

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs...



NEWSLETTER November 2007

Building Your Own Theology

The Religious Education Committee in collaboration with Membership Services is sponsoring an Adult Religious Education program known as Building Your Own Theology. The program is divided into three parts:

Building Your Own Theology Part 1: Based on the assumption that everyone is their own theologian, this classic UU adult education program invites participants to develop their own personal credos.

Building Your Own Theology Part 2: Continues the credo-development process by focusing on various theological questions to help participants grow in their ability to understand and articulate their own belief systems.

Building Your Own Theology Part 3: Invites participants to apply their beliefs, values and convictions to particular ethical situations. Suggests a number of scenarios culled from history, literature, current events and the participants' own lives.

Each part consists of ten sessions, for a total of thirty sessions.. There is a workbook for each part which is available. This program will start on November 1st at 7:00 PM, at the Fellowship, and will run every other Thursday (Nov. 1st, 15th, 29th, etc...). If you have questions, or would like to sign up for the program, please contact David K. (e-mail at: tau.athanasios@gmail.com) or call the fellowship at (937) 767-1603 (office hours Monday & Friday 10:00 AM — 2:00 PM).

November Programming.... ...at a glance:

November 4:

“Off to See the Wizard”,
presented by Jim F.

November 11:

“Wounded Knee and Natural Vil-
lages, Coming Together”.
Presented by Chris K.

November 18:

"Grass Roots Action for Sustainable
Development".
Presented by
Leonard and Lottie B.

November 25:

“Walk the Earth with Love and
Gratitude,”
presented by
Stacy A.

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

November Program Calendar:

Sunday, November 4

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Pivotal Choices."

10:00 a.m.: "Off to See the Wizard", presented by Jim F., a member of Miami Valley UU Fellowship. Jim was a protestant minister and later a counselor and director of a mental health clinic. He asks, "Is there something missing in your life? Then it's off to see the Wizard!"

Sunday, November 11

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Syncretism."

10:00 a.m.: "Wounded Knee and Natural Villages, Coming Together". UUFYS member Chris K. will discuss Native American issues, informed by his experiences during his seven-week odyssey into the world of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, currently holding the record for the poorest inhabited section of the United States. Chris will share pictures in a Power Point presentation detailing his adventure during June, July and August and his return this October to attempt to finish a house.

Sunday, November 18

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Animal Spirituality."

10:00 a.m.: "Grass Roots Action for Sustainable Development". Leonard and Lottie B. (parents of UUFYS member Bengt G.) have been working with numerous programs for change in rural Honduras since the early 1990s. Much of their work has been in support of the Programa de Reconstrucción Rural (Rural Reconstruction Project), a partner of World Accord. They have also developed independent programs supplying lending libraries to rural elementary schools and managing the donations-funded Futures program, offering opportunities for secondary and higher education to young women as a means to break out of the traditional cycle of lifelong procreation. Leonard and Lottie will speak about their experiences, their successes

and what they have learned regarding aid programs which successfully enable sustainable improvement.

4:00 p.m.: Annual Fellowship Thanksgiving Feast (details follow).

Sunday, November 25

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "Wonderment."

10:00 a.m.: "Walk the Earth with Love and Gratitude" Created from elements of the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism, this program will include music, stories, songs and readings to awaken your energy and enliven your spirit. The program, produced by Stacy A., will be led by youth and members of the Fellowship.

It's "Souper Sunday". Plan to stay for a soup and bread lunch and conversation.

Coming in December

Sunday, December 2

8:30 a.m.: Spiritual discussion group, "The Use of Fear in Faith: Islam and Christianity."

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

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

Annual Thanksgiving Feast November 18, 4:00 p.m.

This year's Fellowship Thanksgiving Feast is scheduled on the Sunday prior to the actual Thanksgiving holiday. Our tradition is that several men of the Fellowship cook the turkeys, and the rest of us bring all the other festive dishes. We'll need volunteers to set up tables and chairs and decorate the tables, to cook the turkeys, and to clean up afterward. Ideas for after-dinner entertainment (singing, dancing, talent show?) are welcome. To volunteer for any tasks or to organize entertainment or coordinate games, please contact Judy W. by phone (376-3459) or email (judyxenia@yahoo.com).

From the Religious Education Committee

On October 14th the Religious Education Committee met to discuss the future of the RE program at UUFYS. Several items were discussed and agreed upon. The committee nominated and elected as Committee Chairperson: Blythe P. and as Committee Secretary Sharon R.

The committee also established criteria for committee membership, established a new mission statement, goals, and educational objectives. People interested in religious education at UUFYS are still encouraged to attend RE meetings and to provide their input! RE Committee meetings are scheduled for the third Sundays of the Month, the next meeting is scheduled for November 18th.

Mission Statement of the Religious Education Committee

To provide education and ministry which will nurture the religious growth of our members and friends throughout their life spans. We are guided by our UUFYS mission statement, covenant, and the Unitarian Universalist Association purposes and principles.

Goals

- Share and explore the meanings of Unitarian Universalist values.
- Create opportunities for growth.
- And create opportunities for intergenerational connections.

Educational Objectives

- To promote the concept that all of life is religious education.
- To provide opportunities for shared spiritual experiences.
- To promote healthy connections between individuals of different ages.
- To provide an understanding of Unitarian Universalists as a group and as individuals, past and present.

- To help individuals answer the question “What is a Unitarian Universalist?” effectively.
- To provide opportunities for learning about our Living Traditions.
- To provide opportunities to act on UU principles and purposes.

Role of the Religious Education Committee

The role of this committee is to guide, direct and support the Religious Education (RE) program at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Yellow Springs (UUFYS) by providing:

1. Definition of policy in relation to the RE program at UUFYS.
2. Identification and definition of goals for the RE program at UUFYS.
3. Defining the RE Prospectus (curriculum and events for the year).
4. Liaison with UUFYS parents and staff.
5. Recruitment of volunteer staff.
6. Guidance and direction to the Director of Religious Education.
7. Marketing and Communication of RE programs/activities to congregation.

Religious Education Committee

The RE committee consists of a total of six volunteer members of the UUFYS congregation plus the Director of Religious Education. One of the volunteer members of the UUFYS congregation is named as the RE Committee Chairperson. The chairperson runs this committee with the support of six committee members. This is an active committee that provides both guidance and direct services to the fellowship community.

The Religious Education program at UUFYS consists of a nursery, children’s program, young adult program, and adult religious education. This month the spotlight is on the nursery and the

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Buildings & Grounds Activities

By Mary S.

The exterior of the meetinghouse has been thoroughly prepared for the winter: two coats of white paint, rust-proofing and black paint for metal work, raw wood protected with sealer, and eaves covered with metal to protect the roof timbers. The garden has been cleaned and weeds eliminated. Thanks to all the volunteers!

Members and friends have also cleaned out the basement in preparation for creating two more classrooms and re-organized the storage shed by giving away some items. Volunteers washed windows and moved the basement storage items into a better room.

The sub-committee for building expansion (Rubin B., Byron D., Chris K, Martha G and Jim R met recently with architect Steve Sharp to discuss possible ways to renovate the building to hold more people and better serve our needs. We hope for a response by late November. If you have questions or comments for the sub-committee or the architect, please give them to Martha G.

New business with tasks assigned: Dean L will purchase two hoses and reels for the garden; David T has been asked to repair the circuit breaker for the stove; Hank L will purchase a doorbell system so the admin assistant may keep the door locked when she is working alone; Mary S will find someone to take away the cut maple timber in the back garden; Syd W will ask the sign maker to repair peeling letters on our UUF sign; Chris K and Katina S will replace sash cords in five windows; Dean L will install a light fixture in the new basement store room.

Next tasks that need volunteers:

(1) Install interior storm windows after a Sunday program); (2) Paint the lobby and hallway; and, (3) Wash and paint the walls and floor of the long room in the basement.

Next meeting is Tuesday, November 6 at 7:00 pm. Pass your suggestions to Dean L or Mary S – or better yet – come to the meeting!

Member Services Activities

By Mary Sims

The committee met September 16 with five members present. The Help One Another group discussed the upcoming memorial service for Harold F., upcoming surgery for one woman and knee replacement for a man, plus three members with cancer, two with worries about aged parents and one member recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Shelley A and Stacy A organized food for one surgery, and Sylvia C-D is providing information about the knee surgery patient.

Mary C reported that Small Group Ministry has two covenant groups starting, with five people meeting Wednesday evening and seven meeting on Tuesday.

For the booth at the Street Fair, it was too late to register voters for the November election, but we passed out literature, circulated a UUA petition about peace and one for Ohio for single-payer health insurance. A representative from the Human Rights Campaign office in Columbus stood near our booth and circulated a petition about equal rights for GLBT Americans.

On October 28, we held a long-delayed ceremony to honor the 14 newest members of our Fellowship: Denise C., Bengt G.-B., David K., Toby K., Marlene M., Michael M., Blythe P., Helen P., Pat S., Ron S., Bobbi T., Kathryn V., John W. and Harold W.

Upcoming projects are to organize Welcomers for a year of Sundays and to help more members and friends volunteer for tasks that are satisfying to them and beneficial to the Fellowship. The next meeting is Sunday, November 4, after the morning program. We would welcome your comments and ideas!

What Do You Think of Marijuana?

By Mary Sims

The Marijuana Policy Project is an education and lobbying group for reforming our state and national laws about marijuana. They feel it should be de-criminalized and then taxed and regulated like alcohol. This group has an active booth at the annual UUA General Assembly and de-criminalization was a social witness decision by the GA delegates a few years back – i.e., it is an official goal of the UUA.

MPP's statistics show that every year there are nearly 800,000 arrests for marijuana-related offenses – more than for any other drug. Of these, 89% of arrests by state and local police are for simple possession, not sale or manufacture. These arrests cost American taxpayers an estimated \$7.7 billion per year – tax money that could be spent on better things than arresting, prosecuting and imprisoning marijuana users. The social consequences of marijuana prohibition are enormous – after men and women serve jail time, they usually lose their jobs, homes, livelihoods and the right to vote to change these laws. MPP has lobbyists working in Congress and in state legislatures to pass sensible new laws, such as directing local police to make adult marijuana offenses their lowest priority.

For medical marijuana – i.e., letting people with chronic, debilitating diseases such as cancer use marijuana to stop pain and restore appetite – MPP wants to stop the federal DEA from raiding medical marijuana clinics in California (where state law says it's legal) and arresting and jailing the patients. There is progress in this: medical marijuana is now legal in 11 states, and two dozen other states are considering changing their laws for medical marijuana also.

If you want to help support MPP's work, send a check to Marijuana Policy Project, Box 77492, Capitol Hill, Washington DC 20013 or go to www.mpp.org/donate to pay by credit card. To read up on the long governmental campaign against marijuana, there is *Pot Politics – Marijuana and the Costs of Prohibition*, seventeen essays giving all sides, edited by Mitch Earleywine.

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teachers who facilitate the nursery program:
Brenda J. and Lauren W.

From Brenda:

My name is Brenda J. I grew up in Lebanon, Ohio and moved to Yellow Springs about 2 years ago. I am now in my junior year at Yellow Springs High School. Soccer is my passion, along with studying foreign language. I spend a lot of time babysitting or just hanging out with my friends. I love meeting new people which is one of the reasons that working with the children in the nursery is such a pleasure for me. With each Sunday I come I get to know the children more and more. Waking up on a Sunday morning isn't so bad when I'm waking up to do a job as

enjoyable as this.

From Lauren:

Hi, my name is Lauren W. and I am one of the leaders of the church nursery. I'm a freshman at Yellow Springs high school and have worked at the Fellowship since the fall of last year. I'm in the Kettering Children's Choir and love singing. I'm also involved in the YS theater programs. I love working with the kids and get a great satisfaction from doing it. The fellowship is such a warm environment that I couldn't picture myself anywhere else.

Submitted by David K., director of religious education.

September 9th UUFYS Board Meeting Minutes

Present: Stacy A., Louis S., Martha G., Marianne W., and Debbie D.

Absent: George K., Mary D.

The meeting was preceded by listening and responding to the following member concerns:

Blythe P. and Shelley A. expressed distress that a former member who has been barred from the Fellowship attended this morning's service. They asked that the Board follow-up with this person to address the issue of safety for members.

Peter W. noted that this is "the best of times and the worst of times."

The business portion of the meeting began at 12:17 p.m. with chalice lighting, check-in, and agenda review.

The 8/12/07 board meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's report: Louis reported that we are running a short-term deficit because of paying yearly dues owed to the Heartland District and the national Unitarian Universalist Association. Expenses and income are otherwise in balance.

Open meetings: The draft policy has been published in the newsletter and the Board will vote on the revised policy in October.

Green Sanctuary: Stacy is working with Dave T. on this project. The board's goal is eventual certification of the Fellowship as a Green Sanctuary.

50th Anniversary Photo Albums: Tabled until the October meeting.

Newsletter publishing policy: Board members had no current concerns about the newsletter content and tone. Louis will ask the chair of the Member Services Committee to empower the editor to edit articles and/or return inappropriate items. The Board will review the current newsletter publishing policy with the goal of broadening it into a general media policy. Special attention will be given to protecting the confidentiality and identity of minor children.

Apartment: A Building & Grounds subcommittee voted last week NOT to rent out the apartment in order to use the space for other Fellowship needs, alleviate general overcrowding, and control costs involved in solving space needs. The Religious Education Co-Directors have made suggestions about how the apartment and other building spaces could be used to meet the needs of the RE program.

The B&G subcommittee will suggest the following to the B&G Committee:

- 1) expand the entry foyer to eliminate bottlenecks
- 2) expand the kitchen, possibly into the current Younger Group room
- 3) expand the meeting room

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Regarding building changes, the Board strongly recommends that we first make changes that do NOT require tearing down walls. Structural changes would follow recommendations made by the architect. The Board is requesting a phased plan with associated costs for presentation at the November board meeting.

B&G will be encouraged to have a workbee to clear out the apartment and basement space. Other items to be addressed by B&G: cleaning out mold in the apartment, and purchasing items to make the basement a usable space for meetings and activities.

--Committee oversight and volunteer recruitment: The Board decided to develop a new policy to ensure that it receives information on a consistent basis from committees.

--Antioch College closing: Louis reported that per the UUA President, publishing a statement about the Antioch situation is not within the mission of the UUA. Board members acknowledged that this is a situation that arouses heartfelt emotions, but is also very complicated and declined to make a public statement at this time. The Board will encourage congregation members to individually support Antioch.

The board met in executive session. The meeting was adjourned at 2:17 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Debbie D., Secretary

Card of Appreciation

This note is written to express my thanks to all who offered such wonderful support and care to me and our son Ben following Harold's death. The food, beautiful flowers, cards of sympathy and the donations toward food for the memorial service were so generous and loving. I want to especially thank those members of the Memorial Society, and those who offered their assistance to make the memorial service so meaningful. I will always remember your kindnesses, and how lovingly you reached out to me.

With gratitude, Joy F.



[Left Front] **Debbie D.** (secretary), **Martha G.** (member at large), **Stacy A.** (past president). [Back] **Mary D.** (president-elect), **George K.** (president), **Marianne W.** (member at large), **Louis S.** (treasurer).

Below is the TENTATIVE agenda for the November board meeting:

- Chalice lighting and check-in
- Review of the October minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Apartment rental/space use
- Report on the progress of the B&G Committee and architect
- 50th Anniversary photo album project
- Green Sanctuary Committee
- Media publishing policy
- Office Proposal from Administrative Coordinator
- Committee oversight and volunteer recruitment
- Stewardship Committee
- Leadership development
- Situation involving a former member (executive session)



Martha G., currently a member of the Fellowship's Board of Trustees, has recently been honored by the Ohio Library Council and named the 2007 Hall of Fame Librarian in Ohio. Martha retired as Director of the Greene County Public library in December, 2006 ending a 42 year career as a librarian. Over the years she served as a children's librarian, school librarian, taught library science courses at Ohio University and Indiana University, South Bend, and was head of a multi-type library system in Indiana. She came to the Greene County Public Library as Assistant Director in 1990.

In a farewell note to Martha in the newsletter "Ex libris," Yellow Springs head librarian Connie Collett stated that "...after working under Martha Gardin's supervision I have been impressed by her appreciation of the unique contribution each individual can make, her strong commitment to meeting the needs of the public, and her willingness and delight, when confronted with a new and difficult situation, to learn what she needs to know and wade right in. She has the ability to break down complex problems into comprehensible pieces. Martha has approached work with humor, compassion, and intelligence."

Judy Brucken, former Bellbrook head librarian and now a Library Board member, wrote: "...Martha showed us how to be open to change, provided the information we needed to evaluate which changes to pursue, and the skills to implement them successfully. She recognized and respected staff at all levels, providing various opportunities for their input and participation."

Martha grew up in the Cleveland area, attended Ohio Wesleyan University and Western Reserve University. She has two sons; Jason lives in Seattle, Gabe in Springfield. She's been a member of the Fellowship since 1990.

Like many Fellowship members, over the years, she has worn many hats, from teaching RE to tallying congregational surveys. She currently serves as chair of the Personnel Committee.

She is interested in storytelling, reads stories to the children at the Community Children's Center each Monday, and is currently working with the Greene County Council on Aging collecting person stories from Seniors in Greene County.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Materials will be arriving before Thanksgiving for Guest at Your Table: This is the annual effort to support our UU faith in action. What would your membership/contribution support?

- Rebuilding new Orleans after hurricane Katrina
- Making the right to water a reality
- Strengthening the rights of child laborers
- Defending the right of U.S. military to freedom of speech

If you would be interested in these (or any of the other connections sponsored by UUSC), contact Ann T.: anntaylor767@earthlink.net or at (937) 767-1971.

Dayton cancer support group:

If anyone has a new breast cancer diagnosis or knows someone who has, and wants free books about cancer and/or information about the incredible Dayton cancer support group, Noble Circle, which offers a ten-week course in nutrition, Qi Gong, and taking care of yourself after a cancer diagnosis, please contact Sandy L. at 767-2700.

Medical help is critical, but so are the support systems and nutritional and exercise options you choose. The Noble Circle group is open to anyone free of charge. It is also possible to join after you have finished medical treatment and are wondering, "What next?"

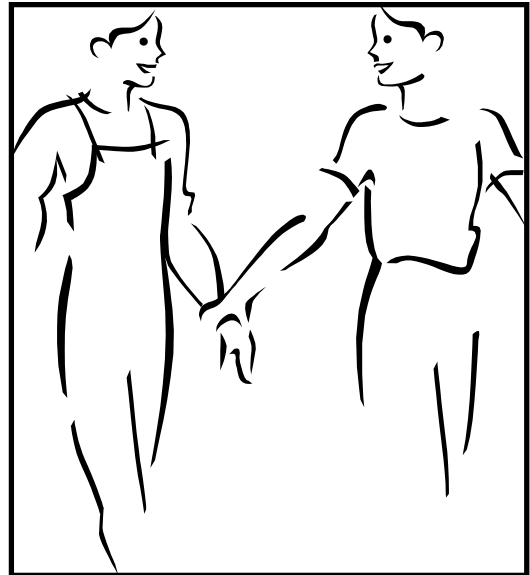
Growing Your Mind and Maybe a New Friend

By Steve J.

If you walked into a room of people that have disabilities, would you know how to talk with them, or would you feel uncomfortable? Do you know someone in the Fellowship that has one? There are more than you know!

Some of our UUF members – like me -- have a hard time hearing the service, and many have hearing aids. How do you talk with them? Or, how do you say “Hello” to a person in a wheelchair? Well, I was happy to read this article that gives us some tips on how to communicate.

Communicating with people with disabilities:
Ten things you can do!



- A. Hearing Problems:** Speak directly, rather than through any companion or sign language interpreter. They will do their job from the side.
- B. Paralysis or artificial limbs:** Offer to shake hands when introduced. People with limited hand use frequently will offer the left hand or a wrist in a greeting.
- C. Visual Disability:** Always identify yourself and others who may be with you when meeting someone with a visual disability. When talking in a group, remember to say the name of the person to whom you are speaking.
- D.** If you offer assistance, then listen or ask for instructions.
- E.** Treat adults as adults. Address people with disability by their first names only when extending that same familiarity to all others. Never patronize people in wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder – no one likes that!
- F.** Do not lean against or hang on a wheelchair. People with disabilities treat their chairs as extensions of their bodies. And so do people with guide or help dogs. Never distract a work animal from their job without the owner's permission -- this includes petting them!
- G.** Listen attentively when talking with people who have difficulty speaking and wait for them to finish. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers, or a nod of the head. Never pretend to understand; instead, repeat when you have understood and allow the person to respond.
- H.** Place yourself at eye level when speaking with someone in a wheelchair or on crutches.
- I.** Tap a person who has a hearing disability on the shoulder or wave your hand to get their attention. Look directly at the person and speak clearly, slowly and expressively to establish if the person can read your lips.
- J.** Relax! And don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions like, “See you later!” that seem to relate to a person's disability.

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