



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs Newsletter June 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.

June Calendar

June 5 (Sunday): ○ 8:30 a.m.: Adult spiritual discussion group (New!). ○ 10:00 a.m.: “Unitarian Universalism for the Twenty-first Century,” a presentation by Harold Fishbain based on an article from the *UU World*. A picnic lunch follows, with hot dogs and brats provided. Bring side dishes, desserts, or drinks to share; and plan to eat outside—weather permitting. ○ 7:00 p.m.: Coordinating Council meeting at the Fellowship.

June 12 (Sunday): ○ 8:30 a.m.: Adult spiritual discussion group. ○ 10:00 a.m.: “Nurtured By Mother Earth: Sharing Our Experiences.” We all have everyday (and sometimes extraordinary) interactions with the natural world. What has brought you joy, peace, awe, or wonder?

June 19 (Sunday): ○ 8:30 a.m.: Adult spiritual discussion group. ○ 10:00 a.m.: “Study/Action Issues From the UU Commission on Social Witness.” Five issues are proposed; Women’s Rights, Safety of Children and Youth, Peacemaking, Affordable Housing, and Moral Values for a Pluralistic Society. A panel will present the issues; and we’ll vote for the one we want the UUA to pursue.

June 26 (Sunday): ○ 8:30 a.m.: Adult spiritual discussion group. ○ 10:00 a.m.: “The State of Women’s Reproductive Rights Today,” a discussion with Molly Galvin, field organizer for Planned Parenthood of Ohio. Included is a showing of the Sundance film selection, “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

July 3 (Sunday): ○ 8:30 a.m.: Adult spiritual discussion group. ○ 10:00 a.m.: “Spirituality—Is This the Enemy?”, a presentation by George Katchmer based on an article from the *UU World*. No potluck this day; instead plan to attend the 4th of July picnic on Monday.

July 4 (Monday): ○ 6:30 p.m.: Holiday potluck picnic at the home of Mary Kosheleff and Louis Sims, 1333 Corry Street, Yellow Springs. Afterward we’ll go to Gaunt Park for the fireworks.

Note: E-mail Newsletter items to Ron Siemer:
ronbear@sbcglobal.net. **Deadline: June 13.**

Typing help

Mary Kosheleff has agreed to type and reproduce the Order of Service and announcements for Sunday morning meetings. Please send information to her as early as possible but no later than the Wednesday before the program you are producing. PLEASE NOTE: For June 5, send your data to Charlotte Battino; for June 12, send it to Judy Williams.

Ed. Note: Heh heh! Good luck, Mary!

Adult Discussion Group

The adult discussion group met on May 26th (4th Thursday) at 7:30 pm at the Fellowship. Articles from the *UU World* magazine included “Modeling the Simple Life” (March--April issue) and “The Thaw, Climate Change, and our Ethical Response (May--June issue).

Members of the adult discussion group are planning a theological program on the 1st Sundays of June, July, and August. The topics will be taken from past issues of *UU World*.

Request from Charlotte Battino:

Please complete your pledge payments for 2004-2005 before June 30.

Op. cit. — Ed.

Corrections to Directory

- ✓ Please update the phone number for Amanda Calder to 767- 1633.
- ✓ Please add Doris Davis, 150 E. Herman St.

For Sale to Highest Bidders

We are storing some items that have been donated and would like to see them put to better use. They are:

- ✓ a computer CPU;
- ✓ a trundle bed frame with mattress; and,
- ✓ a Peugeot adult bicycle which needs pedals.

Please submit your bids to Mary Kosheleff by mail. The highest bid by June 20 wins! — Mary Kosheleff

Ombuds Observations (OO)

For the past few years we have been experiencing increasing numbers of conflicts within the Fellowship. Some of these conflicts are of a personal nature; nonetheless, they affect all of us.

I have been trying to understand the factors responsible for the increasing conflict. I suggest that the use of email is a significant contributing component. In the "old" days, when there was a difference of opinion a face-to-face meeting of the disputants usually eventually occurred.

Now, however, with the Internet as our principal medium of communication, it seems that disputes are amplified with e-mail messages spread in ever widening circles as the disputants try to "explain" their positions, solidify their alliances, and refute the other side. Face-to-face meetings to understand the other side and resolve problems occur rarely. Conflict breeds more conflict.

The Ombudsman says that we should return to the "old" method and talk directly with those with whom we disagree. We are all members of the Fellowship. We have much more in common than we have in differences. E-mail should be used to send notices of meetings and to inform of factual things, not as a weapon of war.

For peace and tranquility....

— Al Schlueter ●

Traveling?

If you have flexible travel plans and would like to stay in a UU B&B, you need to consult "UU'RE HOME" (formerly Homecomings), a listing of UU homes around the country where you can be hosted by (presumably) compatible people. Some of these enterprises earn bread and butter for their owners, but many are operated for the benefit of local UU congregations. Most are rooms in private homes rather than commercial establishments.

In its 25th year, this listing is still rather small -- you have a choice of five homes in Ohio, for example -- but it could be something special for your next trip. The Fellowship copy of the directory will reside in Room 1. Look for the little blue book on the shelf next to the UUA Bookstore catalogs.

If you travel enough to want to subscribe to this service, you can get the directory for \$18/year, or have access to their less extensive web listing for \$10/year, or pay \$23 for both. Check them out at www.uurehome.com.

— Charlotte Battino ●

Be a Volunteer!

The spirit of UUFYS — or of any successful group — depends on the voluntary participation of its members. This is the time of year when we all need to think about how we can share our interests, skills, and energy to further the work of our Fellowship.

Talk with persons who are involved in types of work you have an interest in or would like to do. Attend a committee meeting. Ask any board member or committee member about his or her particular activities, and decide how your skills and interests would best fit into the needs and ambitions of the Fellowship.

At the Annual Meeting on May 1, volunteer forms were made available for anyone able and willing to volunteer to fill out before leaving. Those unable to attend the meeting received forms later.

Think seriously about how you can contribute. The important work of our Fellowship depends heavily on the energy and dedication of our volunteers. ●

UUA Press Room

The Press Room provides members of the media with quick access to useful materials, including an index of recent articles, UUA press releases, and an electronic media kit.

Background information and a list of articles on several major Public Witness issues includes:

Marriage Equality

- ✓ The UUA's position on freedom to marry
- ✓ Media coverage of marriage equality and the UUA

Boy Scouts of America

- ✓ The UUA and the Boy Scouts of America: A continuing struggle for inclusiveness
- ✓ Media coverage of the Boy Scouts and the UUA

Voter Registration

- ✓ Election 2004: A Call to Action
- ✓ Media coverage of voter registration and the UUA

UUA Media Contacts

For more information please contact:

- ✓ John Hurley, Director of Information & Public Witness: jhurley@uua.org
- ✓ Janet Hayes, UUA Information Officer: jhayes@uua.org ●

Working Toward a Public Witness Policy

Our UU values and our commitment to social justice lead us to speak out on public policy issues. We need a policy that describes the procedures and safeguards required to do so. Below is a draft of the policy for your consideration. Please submit your comments to Stacy Arnett or Joel Goldberg.

UUFYS Public Witness Policy — Draft written by Joel Goldberg, April 9, 2005

Unitarian Universalists in general, and the UU Fellowship of Yellow Springs in particular, are actively interested in the public policy arena. We have opportunities guaranteed by our U.S. Constitution and our denomination's religious heritage to call attention to injustices of all forms, to demand changes in social attitudes and governmental programs, and to hold leaders and institutions accountable for their actions and policies.

To this end, the UUFYS Executive Board has developed the following guidelines for advocating for such things as, but not limited to, civil rights, peace, personal liberties, children's welfare, economic justice, health care, support for the arts, and protection of the environment.

But while such advocacy is an important ingredient of our congregation, we must also keep in mind the fact that not all members will necessarily agree with every position that is proposed, or be entirely satisfied with how a public statement is worded. There are also certain limitations on tax-exempt organizations to be considered.

Here are seven guidelines to follow as individuals, as a congregation, or as a subgroup of the congregation:

1) Any proposed public position, or public stance, taken by the congregation as a whole, one of its committees, or any other group of members, must be a good fit with the UUA seven principles.

2) To whatever extent is practical, the topic and proposed action--the statement and its wording-- should be discussed with the congregation. If the statement or

position is to represent the entire congregation, it may be advisable to vote on it before it is released to the public. If the issue is particularly controversial or if the vote appears very close, members may request a "supermajority" vote--eg, three-quarters of the quorum.

3) A vote generally will not be necessary when the UUFYS statement reflects established policy of the Unitarian Universalist Association, as previously enunciated, for example, in a Statement of Conscience, an action of Immediate Witness, a statement by the UUA president, or a publication of the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy. However, that source must be clearly acknowledged in the UUFYS statement.

4) When it is not practical to poll the entire congregation, UUFYS policy statements may be issued by, and over the name of, the Executive Board, a subgroup such as the Social Justice Committee, or any subgroup of three or more members--with the explicit understanding that the group making the statement be clearly identified.

5) During election campaigns, our Fellowship, along with all other religious organizations, may not publicly endorse, or publicly oppose, any political candidate running for office. This applies to elections at all levels, whether it be for a local school board or for national office. Nor can our congregation as a group support candidates financially.

6) Despite these cautionary points, the Fellowship is encouraged to participate in public events such as political forums to which all candidates are invited, and in nonpartisan activities such as voter registration, as long as careful attention is paid to being objective. The test is whether the activity is educational rather than advocacy.

7) Restrictions imposed on the congregation as a whole or its subgroups do not apply to individual members. For example, a member may freely make a partisan statement in a letter to a newspaper, while making it clear that the member is speaking only in his or her own name. ●

The Newsletter staff (sic) invites UUF members to submit articles, notices, suggestions, complaints, and other items of communication for publication for any upcoming issue. Group meetings or conclusions, notices of items for sale, solicitations for help with projects, praise for members or non-members, suggestions for better ways to do things or for new things that need to be done — all are excellent fodder for publication. Particularly in the summer season, we frequently must publish with too little material to fill an issue, or material is submitted too late for publication, so silly things like this must be used to fill the pages. Help stamp out editorial fillers! ●



UUF member Jim Rose is shown introducing characters in his Punch and Judy show. Jim travels around the country with his wonderful puppets and a complete puppet theater, all of which Jim designed and built in the James Rose Puppets workshop in Yellow Springs.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs
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