

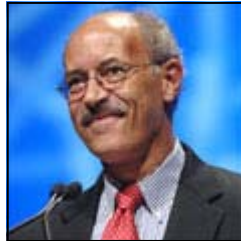
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs...



NEWSLETTER June 2008

A Long Overdue Conversation About Race

By Rev. William G. Sinkford,
President, Unitarian Universalist
Association



A commentator on CNN yesterday expressed what I imagine is the feeling of many white Americans in response to Barack Obama's speech about race last week: "Why can't we just go back to being color blind?" In our hearts, most Americans will acknowledge that racism is still at work in the body politic and in our individual lives, regardless of our race or cultural identity. But most would also acknowledge that we haven't yet found a way to move forward to redress the impact of racism, or even a way to productively talk about race in our society or in our lives. We have been stuck for far too long.

Much of the conversation about race is so filled with political correctness that truth is hard to come by. Whites move so easily to denial, citing the progress that has been made in recent decades and glossing over the glaring disparities in opportunity, income, even incar-

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June at a glance...

Sunday, June 1:

“God-Talk in Genesis.”

Sunday, June 8:

“Take Us Home.”

Sunday, June 15:

“Mother’s and Father’s Day.”

Sunday, June 22:

“Do Chickens Come
Home to Roost?”

Sunday, June 29:

“Gratitude!”

Mark your calendar!

**Sunday June 22 at Noon:
Annual Meeting! See Page 4 for details!**

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs is published monthly. To submit material for the newsletter please do so by the 15th of each month. Please submit material as **non-formatted text** in your e-mail or as an MS Word attachment in 12 pt New Times Roman with no formatting (bold, italic, etc...). Send material to David K. at: tau.athanasios@gmail.com

June Program Calendar:

Sunday, June 1

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "*Prayer, Meditation, & Contemplation.*"

10:00 a.m.: "God-Talk in Genesis," by Rabbi Mark Verman. The opening chapters of Genesis introduce the two Divine epithets that are usually rendered in English as God and LORD. The origins of these English terms will be discussed in relationship to their original Hebrew phrasing. We will discover that the Hebrew terms, Elohim and YHVH are richly evocative and multi-valent. They are far more dynamic than the static English terminology. Awareness of diverse meanings of Elohim and YHVH can provide an important gateway to promoting personal spirituality.

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

Sunday, June 8

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "*Being a stranger in our own land.*"

10:00 a.m.: "Take Us Home." Clips of the documentary film about the exodus of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel will be discussed by the film's producer/director Aileen LeBlanc.

The culture of the Ethiopian Jews dates back thousands of years—to the time when they were forced to the mountains of Gondar Ethiopia; when they were not allowed to own land; when they were called Falasha, strangers, hyena people. As Jews they were told that conversion to Christianity meant a better life, but often the promises vanished like vapor. Their hope lies now in the promised land—Israel, where they return to the faith of their birth.

Aileen LeBlanc, film producer, director, and journalist has worked in television, film, and

Mark Verman is the inaugural occupant of the Larry and Leonore Zusman Chair of Judaic Studies at Wright State University, where he has taught for 8 years. He previously held the Jay Phillips Chair of Jewish Studies at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. Professor Verman received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in medieval Jewish studies, specializing in Jewish mysticism. In 1974 he was accorded Rabbinical ordination from the head of the Council of Orthodox Rabbis, Toronto, Canada. Professor Verman's numerous publications include *The Books of Contemplation* and *The History and Varieties of Jewish Meditation*.

public radio and has earned more than 50 regional and national awards. She lives in Yellow Springs.

Sunday, June 15

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "*Transitions.*"

10:00 a.m.: "Mother's and Father's Day," presented by Mitzi M. The congregation will be invited to share stories and memories honoring their parents. Participants may also include special memories of being honored by our own children.

Sunday, June 22

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "*Perspective.*"

10:00 a.m.: "Do Chickens Come Home to Roost?," a program conceived by Fellowship member, Peter W. Is the universe fair? Is the universe balanced? Does good trump evil? Or does the universe belong to the evil empire? Members and friends of UUFYS are invited to the convening of a grand jury to consider this issue on Sunday morning, June 22.

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Those who wish to may provide appropriate brief comment to the jury in deliberation. Based on the evidence, a determination as to the validity of the charges presented and whether or not to indict will be rendered.

[NOTE: Annual Meeting at Noon. See page 4.]

Sunday, June 29

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "*Transcendence & Immanence.*"

10:00 a.m.: "**Gratitude!**" a program produced and presented by Fellowship member, Blythe P. "Counting your blessings may sound trite when you're in the thick of miring ooze, but it so beats the alternatives that Blythe believes it's the place to return to over and over again. Come learn how to hone your silver-lining abilities and find your way back to grace and gratitude even on the darkest of days!!!"

We'll also be celebrating the special brand of volunteerism we practice at UUFYS with recognition and an Ice Cream Social! Join us!!

Coming in July: Sunday, July 6

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "*War & Conscientious Object.*"

10:00 a.m.: Todd T., a materials research engineer at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, will speak about his experience in Afghanistan as a member of the military and how that ties into his efforts to establish an Ohio chapter of the humanitarian relief organization, Emergency USA.

11:30 a.m.: A potluck lunch follows the program.

Green Notes – Did you know that ...

- The second Saturday of each month, Greene County accepts old electronic waste (computers and smaller TVs) at the Solid Waste District location at 2145 Greene Way Blvd in Xenia, which is between the Social Security building and the jail, near the old WalMart site.
- That site also accepts yard waste for free, but no help in unloading. Hours are 1-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday. Trees and branches must be no larger than 4 feet long or 4 inches diameter.
- Phosphate chemicals that humans put into the water are a terrible burden on streams. Most laundry detergents no longer contain phosphates. However, most products for the automatic dishwashers still do contain phosphates – from 2 to 8%. What to do about it? Read the label and choose ones with lower percentages or none (available at Living Green.)
- The county extension agent asks each of us to try to remove from our immediate area the invasive alien plants that threaten native Ohio plants. The most frequent are: Japanese (or Asian or amur) honeysuckle, garlic mustard and poisonous hemlock. This latter looks like Queen Anne's lace but grows 6-8 feet tall; the stalks are purple at the bottom. It is truly harmful to animals; now is the season to dig it out or spray with weed killer. If you want help in identifying these invasives, ask Mary C. or Mary S.

UUFYS Annual Meeting

June 22, 2008

The Executive Board cordially invites you to attend the June 22nd annual meeting luncheon at noon at the fellowship building. A main course, bread and drinks will be provided; please bring a side dish or dessert to share. The meeting agenda includes:

- Bylaws Change
- Election of Executive Board Officers
- Election of Leadership Development Committee Members
- 2008-2009 Budget Approval

We look forward to seeing you there! --Mary D., Louis S., Debbie D., Martha G., Blythe P., Judy W., and Marianne W.

RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES

The changes to the sections in Article V "Officers and Board" are being made to reduce presidential burnout. It has come to our attention that over the past several years the three-year presidential term (President-Elect, President, Past President) has led to exhaustion and a high drop-out rate among our top executive board members. The proposed bylaw changes are aimed at eliminating this pattern of behavior and on retaining our experienced and talented leaders.

Other changes in Article V and Article VI "Leadership Development Committee" are secondary to eliminating the President-Elect and Past President positions. These changes are being made to provide coverage for responsibilities previously undertaken by the people in those positions.

Finally, the start date for board members to assume their responsibilities has been changed to coincide with the beginning of the fiscal year.

Nominees for Election at UUFYS Annual Meeting

The Leadership Development committee (Judy W., Peter W., and Mary C.) is pleased to present the following slate of nominees for election to the Executive Board of UUFYS at the annual meeting on June 22:

- Mary S. Treasurer (2-year term)
- Joan C. Member-at-large (2-year term)
- Bengt G. Member-at-large (2-year term)
- Jim R. Member-at-large (1-year term)

The current members of the Leadership Development committee have agreed to serve for another year and put forward their own names in nomination for election to the 2008-09 Leadership Development committee at the annual meeting.

Condensed Budget

Fiscal Year 2008 – 2009



Income	
Pledges and Donations	\$58,200
Collection for Charities	3,000
Fundraising, Tar Hollow (net)	1,200
Rent	900
Interest and Other	3,300
Total Revenues	\$66,600
Expense	
Program	\$7,100
Religious Education	9,600
Social Justice	7,550
Fellowship Community	6,900
Building and Grounds	14,250
Administration	12,500
Denominational Support	7,400
Cap.Exp., Maj. Maint. Set Asides	1,300
Total Expense	\$66,600

After the pledge drive is completed, the budget will be revised to reflect the total level of pledges. This revised budget (P4) will be presented to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting June 22. Questions on this budget or the budgeting process may be addressed to your honorable and revered treasurer, Louis S.

The table to the left is a condensed version of our proposed budget (P3) for upcoming year. A pledge drive is in progress to obtain funding to support this budget. On the expense portion of the budget some costs have gone up and others have gone down a little. This budget represents the employment of three part-time staff people who work regular hours to help make our Fellowship successful. This proposed budget is \$6,900 higher than the approved budget from last year. The largest increases are \$2,700 more for Program, \$1,950 for our RE Program, \$550 for Social Justice, and \$2,550 for Building and Grounds. While these increases total more than \$6,900, we have made some savings in other areas to partially offset these increased amounts.

Proposed UUFYS Bylaws Change

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS AND BOARD

1. (No change) The Fellowship shall be governed by its members, who shall elect an Executive Board, which shall be responsible for the integrity of the Fellowship.
2. (No change) All officers and board nominees shall be members of the Fellowship.
3. The Executive Board shall consist of seven members and shall be composed of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and four at-large members. A Vice President shall be appointed by the board for a one-year term to run meetings and handle fellowship matters in the absence of the President; this position does not assume any right of succession to the presidency. The Board shall have general

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charge of the property of the Fellowship and the control of its administration, including the appointment of such committees as it may deem necessary. In the event that a vacancy occurs on the Board between regular elections, the Board may fill the vacancy by appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(The previous wording was: “The Executive Board shall consist of seven members and shall be composed of a President, President-Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two at-large members. The Board shall have....” The remainder of this section is unchanged.)

4. All elected members of the Board shall serve two-year terms. The President, Secretary, and two at-large members shall be elected in odd-numbered years, and the Treasurer and two at-large members shall be elected in even-numbered years.

(The first sentence, “A President-Elect shall be elected every year” is eliminated. The second sentence originally said, “All four other elected members of the Board shall serve two-year terms; the Secretary and one at-large member shall be elected in odd-numbered years; and the Treasurer and one at-large member shall be elected in even-numbered years.”)

5. (The following statement is eliminated) The President-Elect shall serve one year in that position, a second year as President, and a third year as Past President, for a total of three years.
5. (This is now section 5) New Board members assume responsibility as of July 1 each year. (Changed from “as of the date of the annual meeting.”)

ARTICLE VI. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Leadership Development Committee shall consist of three members: two members of the Fellowship chosen at the Annual Meeting and a Past President or a member of the Executive Board as chair. The Committee shall be responsible for nominating, orienting, and mentoring new members of the Executive Board. The Committee shall communicate a slate of candidates for all vacant positions to the membership of the Fellowship via the newsletter or another written communication at least two weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting at which the election is to take place. Nominations for all positions may also be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

(The previous wording was “The Leadership Development Committee shall consist of three members: two members of the Fellowship chosen at the Annual Meeting and the Past President as chair. The Committee shall be responsible...” The rest of the paragraph is unchanged.)

“My friend and colleague Peter Morales has written, “Hospitality is not something to be proclaimed; it must be lived. Hospitality is both a spiritual discipline and an expression of spiritual health.” Peter’s insight is a valuable one. A healthy community has abundant emotional resources and can extend loving attention to newcomers. When we are truly hospitable, we are alert to the needs of others, and—perhaps more importantly—we are receptive to their transforming gifts. Because, while the practice of hospitality is indeed about welcoming the stranger, at a deeper spiritual level hospitality is really about cultivating openness in ourselves.” — Rev. William G. Sinkford, President, UUA

April 13th, 2008 Board Meeting Minutes Summary

Present: Mary D., Debbie D., Martha G., Blythe P., Louis S., and Judy W.

Absent: Marianne W.

Member observer: Mary S. who has agreed to serve as our next treasurer.

Member statement: Peter W. commended the board for its “navigational skills” during a time of transition within the fellowship.

The meeting began at 12:15 p.m. with check-in and agenda review.

Review of meeting minutes: The 3/10/08 board meeting minutes were unanimously passed with one abstention.

Treasurer’s report: Debbie made a motion to accept the February treasurer’s report, as this was not previously done. Unanimously passed. Louis reported that we are three-quarters of the way through the fiscal year with 66% of pledged funds collected. Committees are significantly behind on spending their budgets and we are currently \$154 in the black. Judy made a motion to accept the treasurer’s report as submitted; unanimously passed.

Old Business

Board vision and report to the congregation: The 3/30 board presentation went smoothly and was well received. Debbie reported on congregational feedback, suggestions and concerns as recorded during small group discussions.

Space Usage and Building & Grounds: Jo Anne Hausser has volunteered to serve as the new B&G secretary. It was noted that the architect’s suggestions had not included a possible change to the gallery but that he acted within the parameters given to him; such a renovation would be very costly due to a variety of factors including the current placement of the septic system. Members discussed a survey as a follow-up to recent B&G and board presentations.

Stewardship Committee: The pledge drive kick-off previously set for 4/20 was vacated in favor of a 5/11 date. A special meeting to work on this project was set for 4/16 at 7 p.m. at the fellowship. Members intend to stress the importance of contributing time and energy as well as financial support during the drive.

Leadership Development Committee (LDC) and Bylaw Revision: The board discussed bylaw information about presidential terms with the idea of eliminating the past president position. The goal is having the president serve for two years to avoid burnout. Such a change will require a congregational vote so new bylaw language and explanatory information will be included in the June newsletter; this will satisfy the two-week notice requirement stated in the bylaws. The LDC will consider setting minimum requirements for Executive Board officers (e.g., length of time as a member, level of commitment to and involvement with the fellowship). The annual meeting date was moved from 6/8

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to 6/22, which will allow the LDC more time to recruit a slate of nominees.

Committee Oversight and Coordinating Council: Marianne chaired the 3/30 Coordinating Council meeting, which was very productive. Next meeting 6/29.

Building Rental: Discussion was postponed to the next meeting.

Personnel: Steve J. resigned as Financial Secretary as of 3/31 but agreed to continue counting the Sunday collection until a replacement can be found to perform that function and track pledges. Members discussed the Administrative Coordinator transferring pledge data into the UUFYS computer program. Martie J. has agreed to make bank deposits in light of Steve's resignation.

Fellowship behavioral standards: No information has yet been received from the Administrative Coordinator due to computer problems. Louis will send members information about behavioral standards from the Church Mutual Insurance Company web site. A troubled visitor at today's service was discussed in light of his hostility during the program. Members would like to see language included in future UUFYS behavioral standards about dealing with such persons. It was noted that the Conflict Resolution guidelines need to be updated.

Tar Hollow: Blythe and Mary S. reported on progress to date.

Review of 7/07 board retreat goals: Debbie will re-send these to members for review at the next meeting.

50th Anniversary photo album project and **Green Sanctuary:** Debbie will ask appropriate members for updates at the May meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie D., Secretary

<p>The next Board meeting will be held on Sunday, 6/8/08 at noon at the Fellowship. Prior to the meeting the Board will meet with congregation members and friends to address their concerns. Agenda items will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chalice lighting and check-in• Review of the May minutes• Treasurer's report• Board vision, follow-up survey and annual meeting• Stewardship Committee and pledge drive• Leadership Development Committee and by-law change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer Recognition• Committee oversight & Coordinating Council• Space usage and B&G• Building rental• Personnel• Fellowship behavioral standards• Conflict resolution guidelines• Tar Hollow• Purchase of a defibrillator• Review of 7/07 board retreat goals• 50th Anniversary photo album project• Green Sanctuary Committee
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ceration that remain. African Americans and people of color generally, including myself, show up defensive, afraid that the reality of our lives will, yet again, be deemed unimportant, that we will, yet again, be made invisible. Honesty has been simply too hard to come by, at least in mixed company.

Obama's speech, by naming the honest concerns and fears on both sides of the racial divide, presents us with that rarest of opportunities, an invitation to re-engage with an issue many people would prefer to ignore. I hope and pray that we have the courage to take advantage of this gift.

The religious community has an important role to play. Forty-five years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. observed that 11:00 a.m. Sunday morning was the most segregated hour in America. It was true when Dr. King said it, and it is still true today. But the religious community knows something about confession, reconciliation, and forgiveness. At least we say we do.

Although thoughtful statements from national religious bodies are a start, the real work needs to be done closer to home, in our families and in our congregations. If we can be both honest and open-hearted, there is a chance that we can move beyond the impasse that blocks our path into a place where true reconciliation may be possible. There are excellent resources to help Unitarian Universalist congregations and families in having this conversation. The Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and many others have their own resources as well.

This message is not a political endorsement of Senator Obama, but it is support for his courage and leadership in calling us to a long overdue conversation about race. That conversation needs to move forward regardless of who is elected to our national leadership in November.

March 24, 2008



To our High School Graduates:

- **Alex T.**
- **Casey A.**
- **Catyana P.**

The UUFYS Philosophical Film Series

Sponsored by the RE Committee, will begin this June with *What the Bleep! Do We Know?* July's presentation will be on *Koyaanisqatsi: Life Out of Balance*. Dates and times to be announced.

Bengt G. will facilitate the showing and the following discussion. He is also currently developing a list of additional films to view and discuss.

Please contact Bengt with ideas or suggestions for future films:

Cell: 937-831-9653

Email: wolfscents2001@yahoo.com

Announcement....

To the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs, you are invited to celebrate David O. Kling's graduation from Wright State University at the Fellowship on Sunday June 15th at 2:00 PM. David will be graduating with a B.A. in Religious Studies & a B.A. in Philosophy after many years of effort.

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

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