guidelines, the UU principles of *respecting the inherent worth and dignity of every person* and *acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth* will serve us well.

We anticipate that the later steps (2 and 3) will be necessary only when behaviors are seen to be dangerous (e.g., threatening people or property), disruptive (e.g., interfering with essential church functions), or damaging to our UU/fellowship image (e.g., driving people away). Finally, when no resolution is possible, concern for the well-being, stability, safety, and openness of our congregation as a whole shall be given priority over the feelings or actions of any individual.

**See CHART on Page 7.**

### **YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!**

The Board wants to know your thoughts and ideas about the future of our Fellowship over the next several years. Board members have been working with Martha G. to construct a survey, which will be distributed to you in early January. Don't miss this opportunity to let us know your suggestions, concerns, and ideas about our Fellowship's future. The survey results and other topics of interest will be presented by Board members during a future program, most likely in February.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION.....**

At the Souper Sunday on 1/28/07, members of the Conflict Resolution Team will make a brief presentation on the draft conflict resolution policy printed in this month's newsletter. Members of the Fellowship are welcome to provide feedback on the policy to Board members at the 1/28 lunch or any time in January. The final policy is set to be adopted at the Board's February meeting.

### **An upcoming Social Justice Event**

The Ground Truth is a video which shows, in their own words, how the Iraq War has effected our veterans. How they were recruited, trained to kill, what they had to do in Iraq to perform their mission and how it has effected them, physically and psychologically, upon their re-entry to civilian life. This powerful video was shown nationally in hundreds of theaters on veterans day to strong critical reviews.

The Ground Truth will be shown locally Sat. Jan. 27 @ 1:30 at the Little Art Theater, followed by a reception and discussion of the war by Iraq War and other veterans at the Senior Center. A \$5 (or more) donation for the Dayton Peace Museum will be requested for this non-political movie. Come see this powerful video of the war from the veterans' perspective.

The showing of the 70 min video is co-sponsored by Yellow Springs Friends Meeting, The Inter-Faith Council, Corner Books and the Dayton Peace Museum.

For further information contact Tucker M. 266-7658 or Neal C. 307-2211 or see the trailers and reviews at:

[www.thegroundtruth.net](http://www.thegroundtruth.net)

## Steps of Conflict Resolution

First Steps	Actions	Additional Information
<b>Step 1</b> Individual reflection	Examine your own role in the conflict. Why is this matter important to you?	Anonymous complaints are not acceptable. Be prepared to take responsibility for your concerns.
Discuss with a trusted third party	Check your perceptions with a trusted third party. Did they see it or experience it in the same way? Based on your telling of events and your feelings about it, would a neutral person feel the same way?	
Address the concern directly	Talk directly with the person (fellow member, etc.) with whom you have the disagreement.  Agree on a mutually acceptable time and place to talk one on one and as soon as possible after the incident.	Use "I" statements in your discussion ("I feel..." not "You did..."). Use <u>active</u> listening and reflect back what you've heard.  If the conflict is less with a person than with how they are performing a job (staff, volunteer), address the concern to the proper committee. If you feel that safety is an issue, use an appropriate third party or committee to provide a safe environment.
When to move to the next step	If unresolved, consult with a conflict resolution team member for assistance and direction on taking the next appropriate step.	
<b>Step 2</b> Contact a Conflict Resolution Team Member	If still unresolved, contact any member of the CRT who will call a meeting of the Team within one week. (All three members will be involved if available; at a minimum two of the three members will be involved.)	The CRT is empowered to facilitate the involved parties in agreeing on a set of recommendations, behavior contracts, and expectations. They are not limited to achieving compromises; when they believe that a situation exists where behaviors are harmful to the Fellowship, or not expressive of our collective values, they can recommend counseling, limits to participation in church life, or other behavior changing strategies.
When to move to the next step	Should one or both of the parties refuse to participate in the resolution process, the behavior is unchanged, and/or the belief of the Team is that the behavior is a threat to the fellowship, the matter will go to Step 3.	
<b>Step 3</b> Exclusion or removal of a person from church activities	The Board can take action to exclude a person from attending fellowship activities for a period of time based on a refusal to honor our church mission and covenant.  The Board, given just cause, can exclude a person from the fellowship and the fellowship premises, and remove their name from church membership.	The Board may specify conditions for returning to the UU Fellowship of Yellow Springs community, and set criteria for evaluation of compliance.  Once conditions are met, assent of the Board will be required for return to the UU Fellowship of Yellow Springs community.
Information sharing	The Board may share the final actions with the congregation within the bounds of privacy and confidentiality.	

### TAR HOLLOW

Get out those new 2007 engagement calenders and mark the dates for this spring's Tar Hollow weekend. The dates are May 18 - 20, 2007, that's the third weekend in May, the weekend before Memorial Day weekend. If this be winter, can spring be far behind? Hardy B., [hardy@bookcrafts.com](mailto:hardy@bookcrafts.com)

### Ordination of Martha Hodges

Members and friends of the Yellow Springs UU Fellowship are cordially invited to attend the ordination service of Martha Hodges, Interim Minister of Miami Valley UU Fellowship. In our UU tradition, only a congregation has the power and privilege of ordaining a minister. This is a chance to participate in an authentic UU tradition and your presence would be an honor.

The ceremony will take place Jan 7, 2007 at 4:00 PM at MVUUF (8690 Yankee St., Dayton) and will be followed by a reception. Please join us on this joyous occasion.

The Congregation of MVUUF.

## 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**