



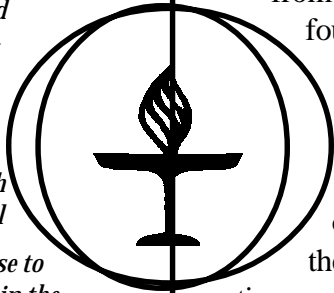
# THE SEARCHLIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF COLUMBIA, MO No. 3, NOVEMBER 2003

*The Searchlight is a monthly publication of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, 2615 Shepard Blvd, Columbia, Missouri 65201*

*Membership in this church is open to all*

*All who choose to walk with us in the spirit of love and in agreement with our UU principles. We have no creedal requirements for membership. To become a member one signs our Membership Book on the last Sunday of any month in the presence of the Minister and another member of the church. If you wish to become a member, please speak to Rev. Haney or call the church office at 442-5764.*



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## FRONT PAGE NEWS

### Bible Study

Are you interested in a Unitarian Universalist approach to the Bible – that is, from a reasoned and non-literal way? Then join us on the second and fourth Sunday of each month at 9:00 AM downstairs for a one-hour session co-led by Stephen Blower and Rev. Haney. If you attended the sessions last year, you will have already been engaged with Genesis and Exodus. We will continue this church year beginning with the minor prophets, starting with the Book of Joshua and finish our overview of the Hebrew Bible by December. Come join us in the Channing Room downstairs. Drop-ins are welcome. No registration required.

### UU History & Values Covenant Group

The UU Values In The World Covenant Group is now meeting the second and fourth Monday each month at 7:00 PM instead of 7:30. At our October 27 meeting we'll continue discussing the first fifteen questions found at [www.uunashua.org/100q/](http://www.uunashua.org/100q/), which seek to define and explain UU. We'll also consider future discussion topics. All are welcome to join us, including non-members. More information can be obtained at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UUHistVal> for anyone interested in joining.

### Visitor Orientation

On the second Sunday of the month there is regularly scheduled an informal orientation to this church led by the minister. This short session is designed for our visitors to meet Rev. Haney and to ask him questions about our church. Whether you are new to our church or have been attending for a while you are invited to meet in Rev. Haney's office after the worship service on **Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>**.

### Spirituality Covenant Group

The Spirituality Covenant Group is open to new members. We will be meeting every third Thursday of the month from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Babysitting will be available. We will be doing group spiritual direction. We will be spending some time in silence, and out of the silence people will speak about what is of spiritual concern to them. If you have questions and/or if you are interested in joining us, please contact Allie Gassmann.

## MINISTER'S MONTHLY MUSINGS

“In Everything Give Thanks . . .”

We are embarking upon the season of thanksgiving. The clock is set back to what some feel is God's time – why mess around with the cosmos like that! So the days darken sooner, the leaves are dropping for the yard roundup. By the end of the month, we will be in the starkness of a pending winter. Aside from the Pilgrim's harvest, how can one be thankful with such descending darkness and bareness? In fact, how can one be thankful with so much pain and injustice in the world?

My colleague, the Reverend Daniel Budd lifts this issue up. He says, “Around Thanksgiving, just about every year, my thoughts return to a sermon by Peter Fleck from his book, *The Mask of Religion*. In it, he raises an important question. He asks: ‘. . . do we have a right to be thankful as long as others are excluded from sharing in the blessings we enjoy? The answer to this question lies in the realization that thankfulness, while it may relate to specifics, has an absolute character. To give thanks is a basic human need, an essential element in our relationship to the universe. Thankfulness is independent of specifics.’” While each of us does have a specific to be thankful for, we can do as Paul of Tarsus offers: “In everything, give thanks.”

Peace and Love, *Bill*.



### CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERS

New members joining in September: Tawnee Dufur, Allison Ehret, Jennifer DeLucy, and David Rosman.

### JOYS AND CONCERNS

Congratulations to Patricia Morrow and Robert Habenstein on their wedding on October 2<sup>nd</sup>.



### From the desk of the Church Administrator:

If you are trying to contact someone who may be in the church at a time other than during the regular business hours you may want to try calling the telephone in the kitchen. That number is not the regular church phone number but is 875-6616. This information is published in our church directory but is not in the local telephone book.

The 2003-2004 Church Directory is ready for distribution to members of the church and to participating friends. It will be available at the Visitors' Table in the greeting area all through the month of November, so pick one up when you are here.

There are many volunteer tasks that the church depends on for its program and events to run smoothly and to make sure that the building and grounds are cared for. We ask all members and friends to pitch in by choosing several tasks that they are willing to do. Please consider serving at the Visitors' Table or as an usher in the upcoming year. I will be happy to hear from you on any Sunday!

Many thanks to Patricia Morrow, Casey Goodman, Peter Holmes, Caya Tanski, Pat Kraff, Rosetta Miller and Christine Doerr for helping out in the kitchen by preparing and serving coffee on Sundays in the last month or so. And for staying to help clean up. Liz Palazzolo and Katherine Corey continue to oversee this volunteer work and do appreciate it if you can sign-up in advance to volunteer a Sunday or two.

*Kathie Bergman*

## President's Report

Sometimes I am tempted to think that I put in quite a bit of work being board president. There are those long monthly meetings followed by the not-quite-so-long monthly executive committee meetings. Then I stop and look around.

Last week, for example, I was able to make the art auction after all. Between getting a very great deal on lunch and finding a few treasures, I noticed all of the work that went into making this fund raiser happen. Sharon Hanson and the fund raising committee did an extraordinary job of pulling together all of the art and setting up the displays. Marianne Erickson and crew spent hours in the kitchen preparing, serving and cleaning up food. Then there were the members who volunteered to provide music and those who worked on art projects with the children.

This set me to thinking. In the scheme of things, do I really do that much more work than anyone else? Even more important, is that the right question to be asking? Wouldn't it be better, when I am tempted to think of all the work that I am doing, not to ask how much work are others doing but to ask myself the question, "is it really a burden?" I could also ask the question, "why do I do it?"

To the question, "is it a burden?" the answer is, no, it is not. Oh, yes, being on the board does take time and effort. However, that is not the same. It is time and effort that I have offered to give. Which brings up the next question, "why?" The answer to this is simply that I value the Unitarian Universalist church and what it offers me.

I know that there are folks who don't need organized religion in their life. I'm not one of them. I crave the fellowship of gathering on a Sunday morning to share in the wonder of why we exist. Why there is so much joy in life. Why there is so much pain. Sometimes I come needing a security blanket for the cold rawness of this why – to the probability that there might not be a point to our existence, to the probability that there might not be an antidote to suffering. Other times, I come seeking a chance to rejoice with others in the exquisiteness of life – sunlight through a dew laden spider web, laughing over a meal with family, the kindness of strangers.

I value our church because it is a place where I can continue to grow spiritually. I mentioned two columns past that I had been both a Presbyterian and a Christian Scientist. Both religions served me well for a time; but, whether I outgrew them or simply walked another path, they no longer fit. From what I have heard, read and experienced with UU is that I will be able to seek, learn and grow spiritually for a long time before I outgrow this religion.

So, the answer to my question of why do I give my time and energy, is that church is important. I want to see it continue and to be here for myself and others seeking such a place to grow in spirit. When I am tempted to think that I am working too hard, I remember this. And, for all of you who are also working for the church, thank you. Your work is noticed and appreciated.

*Rebecca Graves, UU Board President*

### **Caring Committee Announces**

Jan Swaney is the Caring Assistant for November. The Caring Assistant activates the Caring Committee in response to our members' significant life transitions or achievements or stressful circumstances. We depend upon each of you to alert us to members who have special personal and family needs.

### **Monthly Book Discussion Group**

The Book Discussion Group will meet Friday, November 14 @ the Formosa Restaurant, 913A E Broadway @ 5:30 pm. Bring a book you have read to share. All are welcome. Call Pam Springsteel if you have questions.

### **UU Singletarians**

The UU Singletarians have created a website. If you would like to join the online group and stay informed about what is going on, please contact Deborah Finfgeld.

**WORSHIP SERVICES**  
**Sunday Services: 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary**  
**(Meditation 9:30– 10 AM every Sunday)**

*Our church plans a lay-led service on one Sunday of each month of the regular church calendar year. Lay-ministry enriches us all and helps maintain the tradition of lay-ministry as a vibrant part of our church life. The Worship Associates are responsible for planning lay-led services in the upcoming year. If you have an idea for a Sunday service or just want to help, contact a Worship Associate or Rev. Bill Haney at the church.*

**Nov. 02** “Dias de los Muertos”

This first Sunday of the month brings us together with our children and the teachers for the service. The service will celebrate All Saints/All Souls Day. The UU Choristers will be a part of the service. Our monthly pot luck luncheon follows the service.

**Nov. 09** “Generosity Knows No Boundaries”

Augustine of Hippo once said of generosity, “Where your pleasure is, there your treasures; where your treasures, there your heart; where your heart, there your happiness.” We will look at generosity as a gift from and of the heart. The UU Singers will be a part of the service.

**Nov. 16** “The Promised Land: Bible Study UU-Style”

We welcome Susan Maginn to the pulpit. She is the Intern Minister at Eliot Unitarian Chapel in Kirkwood, MO. The entering of the promised land is noted as being “the most indigestible of passages of all the indigestible passages in the Bible.” Why would the authors create such an ugly story as their culture’s founding myth? How are we all living with the legacy of their choice today?

**Nov. 23** “The Club: Early Years”

The Transcendentalists were a very small group. All were Unitarians. How did this insignificant collection become so important? Who were the key players? The UU Singers will be a part of the service.

**Nov. 30** “Thankfulness is a Sign of Strength”

Sometimes, giving thanks can be difficult. We may be in a situation that doesn’t seem to offer any reason to give thanks. How can this season of Thanksgiving be so important to us in our hour of need?



**First Sunday Potluck Lunch - Come one and all!**  
**November 02, 2003**  
Immediately following the worship service in the greeting area  
at the church  
Bring a dish to share!

**Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)**  
**Your Church at Home - Anywhere in the World**

You may know someone who would enjoy the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF), a congregation that provides a ministry to isolated religious liberals around the world. CLF, the congregation by mail and cyberspace, offers a spiritual home within the UU movement for all kinds of people. Members receive mailings of *Quest*, a monthly publication of sermons and other material, and **uu&me!**, a children’s magazine. Also offered are religious education materials and consultation, a loan library of books, audio and videotapes, as well as email lists and a cyber community. The CLF also supports many small congregations with worship and programming resources through the Church-on-Loan program. Nearly half of the CLF members are active contributing members of local congregations who appreciate more UU input. For more information, contact the Church of the Larger Fellowship, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108; (617)-948-6166; [clf@uua.org](mailto:clf@uua.org); or visit the CLF homepage: [www.clfuu.org](http://www.clfuu.org).

## Visions and Promises



The times, they are a-changin'. That can sometimes feel disorienting and threatening, but living organisms must change if they are to survive. The church is a living entity, and we are the cells of its body. That body continues to change. We must change with it.

We told you in September that the canvass would be different this year. This month we would like to tell you how different. Some changes have already occurred. The canvass committee (Generosity Team) started meeting this summer. We are working closely with the Board, talking about our visions for the church rather than the bottom line. We have approached those from whom we did not have a pledge this year, and have started to approach new members as they join, to introduce them to the needs of the church for money and volunteers and ask for an interim pledge. The canvass will now be a year round process.

The first two of many planned focus groups have met. We are searching for the reasons people come to the church, the visions we hold for the church, the processes that we would like to see changed or enhanced. We cannot talk to everyone in the church before the 2004-2005 pledge drive, but we will be contacting you at some point in the next year to put in your \$.02 worth. We hope that in order to see these visions come to life you will put in much more than \$.02 when we come to you with pledge card in hand. We are also considering children's focus groups.

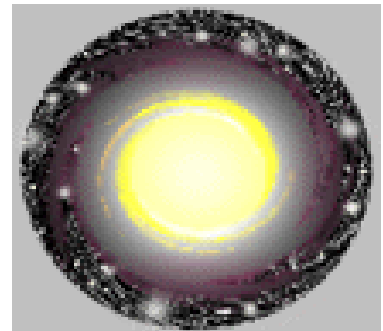
We are going to be leading an informal discussion about our visions for the church at the November 2 potluck as well. The people you will see taking notes are the Generosity Team, possibly assisted by some Board members. Please feel free to approach any of us with questions, comments, or concerns.

Then come the big changes. This year, the Finance Committee will be working on the budget during the pledging period, but the budget will not be presented to the congregation until after the pledge drive is completed, and will be based on the amount of money pledged. The Board is working on by-law changes that will allow us to work in this new way. This is a radical departure from the way we have always done things, and we expect some anxiety about it. We think there is a reasonable basis for doing it this way, however. The "pledge professionals" point out that we make our personal budgets based on our income, and that it makes sense to do the same with our church budget. In our Generosity Team discussions, we also realized that nobody on the Team makes their pledge based on the proposed budget. All of us make our pledge based on our personal income, commitments and how much we feel the church is "worth" to us. Thus, the visioning process: an effort by the Generosity Team to make all of us aware of the worth of the church in our lives, and to increase its value to all of us.

This means the canvass must be moved earlier in the year. The pledge drive will start this year on the first Sunday in February, with a Vision Sunday. This is still in the planning stage. A speaker from "outside"? Evangelical UUs? Who knows? Watch for developments as they occur. We will complete the canvass by February 14, and will follow up in the two weeks after that by contacting anyone for whom we do not have a pledge card.

You say we forgot the Canvass Dinner? No, we didn't, but this year we will celebrate the completed, highly successful pledge drive with a "Just Desserts" party near the first of March. This will be a family affair, with lots of goodies and fun.

The Generosity Team and the Board are very excited about these new approaches to church stewardship. We want to communicate that excitement to all of you, and have you join us in creating our visions for the church. **Enter, Rejoice, and Come In.**



### Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group meets at 8 AM for breakfast every 2nd and 4th Saturdays at a local restaurant. We discuss topics of current interest. Everyone is welcome to attend. For location, contact Sam Anand.



### Conversations, Etc.

Conversations, Etc., will meet Wednesday, November 12 at noon in the greeting area of the Church.

Bring your lunch (coffee and tea will be provided) and join other women as we enjoy fellowship and a presentation by Ann Robins. She will show how to make Thanksgiving and Christmas decorations using edible products. Just think, no storage needed for you can just devour the item when it is no longer seasonal! At the meeting we shall decide details of our December outing. Phone Roberta or Sue if more information is desired regarding our group's meeting

### Caring Committee Notes

John and Jackie Byland, whose Fayette home was destroyed by fire, are settling into a rental home until theirs is rebuilt. Thanks to all of you who contributed household items, and words of encouragement during this difficult time. Meredith and Joe Donaldson were especially helpful in collecting and sorting donated items and seeing that they found a new home.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bob and Hazel Breitenbach in this difficult time. Bob has decided to forego further chemotherapy and is receiving hospice care. Your cards and well wishes are appreciated in this difficult time.

Our best regards to Chris Bird as she recuperates from her hospitalization and our thoughts and prayers are with Susie Anand, who spend a few days in the hospital for a neurosurgical procedure on October 29th.

Our thanks to Barbara Montgomery, who was Caring Assistant for October. In November, it will be Jan Swaney.

Allie Gassmann and Jan Swaney, Co-Chairs

## Adult Religious Education

### "Writing the Stories of Our Lives" Adult Writers' Groups

The "Stories of our Lives" writing groups continue again this year every Saturday morning at 10:00 A.M. in the Centering Room downstairs. Writing our life stories can move us to laughter and tears, revive memories of all kinds, and help us revisit some of the events and people we've experienced on our life journeys. Bring pen/pencil, paper and a willingness to "just write!" Everyone is welcome.

**Women's Group:** 2nd and 4th Saturdays – facilitated by Fran Reynolds and Dale Oberer. September 13 & 27, October 11 & 25, November 8, December 13.

**Men's and Women's Group:** 1st and 3rd Saturdays – facilitated by Fran Reynolds and Peggy Dawson and others. September 6 & 20, October 4 & 18, November 1, December 6.

### *Family Forum – 2003-2004*

*Creating a Culture of Peace – in Ourselves, our Families, our Church, our Community and our World*

#### **November 9 – Developing a Culture of Peace in Our Church.**

Using William Ury's book, *The Third Side*, this forum offers an opportunity to explore and examine positive ways to deal with differences and to consider how our congregation can create a culture of peace which embraces a wide variety of spiritual and political beliefs. Facilitators: Members of the UU Peace Building Team

This forum series is for everyone! Each session is experiential and only requires an inquiring mind, an open heart and a listening ear. Childcare is provided, but sign ups in advance are *necessary*. Second Sunday of each month in the Forum Room from noon to 2 P.M. Bring your own lunches or call a take-out.

## Social Action News

### UU Service Committee - what is it, and why should I care about it, much less contribute to it?

“Many UU’s know the UUSC from the congregational appeals that have been made for disaster and humanitarian aid needs in the world. But that is only a very small part of the social justice work done by the organization. UUSC is the UU voice for human rights, actively empowering women, defending the rights of children, training the next generation of social justice activists, and supporting the civil and political rights of oppressed racial, ethnic and indigenous groups in varied regions of the world.”

The above comes from the Guest at Your Table 2003 material we will be sharing with you in late November. “Guest” is the major fundraiser for UUSC. Visit the website at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org) and learn more about UUSC and its importance to us.

Other info: 98 pounds of food were taken to the Mid-Mo. Food Bank Pantry on Oct. 16; thanks to those who contributed. More is always needed. As the song says, “There but for fortune go you and I.”

SAC meets on the 3rd Sunday of the month following the service. All are invited to join us.

*Steve Mudrick, chairperson*

## Green Sanctuary

### Work in Progress

The Green Sanctuary Group, formed in 2002, is still working to qualify our church for “Green Sanctuary” status. Many steps have been taken, and more are in the works. To know more about the project, look at our progress poster displayed in the greeting area. Our next meeting will be on November 13, beginning at 7 p.m. at the church. All are welcome to attend.

### Farm Tour

Most recently, we sponsored a tour of Sunny Acres farm, a community supported agriculture operation just outside of town. We learned about the environmental benefits of farm practices including organic soil building and natural pest controls. The farmers are sensitive to preserving local soil, water, and wildlife, as they offer to members the health benefits of fresh, organic local foods. Local distribution of the produce reduces fossil fuel use for delivery. In addition to supporting a healthy environment, participation in this kind of food system brings people closer to the land that feeds them. (...and to the farmers) A weekly “shopping trip” to the farm to select fresh produce, flowers and herbs, is an opportunity to be in touch with the cycles of the seasons, and to appreciate the generosity of the Earth. If you missed the trip and would like to know more about CSA’s or Sunny Acres, contact Carol Arnold.

The Green Sanctuary Committee is proud to bring fair trade coffee to our coffee hour! Through the Coffee project of the UU Service Committee, we have purchased coffee which allows us to “affirm human dignity” and “respect the interconnected web of all living things of which we are a part” while enjoying one another’s company during coffee hour. The coffee trade is mostly characterized by the hard work of small farmers in impoverished nations who go into debt and clear their land in order to raise coffee beans that are then bought at rock-bottom prices by middlemen who then sell to large coffee companies. The costs to humans and the environment are great, with huge areas of rainforest being cleared for unsustainable coffee plantations that barely support the people who work them. Fair Trade certification changes that arrangement. By working with democratically run farming cooperatives, and providing fair advance credit opportunities to farmers, Equal Exchange and other companies develop long-term relations with farmers, allowing them to practice ecologically sustainable farming. This allows the farms to remain productive longer rather than requiring the destruction of tropical forests as old plots of land become infertile. . Growing crops organically and via traditional shade-growing techniques allows coffee farms to continue to provide important habitat for migratory songbirds as well as indigenous species. For more information, see the information leaflets in the Social Action area, or check out [www.equalexchange.com/interfaith/uuscproject.html](http://www.equalexchange.com/interfaith/uuscproject.html).

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The Unitarian Universalist Church  
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### Forum Schedule

The Forum, an adult discussion group, meets on Sundays at 9-10 a.m. in the Library, lower level of the church. Conversation and refreshments are offered along with the discussion. The Forum, as always, is open to the public. Bob Breitenbach, Forum Coordinator

**Nov. 02: Two Nations Separated by a Common Language: Perspectives on Life in the US and the UK** by Peter Holmes and Ian Thomas. Peter is a Columbia Psychologist with a BSc Physics from London Univ. and a PhD in Psychology from MU. He has in Columbia the last 15 years. Ian currently teaches high school physics and received his BSc-Physics from London University, his MSc Bioengineering from Strathclyde Univ., a PhD in Psychology from MU along with a MEd-Technology also from MU. He has distance-teaching and educational video/multimedia production experience with BBC and has lived in US for the past 10 years.

**Nov. 09: The Cost of Health Care Administration** by Mehdi Farhangi, MD. Mehdi Farhangi, MD will present three programs. Mehdi graduated from Medical School in Iran 1953. He received his Post-graduate training from Columbia University and the University of Missouri. Mehdi specializes in blood diseases and cancer.

**Nov. 16: Consenting for Medical Research** by Mehdi Farhangi, MD

**Nov. 23: Iranian-American Relations Since 1903** by Mehdi Farhangi, MD

**Nov. 30: This Week in the New York Times** by Charles Atkins, Mid-MO Veterans for Peace member and Univ. of MO Friends of Peace Studies Board Member.