



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs
Newsletter *July 2006*

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.

July Calendar of Sunday Programs:

Sunday, July 2:

8:30 am: Spiritual discussion group, "Guilt and sin"

9:30 am: Choir preparation.

10:00 am: "China: Under Mao and Now," presented by Len C who traveled to China for the first time in 1977 and again in 2002 -- 25 years later. Len is a Fellowship member, Wright State professor of sociology emeritus, and an effective community volunteer with the Yellow Springs Library Association, the Tree Committee, and Glen Helen.

11:30 am: A potluck lunch follows the program. Bring a generous dish to share and your own table service.

Sunday, July 9:

8:30 am: Spiritual discussion group, "Spirituality and sexuality"

9:30 am: Choir preparation.

10:00 am: "Creation Connection: a Local Christian Environmental Justice Ministry," presented by Bob Jurick, founder of two environmental organizations. He founded two environmental organizations: B-W Greenway Community (www.bwgreenway.org) and Greenways of Dayton (www.daytongreenways.org) and is a former board member of Tecumseh Land Trust.

Sunday, July 16:

8:30 am: Spiritual discussion group, "Spiritual development as a 'spectrum' (Scott Peck)"

9:30 am: Choir preparation.

10:00 am: "Gnosticism". David K, a newcomer to the Fellowship, will present a survey of the ancient Christian sect of Gnosticism with an emphasis upon the Gnostic texts from Nag Hammadi, and their application today. David describes himself as "a religious syncretist combining Nature Spirituality, Gnostic Christianity, and Roman Paganism in ways that speak true to his soul." He is currently enrolled in a program of religion and women's studies at WSU.

Sunday, July 23:

8:30 am: Spiritual discussion group, "Gnosticism"

9:30 am: Choir preparation.

10:00 am: "Women in Islam", presented by Naseem R. Naseem, a native of Pakistan, teaches at the McGregor School of Antioch University and has much insight and first-hand information about women in the Islamic tradition.

Sunday, July 30:

8:30 am: Spiritual discussion, "Faith communities as gold mines for entertainment media."

9:30 am: Choir preparation.

10:00 am: "Pagans: Who Are They and What Have They Done With Heaven?" Join us for a discussion of who pagans are, what they believe and practice, and how they aren't so different from the rest of us. This program will be presented by Blythe P, Fellowship member, artist and eclectic pagan. Blythe's art will adorn the walls of the meeting room and will be on display through August.

Sunday, August 6:

8:30 am: Spiritual discussion group, "Defusing the population bomb"

9:30 am: Choir preparation.

10:00 am: Rev. Martha Hodges, interim minister at Miami Valley UU Fellowship, will speak.

11:30 am: Potluck lunch follows the program.

Fun Events in July!

- Thursday, July 20, 12 noon: Potluck women's luncheon at Ellis Pond. It will be too hot for soup, so bring salads and bread. Mitzi will bring beverage and maybe dessert. 767-1988.
- Sunday, July 30, 10:00 am: Car wash for Rwanda- \$5 for exterior; \$5 for interior.

UUFYS - Our 50th Anniversary!

September marks an exciting milestone in our Fellowship's history – our 50th year! In honor of this landmark occasion, the Board wants your ideas about how we can celebrate with a series of events and activities. Please share your ideas with any Board member (listed at the back of this newsletter) before the July 9 Board meeting.

Note to Choir Members – Mitzi M

There will be no choir practice during July and August. We will resume in September. Please come at 9:30 am to go over the hymns for the day. My heartfelt thanks to all the choir members who faithfully have come every week. You have enhanced our Sunday services.

FinCom Report: Pledge Campaign Results

Thanks to the 103 members and friends who pledged financial support to the Fellowship for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The total pledged as of June 20 was \$45,089, an impressive one-third higher than the amount collected during 2005-06. Although we did not reach that ambitious \$60,000 "vision" budget goal, we collectively took a big step forward this year. The pledge total can still grow as additional cards are mailed in. Since the pledge card indicates both your level of financial support and your wishes regarding membership status, we need to hear from you on an annual basis in order to update our membership records. If you have not yet returned your card, please do so this month.

Help Wanted:

Sound System Operators:

Our fellowship could use another few sound system operators, to ensure we have a trained person present every Sunday. If you can hear and turn a volume knob, you're qualified. You also get a seat in the most desired area of a church or fellowship: the back row!

If you're willing to help, please contact Dean L. at 767-9833. He'll be glad to give you instruction on how our system works and lead you through a service.

Financial Secretary/bookkeeper:

Finance committee needs a volunteer to work on the computer every week to record pledge payments and other receipts, prepare the bank deposit and carry the money to the bank. Committee attendance is not required.

Brochure Designer:

The Endowment committee is preparing a brochure and needs someone with desktop publishing skills to format the text into an attractive product. Please contact Hardy B, 767-7417 or hardy(at)bookcrafts.com.

Letter from the President – Stacy A

Dear Fellowship Members and Friends,

As I write this letter, I am preparing to attend the UUA General Assembly in St. Louis. This is an honor for me, although I will miss the Sunday interaction with all of you that means a great deal to me. Afterward, I invite any of you to call, email, or speak with me about what I experienced at GA this year.

Because of our growth in numbers and programs, this is an exciting time for our Fellowship and a rewarding time to become involved with the GA's opportunities to learn from a larger group. Each week I use every opportunity to listen to individual's concerns, dreams, and desires for our Fellowship and I want to connect your interests with the needs that are present for all of us. Here are a few common and continuing areas of comment that I want to bring out of private discussion so that more of us can get together and get involved.

One topic that has a gaping need for good people to get their hands on is that of financial stewardship. This isn't about planning the budget, but rather acting in the interest of the Fellowship as a whole so that the pledges are fulfilled in a timely manner, therefore ensuring a smooth operation. Sound dry and boring? Well, imagine being the person who tells Joan that since people stopped honoring their pledges, there will be no speakers for Social Justice Sunday, no field trips, and less money given to a chosen charity each month. Or perhaps there is a person brave enough to tell the Religious Education Committee and the Member Services Committee that if only the pledges were paid, we could allow them to purchase the materials they need to continue their work. So, in that light, are there among us some good people who would use their skills of encouragement to help us keep the wheels greased and rolling? This means joining the Finance committee's Stewardship sub-committee.

You can please some of the people most of the time, but not all of the people all of the time. Such is the reality of our Sunday programs. The topics, the speakers, the readings, the music -- they won't be a hit with you every time, but sitting next to you is someone who is connecting with that UU message even as you wait for it to be over. I come to every program without the expectation that it will be exactly what I want and knowing that if we touch at least one person and keep their interest, they are likely to want more and to come back. We share these experiences, but we don't own them. We can offer a diversity of MEANING on Sunday morning that few competing denominations could hope for. That's wonderful! Yet, this too requires attention and work, from each of us. I know that joining a committee is a draw for some but not for many. There is another way for us to insure great programming -- indeed the entire Sunday morning experience. Get involved through your personal interest. Show everyone that you care enough to choose your small role that will make a big difference. Do you have a talent for telling stories? Are you a great singer in the shower? Are you an artist? Would you like to lead a service? Could it be that you are the perfect person to greet people at the door and help them feel welcome? There are many small things that come together to build a great service, and I am confident that each of us already knows what we could lend to it. Speak to Mary Cargan or Mary Sims about how you can join in.

Acting on behalf of our Fellowship with the personal interests and talents we each possess will benefit all of us without overtaxing the energy of a few. I know that we have been operating with the valuable help of many people, and I know that many of us who could be involved are being overlooked. To all of you that haven't been asked to contribute but have the desire to do so, please accept my apology that you weren't approached and my invitation to speak to me soon. This Fellowship is valuable to all of us. All of you are even more valuable. Please share from your hands, your heart, your interest. Thank you

UU Fellowship Responds to Need - Martha G

The Tuesday night covenant group wishes to thank all Fellowship members who contributed non-perishable food items for the Greene County Food Pantry. The Food Pantry was in dire need of contributions during the winter months and the covenant group arranged to collect and transport the items. More than 150 boxes and cans of food were collected! Many thanks!

In Appreciation – Mitzi M

Mary M and Jan G prepared a service for residents of Friends Care Center on June 11. Mary played the hymns and Jan, who is an ordained Congregational minister, conducted the service. The residents really enjoyed it. As a result, I was able to participate in the Interfaith Choral Festival with no worries about being two places at once. Thank you, Mary and Jan.

Drivers Needed

At the Yellow Springs Senior Center, we need some more volunteer drivers. The Center provides transportation for seniors (and other Yellow Springs residents who are unable to drive) for medical appointments, shopping trips, and other necessary journeys in the local area. By driving for us, you will help seniors maintain their independence and live at home in the community. The folks who use our service are at least somewhat mobile: some of them use a wheelchair, but are able to transfer to and from a vehicle with minimal assistance.

Most trips are scheduled between 9:30 am and 3:30 pm on weekdays, although an occasional doctor's appointment may be outside those hours. Drivers can sign up for a regular day or half day on a weekly or less frequent basis or can volunteer to fill in as substitutes or specifically for medical appointments. We provide the vehicle and the fuel and we don't mind a bit if you sneak in an errand or two of your own! I am especially looking for people who can drive on Monday, Wednesday, and/or Friday either for a full day or a half day. If you are interested in joining our corps of drivers or learning more about the program, give me a call at the Senior Center (767-5751) or at home (767-9164). - Barbara M, Transportation Coordinator

Religious Education – Debbie D

Plans for Summer: Childcare will be provided for our youngest children in the Nursery and on our lovely Fellowship grounds. Children who are 6 and older will study UU Principles with Debbie Downey, Eliza Woodburn, Sylvia Carter-Denny, and Stacy Arnett. During the summer, the kids will be working with Al Schlueter on fund raisers for the Rwanda school he told us about -- their goal is to raise \$200 and support a child for the coming year. On July 30th they'll hold a car wash: \$5 for a wash; \$5 for indoor cleaning (windows, vacuuming).

Donations wanted: The RE Committee wants to add some tire swings and play equipment for the 5 and younger set. We're especially interested in purchasing a playhouse or castle (e.g., Little Tykes or Fisher Price) that could be used in the Nursery during the winter and outdoors other seasons. A child-size tool bench would also be useful. Please keep your eyes out for us while you're at garage sales, etc.

"Calling all cars!" Actually we're calling all those interested in the spiritual development of Fellowship children to join Ann P, the new Religious Education Director, in revitalizing the RE Committee. This committee meets once a month and puts together RE policies, curriculum plans, special events such as Secret Friends, and intergenerational activities such as

the fall campfire/campout. Over the past few years, committee members have become a close-knit group, and this is a supportive, fun group, which might be a perfect niche for you. The next meeting is on Sunday 8/20 at noon. Contact Ann to join today! (299-6453; 266-9169)

Thanks to the following RE volunteers during June: Al S, Chris K, Eliza W, and Judy W (2 Sundays!). Also, a belated thank you to Deb J who helped out in the Nursery on short notice in May – thanks Deb, you're a life saver! Thanks so much to the 40+ volunteers who helped out with Religious Education all during the past year. Nearly 40% of the adult Fellowship population participated in a RE activity in 2005-2006, a record that I doubt many organizations could match. As I end my term as RE Director, I feel incredible gratitude for the help and support you gave me during my 2-1/2 years in this position. It's thanks to YOU that our Fellowship RE program has seen such remarkable growth!

Spotlight on Youth: A Rose, by Catyana Maree P-B:

A Rose is like your love, so beautiful and sweet.
It's like the first time you and that person meet.
You say your hellos and then your goodbyes,
But somehow you just can't unlock your eyes.
You're binding together, you can't pull apart,
Suddenly you have both become just one heart.

MY UU Elevator Speech by Harold W

As a storyteller, I travel a lot outside Yellow Springs, often in rural areas of the south. Telling tales in church basements and the like at times, I am often asked questions about the church I attend. It was not always comfortable for me to say, "I don't go to church." Even after joining the UU Fellowship of Yellow Springs, I found myself at times descending the negative staircase of "Well, we don't believe this nor do we believe that..." I have longed for something more positive to say and find the concept of the elevator speech welcoming. I find it is easier, however, to speak in "I" statements rather than trying to say anything much about the whole fellowship. I was a Unitarian in New Orleans over 50 years ago, and I still don't fully understand the UU "us."

"Like the writers of the Constitution of the United States itself, Unitarian Universalists believe in the freedom of beliefs. I myself was attracted to the Unitarian concept of one God rather than the Trinitarian ideas of later Christianity. I do value the teaching of Jesus in his love and respect for all humanity. Like many of my fellow UU members, I find value and spirituality in the positive aspects of ALL the world religions. I try to avoid, in my own life, however, any teaching anywhere that focuses on separation or condemns other human beings based on anything, including religious beliefs. My world view is a loving gray rather than the black and white words of One Book or a Single Practice. Some good folks I know believe that God had one begotten son. I like to think, however, that He might have been more generous than that, and has given us other wise, but human, sons here and there throughout the world. Maybe even an enlightened daughter or two. . . .

A New Spin On Covenant Groups – Charlotte B

Our Covenant Groups are a wonderful way to get to know each other in many ways. We can explore our own and others' ideas and concerns more deeply than is possible during a Sunday program, coffee hour, or potluck dinner. Certain structural features help make the groups effective -- the check-in, the behavioral covenant, the commitment to attend and to listen. The groups are expected to do some service for the Fellowship and for the community, but this is not their primary purpose- which is to become more cohesive and personally rewarding.

I want to start a Covenant Group whose members share an interest in organizational development and want to apply their passion to one or another of the untended parts of the Fellowship "garden" -- projects that need to be done but haven't been picked up under the existing committee structure. Some of these that reflect my interests are listed below. The actual choice would be generated by the group, if one comes into being.

- connecting with repeat visitors to help them decide how they might fit into the fellowship community;
- reaching former members to ascertain current interests;
- developing a capability in media relations;
- searching UUA and congregational web sites for information we could use;
- creating a system and volunteer structure for ongoing housekeeping between workbees;
- creating a system and volunteer structure for regular cleanup after meetings;
- planning a fundraising event;
- developing a curriculum for a study group or program series on retirement issues;
- developing a curriculum for a study group or program series on end-of-life issues;
- researching and writing a history of the Fellowship;
- locating, acquiring, organizing, and preserving archival materials;

I could go on, but you get the idea. I envision most of these as "demonstration projects" that could be accomplished by a time-limited group and then taken over by others. If this concept appeals to you, I invite you to contact me at 767-1854 or battino.2@wright.edu (note address correction) this summer so that a group could come together in the fall.

Endowment Fund Update by Hardy B

Last December the Executive Board established a Social Responsibility Endowment Fund to manage long-term gifts to the Fellowship in support of our work in promoting social justice. An endowment committee has been formed made up of Hardy B, George K, Sandy L, Judy R and Dick R. We set a goal for the year 2006 of \$20,000 and have so far raised \$10,000. In the coming weeks we shall be talking to members of the Fellowship about how you can help the Fellowship in its mission through your gifts to the Endowment and making the Endowment the recipient of your planned giving.

SpiralScouts International – Ian Sn and Jennifer B, Leaders

This Earth-centered program for girls and boys of minority faiths working, growing and learning together debuted in February of 2001. SpiralScouts began as an organized children's program within the Aquarian Tabernacle Church (ATC). Word of the program spread and the ATC formalized SpiralScouts into an expanded program now available to anyone worldwide.

The program has a unique approach to youth programming. Each group is led by both a male and a female adult, to achieve and teach the balance that is so central to Earth-centered beliefs. While SpiralScouts was developed on Pagan beliefs and practices, it is designed to be adaptable by other minority faiths as well. In addition to traditional woodland lore, camping and the outdoor living skills, the program includes teaching the many mythologies of the ancient world. Uniquely, it includes a component new to youth group programming - life strategies and skills for teens, to help them learn early how to have good relationships with their peers and adults, and interpersonal skills that will serve them throughout their adult lives.

Within the program there are three levels of child participation:



FireFlies, who range from preschoolers through age 8;



SpiralScouts, ranging from age 8 through 14;



PathFinders, who range from 14 upward.

Currently, SpiralScouts serves youth in 20 US States and several provinces in Canada. Our program is experiencing explosive growth as families look for alternatives to traditional outdoor youth group programs. Our group's name is The Elemental Circle. We formed in January of 2005. During the summer that year we started meeting at the Fellowship hall. We have enjoyed the grounds for games outdoors and also have done nature watches. The scouts have requested many normal scouting activities, camping, hiking, and crafts. They have surprised us by requesting to learn sign language, which we practice each meeting. Everyone is welcome.

Let's go to the movies! Global Warming with Al Gore:

The Social Justice Committee and friends invite you to join us in viewing Al Gore's new movie, "An Inconvenient Truth". Planned dates for showing at the Little Art are the week beginning Friday, July 7. Opportunities for talk back session/s are in the works - dates and places to be announced. Jenny Cowperthwaite favors Saturday night, July 8, after the 7 o'clock showing. Watch your Fellowship Sunday bulletin and YS News for further information.

Bring your friends, neighbors and newcomers to the community. Let them discover that this is just another way that UUFYS's demonstrate their faith. The first step to problem solving is education and community action. Global Warming has been studied by UU's across the nation and was considered for adoption as a "Statement of Conscience" at the UUA General Assembly. By the time you read this, it will be news nationwide. To help, contact Joan C, and Sylvia Carter D.

Social Justice News

In May, local residents Harold Fn, Joan C and Bill M recently were awarded the 2006 Social Justice Lifetime Service Awards at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Harold was honored for his service and advocacy in the fields of Medicine and Mental Health. Joan was honored for her service and advocacy in community and Mental Health. Bill received his award for his 40-plus years as an educator and advocate for the youth in Yellow Springs.

Those Pesky Little Chores

There are several small tasks which recur every week at the meetinghouse: greeting people at the door and helping visitors on Sunday; bringing snacks and preparing coffee; and, of course, washing dishes and cleaning up after coffee hour. Please sign up on the clipboards for coffee hour and with Ruth L for greeters.

Leadership List – Executive Board

Stacy A, President	767-7943
Judy W, Past President	376-3459
George K, President Elect	767-2782
Sandy L, Secretary	767-2700
Louis S, Treasurer	767-1603
Joy F, Member at Large	767-7724
Debbie Dy, Member at Large	767-7849

Forgiveness is not an occasional act:
It is a permanent attitude.



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