

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs...



NEWSLETTER March 2008

March Program Calendar:

Sunday, March 2

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "The Impact of women in our lives."

10:00 a.m.: "Women in U.S. Higher Education" Join Amber V., Director of the WSU Women's Center, for a presentation exploring the past, present, and future of women in U.S. higher education. Learn how particular groups of women gained access to higher education, how society reacted to their college attendance, and how institutions of higher education have (or have not) changed with women's participation as students. Learn why women, who are the majority of undergraduate students numerically, still struggle in U.S. higher education and what colleges and universities are doing to address their changing needs.

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

Sunday, March 9

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "I-You relationships vs. I-It relationships."

10:00 a.m.: "Living green...good for you, good for the earth," Nancy G. and CJ Williams, owners of living green, in Yellow Springs will be leading a discussion group on how one can make living green a way of life.

Sunday, March 16

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Am I living in a Kafkaesque world?"

10:00 a.m.: To be announced.

Sunday, March 23

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Renewal & Resurrection."

10:00 a.m.: "Easter," Fellowship member David K. will facilitate an Easter program and child blessing ceremony for youth of the Fellowship. Life, Death, Resurrection, and the removal of stones, among other things, will be discussed.

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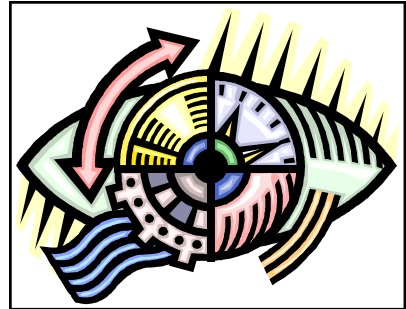
The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs is published monthly. To submit material for the newsletter **please do so by the 15th of each month**. Please submit material as **non-formatted text** in your e-mail or as an MS Word attachment in 12 point font with no formatting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

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Sunday, March 30

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Vision, goals, & dreams."

10:00 a.m.: "Congregational Visioning Process," hosted by UUFYS executive board members. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about progress made over the past year to maintain and develop our fellowship, and to provide your input into this process. The executive board will provide a summary of accomplishments over the past year and invite you to share your vision for our future. This is a wonderful opportunity for members and friends to influence UUFYS future directions!



It's "Maple Syrup Time". Plan to stay for a pancake brunch--with real maple syrup!

Coming in April: Sunday, April 6

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "What is love?"

10:00 a.m.: "Where is the Love?," Blythe P. offers this question along with her own thoughts and responses which will hopefully take listeners beyond their own neat and tidy answers.

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

Plant Exchange

Spring really is coming -- the Spring Equinox is March 20 and Easter is March 23 this year. It's time to put seeds in the dirt, even if the dirt is in the house on a windowsill. Hopefully, those seeds will sprout profusely and we will all have extras. So, let's exchange them! Bring your surplus garden and house plants and seedlings to the meeting house on Sunday, April 27, to share and exchange with your fellow gardeners. For info, call Mary S.

Many thanks to Stacy A. & George K.

Stacy A. was a member of our Fellowship for several years; upon his arrival he quickly made his presence felt with his enthusiasm for Unitarian Universalism and his generous volunteer spirit. He also brought with him two handsome, charming sons. Although a relatively new member of our Fellowship, Stacy did not hesitate to shoulder immense responsibility. He completed terms as president (2006-2007) and president-elect (2005-2006). He was actively serving as immediate past president when he resigned his position as a board and fellowship member in December 2007. Additional service activities he undertook during his time with our fellowship included Co-Director of the Religious Education Committee, willing teacher at all age levels, and participation on a number of other committees including Green Sanctuary, Building & Grounds, and Finance. He was constantly exploring his spirituality and was a Covenant Group member; he also championed the start of the Sunday morning spirituality group. He was a frequent service leader and dishwasher -- no job was too small or too big for him. Stacy's intelligence, wisdom and quiet leadership are sorely missed.

George K. was serving as UUFYS president at the time of his resignation in January. Out of respect for his wishes, nothing at length is being written about his many contributions to our fellowship -- suffice it to say that his absence is felt by many and we wish him well.

Heartland District News

Our treasurer, Louis S., has been selected to be the next Treasurer of the Heartland Unitarian Universalist District. This district covers the western portion of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Kentucky. The Heartland District was formed in 2000 from a merger of the Unitarian Universalist District of Michigan (UUDOM) and the Ohio Valley Unitarian Universalist District (OVUUD). The Heartland District, one of 20 Unitarian Universalist districts in the nation, serves 8,099 members and 53 congregations in the states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio. A wealth of information on the Heartland Unitarian Universalist District is available at <http://www.heartlanduu.org>



Heartland District 8th Annual Meeting & Spring Conference

April 4-6, 2008

Louisville Marriott East — Louisville, Kentucky

“Sustainable Stewardship” featuring keynote speaker: Wayne B. Clark

For more information on the Heartland District 8th Annual Meeting see the Heartland District website listed above.

Rules for Election Campaigns

Would you believe it? -- The 2008 election for President of the U.S. is only eight months away.

Want to know what the rules are for church-based activists, during an election campaign? Here they are below, courtesy of the group Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Churches and other non-profit organizations that want to keep their 501©(3) tax-exempt status must abide by IRS regulations barring any involvement in partisan politics. This prohibition concerns only races for public office, not issues.

That means, religious leaders may speak out from the pulpit or in other forums on moral, social and political issues. But, churches and leaders may not endorse candidates for public office, nor advise congregants to vote for or against any candidates, in their official capacity or official media such as newsletters.

Religious leaders are free, however, to speak or work for or against candidates in their personal capacity, on their own time.

In addition, houses of worship may not contribute money to candidates, solicit contributions on their behalf, donate to political action committees nor display campaign signs on church property.

What can houses of worship do? They may sponsor voter registration drives, encourage voting as good civic behavior and help transport people to the polls. They may not tell people who to vote for.

For more details, see the brochure *A Guide for Religious Leaders* on the bulletin board in the committee meeting room or talk with Mary S.

Message from the Board to the Fellowship UUFYS Development

One of the issues we as a Board are looking at this year is the current status of and future direction of our Fellowship. For many years UUFYS fit the description of a Family Model congregation (50 regular attendees on Sundays). Currently, in terms of numbers, we are a Pastoral Model congregation (51-149 regular Sunday attendees). However, some of our practices continue to be family-based (for example, sharing announcements and Joys and Sorrows with each other, joining hands and saying the Covenant at the end of services), so in reality we're a mix of the two models.

A growing body of research indicates that congregations fall into different size categories, frequently based on groups of 12 or so, and clans of about 50. At about 150 regular Sunday attendees, congregations become more structured and have more explicit procedures in order to facilitate communication and smoothly accomplish tasks. Raising the Roof workshops (previously attended by some of our members) are aimed at helping UU congregations make the transition from a Pastoral Model (51-149 regular Sunday attendees) to a Program Model (151-400 regular Sunday attendees). Please be clear that **IT IS NOT OUR GOAL TO BECOME A PROGRAM MODEL CONGREGATION.**

Raising the Roof is a process aimed at helping congregations undertake a communal learning process.

The five basic steps in this learning process are:

1. Establish a covenant for learning.
2. Explore the unique character of our congregation.
3. Explore the unique character of our community context today.
4. Articulate our congregation's particular vocation within this context.
5. Adopt a plan for further learning and action.

Because we are nowhere close to having 151 regular attendees, this basic Raising the Roof process must be adapted to fit our Fellowship. We as a Board are working to figure out how to do this. Over the past year or so, we have conducted a member survey about the future direction of our fellowship, consulted an architect about adapting our current structure to meet current and future needs, commissioned a task force to explore the possibility of moving to another site, and re-vamped our space usage to accommodate changing needs. We have also hired a part-time administrative staff person to assist with necessary congregational tasks as well as continuing to employ a Religious Education Director.

As you know, over the past three to four years we have changed from offering 29 programs per year to offering weekly programs 52 times per year. And these programs are usually very well attended (leading to a cozy or crowded feeling in our Meeting Room, depending on your perspective). Our Religious Education program has also changed. We as a Board are aware of these changes and want to live up to our responsibility of oversight for programs as well as charting future congregational directions **IN CONSULTATION WITH YOU.**

We as a Board want to offer congregation members the following assurances:

1. We do not have any particular agenda about our Fellowship's development.
2. We do not have any specific goals in mind other than to learn about what concerns you have

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- about our current operations and where you see our congregation headed in the next 5-10 years.
3. We will keep you apprised as we develop procedures for this inclusive congregation-based learning process.
 4. We will share the results of this process with you in an unbiased way.
 5. We will address concerns and chart future directions based on what you tell us you want/need.

We invite you to provide us with feedback about this process and your concerns either individually or at an upcoming Board meeting (at noon, second Sunday of every month).

Yours in Faith and Fellowship,
Members of the UUFYS Board of Directors (Mary D., Debbie D., Martha G.,
Blythe P., Louis S., Marianne W., and Judy W.).

Minutes Summary 1/13/08 UUFYS Board Meeting

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

Absent: Marianne W.

The meeting began at 12:05 p.m. with chalice lighting, welcome to new members (Judy and Blythe), check-in, and agenda review. There were no congregation visitors.

--Mary stated that she will be in Cuba from 1/18/08 – 2/3/08. Judy will be away the entire month of February.

--Mary shared an invitation to a 2/23/08 luncheon with the Heartland District Board of Trustees.

--Annual Congregation Certification: Finance Committee figures indicate there are 93 current UU-FYS members. Debbie will report this number to the UUA.

--Administrative Coordinator: Toby needs Sunday program info by Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

--Review of meeting minutes: The 12/9/07 board meeting minutes were unanimously passed.

--Treasurer's report: Louis reported that we are halfway through the fiscal year and our income is at 55% for the year. Louis also reported that the Social Justice Committee has about \$5,000 available for projects. Judy, as Program Committee chair, will speak to SoJo about paying for their program speakers; this payment currently comes out of the Program budget. Louis has requested a budget for the 2008-2009 fiscal year from committee chairs.

Old Business

--Stewardship Committee: Mary will serve as the board liaison and Louis will be an expert advisor.

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He will ask some members to serve on this committee; they will jointly choose a chair. Stewardship Sunday is set for 4/20/08. The annual meeting was set for 6/8/08.

--Personnel: Martha plans to talk with the janitor about cleaning the basement; she will ask him about tasks he currently performs, time spent, and pay rate. Martha expressed concern about the janitor's high hourly pay vs. the hourly rate for other employees.

--Leadership Development Committee: Judy volunteered to chair this committee (formerly known as the Nominating Committee), comprised of Mary C. and Peter W. elected last June.

--Committee Oversight: The board would like to revive the Coordinating Council in order to facilitate communication among and between fellowship committees. Debbie will talk with Marianne about overseeing the Council, organizing a meeting ASAP, and reinforcing that committees should send the board its meeting agendas and minutes.

--Board Transitions and Responsibilities: Concern was expressed about our current three-year rotation system for the presidential positions. Debbie will check the bylaws about amending this to a two year system (eliminating the past president position) and the possible need for a congregational vote. New committee liaison assignments:

B&G – Martha	Program – Judy
RE – Blythe	Leadership Development – Judy
Finance – Louis	Personnel – Martha
Member Services – Debbie	Communications – Marianne
Social Justice – Mary	Tar Hollow – Blythe
Stewardship – Mary	

--Space usage: Martha related that the architect presented four plans with different configurations and costs. Different projects can be completed gradually and mixed and matched from different plans. It was noted that Steve S. is a good architect with previous experience working with churches, and would potentially be a helpful person to work with in the future.

--50th Anniversary photo album project and Green Sanctuary: Tabled until February meeting.

New Business

--Tar Hollow: Hardy B. is no longer organizing Tar Hollow and has been replaced by Chris K. Blythe volunteered to be the board liaison. Debbie will send suggestions made by a community member to Blythe and ask this person to serve on the Tar Hollow committee.

--Addressing/Avoiding behavior problems: The board wants to develop behavioral standards for the fellowship. Louis will ask Toby to research this topic.

--Board vision and report to the congregation: Debbie reminded members that the board last presented its vision and solicited congregational feedback on the fellowship's future in 2/07. She suggested scheduling another such presentation in conjunction with the B&G Committee prior to Stewardship Sunday on 4/20/08. The board would like B&G to present the architect's report and have

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Mary S. report on the possibility of and costs associated with moving to a new site. The following dates and ideas were discussed:

- 2/24 or 3/2 B&G program
- 3/30 Board program
- 4/20 Stewardship Committee program

--Review of 7/07 board retreat goals: Tabled until February meeting.

--February meeting: The next Board meeting will be held on Sunday, 2/10/08.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie D., Secretary

The next Board meeting will be held on Sunday

March 9th 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:

- Chalice lighting and check-in
- Review of the February minutes
- Treasurer's report and other financial matters
- Stewardship Committee and upcoming pledge drive
- Leadership Development
- Board vision & report to Fellowship, program

March 30th.

- Committee oversight & Coordinating Council
- Board transitions and responsibilities
- Space usage and B&G program on 2/24
- Building rental
- Personnel
- Fellowship behavioral standards
- Tar Hollow
- Review of 7/07 board retreat goals
- 50th Anniversary photo album project
- Green Sanctuary Committee
- Situation regarding a former member

A Whale of an Excursion!



Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to experience our eco-cultural program this July, our 12th year. See *REAL* Alaska, with UU homestays in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Seward, Juneau, and Sitka. UU's host events and lead tours. We visit Tlingit and Inupiat Native Alaskans, see lots of wildlife like bears, moose, caribou, whales, sea otters and bald eagles. We visit Denali and other National Parks. Dave Frey, a 27-year Alaska resident, leads the programs. Visit our www.wuurld.org website, email waltonfrey@gci.net or phone 907-322-4966 for a brochure. Reservation deadline March 15. Note: Charlotte and Rubino went on this trip in 2007 and can give you details.

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