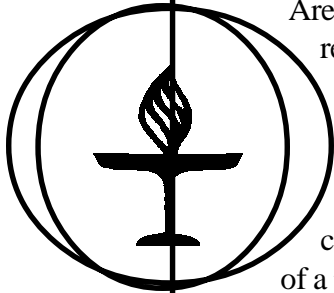




THE SEARCHLIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF COLUMBIA, MO No. 7, MARCH, 2004

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



Inside This Issue:

**Worship Services
Page No 9**

**Forum discussions
Page No. 2**

**Minister's
Musings
Page No. 2**

**President's Report
Page No. 3**

FRONT PAGE NEWS

New Opportunity for UU Social Action

Area churches and other organizations have long provided assistance to refugee families who are fleeing from political oppression, and endangerment in their home countries. A few years ago our church sponsored a family for the first time – a family from Bosnia – with a very gratifying outcome. The family is now independent and successful; they recently bought their first home. The oldest son is enrolled in college; the youngest a thriving first grader. We worked ourselves out of a job!

The Social Action Committee is hoping to sponsor a refugee family again this year. This program is run by volunteers with guidance from the Refugee Center, and is designed to provide the family with whatever is needed to help them get started in their new country. Two or three coordinators are needed to organize U.U. volunteers who will provide direct assistance in such areas as grocery shopping, school enrollment, medical and dental care transportation and liaison with the refugee center. If you have an interest in helping in one of these areas, or if you would be willing to help in any way, please call Margaret Tyler or Kathie Bergman at the church. This is an opportunity for service and fellowship. Join us.



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 (442-5764).

MINISTER'S MONTHLY MUSINGS

THE SURPRISES AND UN-SURPRISES

March is here already! It seems not too long ago I was preparing for a new church year to start. Now, we have only three months remaining for our formal activities before the summer services begin. This means spring is about to be revealed to us – not necessarily in March, but by the end of April. The wintertime of darkness is nearing its end and the rebirth of nature will regale us with its splendor. We can come out of our winter cocoons and into the light of spring. The cycles of nature continue its predictable pace with some variation in its presentation of weather. Even as each season is unsurprising when it unfolds, it is the variations that enliven the experiences open to us. We brace ourselves for a hard winter and are pleasantly surprised when we receive mild weather. In this way, the seasons are part of our spiritual awakening. In our encounters with each other, we often suspect how predictable the other person will be. Then, out of the blue, there is a new dimension to this person we never realized to be present. Of course, we need to be open to this possibility. In our own spiritual and ethical discipline, how we grow is often a matter of how we accept the possibilities that abound around us. These possibilities are within us also. This is where some form of spiritual or conscious practice means more than we may realize. Whatever form that practice takes, it is important to take the time on a regular basis to focus one's attention and energy toward it. Perhaps for some this wintertime is a period of spiritual practice when we are constrained to be less active. With the change of season, let us not be urged to forgo that which will open new possibilities because the weather will provide a more inviting outer world to us. May the un-surprises of the coming season offer to us surprises beyond our expectations.

Peace and Love,

Bill.



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.

March 7, 2004. George Frissell, "*Human rights work at the grassroots: Amnesty International at Hickman and Rock Bridge High Schools.*" Frissell is a religion teacher at Hickman High School and co-adviser to the Amnesty International chapter.

March 14, 2004. Lee Miller, "*Esperanto: A new language for a new world.*" Miller is an expert speaker of Esperanto, an international language now used by several million people throughout the world.

March 21, 2004. Kyler Broadus, "*Gay Marriages and Civil Unions.*" Broadus, a Columbia lawyer, is also assistant professor of business law at Lincoln University, a former member of the Columbia Human Rights Commission, and an activist in the area of transgender law.

March 28, 2004. Barbara Bauer, "*Social Action in Nepal: My Experiences as a Doctor Without Borders.*" Doctor Bauer, a Columbia psychologist, recently worked for five months in Nepal.

President's Report

BACK IN FEBRUARY, FOUR OF US WENT TO A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP IN ST. LOUIS. THE EXACT TITLE WAS "PRACTICING PLURALISM: CONFLICT ENGAGEMENT IN UU CONGREGATIONS." WHAT HOOKED ME WAS THE IDEA OF 'ENGAGING IN CONFLICT.' ENGAGING IN CONVERSATION OR COMPETITION, SURE; BUT, CONFLICT? MOST OF THE TIME I THINK OF CONFLICT AS SOMETHING TO AVOID OR A NECESSARY EVIL. SO, I DECIDED TO PAY MY \$55.00 AND FIND OUT WHAT THIS MEANT.

The workshop was excellent. The main point was there will always be conflict so we might as well learn to deal effectively with it. In fact, if there is no conflict, that's the time to be concerned. Either things are perfect or, more likely, people have become apathetic. And apathy not hate, is the opposite of concern and caring. So, if we have a committed and growing community, we will have conflicts.

I also learned that there are five levels of conflict. Level 1 conflicts are where the disagreements are on the issues and not on people, the focus is on the problem and not on attacking others, where information is shared and the objective is to solve problems not to "win" or force the other out. The trick is to keep the conflicts at level 1.

Our church was seen as a leader by others at the workshop. Our Peace Building team has been in operation for a year now. They have conducted workshops for the board, for the children in the religious education classes and a Sunday service with another coming up. But it's not just one committee that needs to work on conflict. It is all of us.

One of the best exercises in the workshop was to pick a divisive topic and then list all of the fears associated with it. From the list of fears, we then created a list of values. It turned out that many of the values were the same as those on the 'pro' side. (I'm thinking of trying this with my dad on the topic of politics.) When we are concerned, when we have a fear, we need to step back and look at what our underlying value is. We also need to participate, whether it means that we come to a forum, make an effort to get to a special church service, or especially, voice our thoughts and concerns by speaking out.

Currently, we as a congregation are looking at what it means to be a Welcoming Congregation. Can we be welcoming to lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgendered? Do we want to be? If we aren't, can we still uphold our first and second principles of seeing the inherent worth of everyone and treating them equally and compassionately? If we are welcoming, will we get attacked? This is an issue that needs the voices of all us. Sitting on the sidelines isn't acceptable.

On another note, the Board has been revising the bylaws. Having grown in size, the previous bylaws are too unwieldy, requiring for example a congregation vote just to change the size of a committee. We are moving to the model where the bylaws are the skeleton of the organization and the policies and procedures are the flesh. Again, this may be a practical step for some and an uncomfortable one for others.

While conflict isn't something most of us rush to embrace, at level 1, where we openly voice our concerns and fears, where we work towards solving problems, it is healthy. Whether it is easy or hard to join in, we all need to give voice to our accord and our concerns. We need to engage each other.

Rebecca Graves, Board President

We're Looking.....

For a newDirector of Religious Education

- **To coordinate teachers and volunteers**
- **To continue ongoing curriculum assessment and program development**
- **To facilitate a sense of community among families in the RE program**
- **TO HELP CHURCH ADULTS TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN EDUCATING CHILDREN IN OUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY**

We need someone able to start in early summer to help make a smooth transition and be prepared for the fall program.

For more information contact:

**Kathie Bergman for application materials
Val Bader, Chair of RE Committee**

Caring Committee Announces

Allie Gassmann will be the Caring Assistant in March. The Caring Assistant is responsible for activating 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 UU Book Discussion Group will meet Friday, March 13 @ 5:30pm @ the Formosa Restaurant, 913A East Broadway. Bring a book you have read to discuss. Call Pam Springsteel for details.

Everyone is invited!
First Sunday Pot-luck Lunch
March 7, 2004
Immediately following the worship service
In the Greeting Area at the church
Bring a dish to share!



Church Administrator Notes

After giving countless hours of service to the church as volunteers, **Barbara Rupp** is resigning as Newsletter Editor and **Anni Martin** is resigning as Webmaster. Many thanks to both of them! I especially appreciated their promptness and dependability! So...now the church looks to its membership for new volunteers. If you have the skills, the equipment, the time and the willingness to do this kind of work (which, by the way, can be done in your own home!) please let me know! Thanks, *Kathie Bergman*

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, March 14th**.

Playgroup

The Family Playgroup (a.k.a. Toddler Group) has changed their weekly playdate to Friday mornings from 10 am to noon in the nursery. Please join us for giggles and conversation.

Congregational Meeting
Unitarian Universalist Church Sanctuary
Noon on Sunday, March 7, 2004

Members are hereby notified of the annual March Congregational Meeting. The meeting will take place in the sanctuary while members enjoy the potluck lunch. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Board of Trustees sets meeting agenda as follows:

- 1) Election of Slate of officers: Current board members continuing service in the 04/05 fiscal year are: Leslie Luchene, Lisa Fritsche, and Scott Denson. Trustee Larry Dorman was appointed by the board in August 2003. He, along with Eric Bader, Sam Mead, Jeremy Duke, and Marianne Erickson are recommended by the board for election by the congregation. Marianne has agreed to serve as treasurer. Alan Arnold is now searching for members to serve on the 04/05 Nominating Committee. Nominations can be made from the floor during the Congregational Meeting. Volunteers having an interest in serving on the Board or on the Nominating Committee are encouraged to call Alan for details.
- 2) Fair Shares Dues Report
- 3) Treasurer's report
- 4) Minister's Progress Report

Childcare will be offered in the Nursery.

“A member shall become a voting member 60 days from the date of joining.”

——*Bylaws, Article III, Section 2*

The Role of the Peace Building Team

Recently, questions have been raised about the role of the Peace Building Team; this is intended to provide clarification. The Peace Building Team sees its role as being two-fold: (1) to educate members of the congregation about skills for managing conflict, and (2) to mediate actual conflicts between members or groups of members of the congregation.

Thus far, the Peace Building Team's role has been educational. We presented a Sunday service, offered a workshop for one of the Family Forums, and provided training for RE teachers and members of the Board of Trustees.

We have not had occasion to mediate an actual dispute and view the mediation function as being entirely voluntary. That is, while our services may be requested by any congregation member, the Peace Building Team does not attempt to mediate a dispute unless each party agrees to participate. This means that, sometimes, a member may request our assistance but our services will not be provided because the other individual involved in the dispute is not receptive to participating in mediation.

In evaluating our role within the congregation, the members of the Peace Building Team believe this is the most appropriate approach for offering our services. But, we are open to the thoughts and recommendations of other congregation members. If you believe the Peace Building Team should serve a broader or different role, please feel free to discuss this with any member of the team, which consists of Kakie Love, Kathleen Knepper, Pack Mathews, Rosetta Miller, and Neil Minturn.

Conversations, Etc.

Conversations, Etc. will meet as usual for a noon brown bag lunch at the church on Wednesday, March 10th. Bring a snack to share if you care to or come a little early and help with set-up. Beverages are provided. A planned program begins at 12:45. Melinda will talk about some the issues pertinent to the troubled Middle East. She suggests reading or re-reading Leon Uris' book, Exodus and/or James Michener's book The Source for insight into the history of the people and the region.

Ten people were present for the poetry reading and discussion in February. The meeting is open to all women and friends of the church. Please phone Roberta or Sue if you have questions about the meeting.

Social Action Reports

Thank you, thank you for your "Guest" and Food Bank Pantry contributions...

For all who contributed to the UU Service Committee "Guest at Your Table" fundraiser: This year we received \$1134 from 33 contributions. This is the best we've done in a long time! UUSC thanks you. Also thank you to the youth, and their parents, who contributed \$68, and to everyone who provided the 86 pounds of food. The money and food went to the Central Missouri Food Bank Pantry in February.

Ice delays "special collections" "by one month"

Due to the cancelled service in January, the "special collections" have been moved back. The first one, for St. Francis House, will now be, or was, taken on Sunday, February 29. (You may be receiving this newsletter before this date.) A description of St. Francis House and of the SAC special collection program was in the January newsletter.

The second special collection for Amnesty International USA will probably be taken at the March 28 service. An article about AIUSA was in the February newsletter. Others will follow monthly.

Please consider contributing to one or more of these worthy local and national groups

Men's Spring Equinox Sweat

21st March 2004

**A CHANCE TO RECONNECT WITH
YOURSELF,
OTHER MEN, THE NATURAL
WORLD**

For further details contact:
Peter Holmes
Evan Prost

Adult Religious Education

Family Forum – 2003-2004

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.

March 14 – Encouraging Resiliency in Our Children

In this workshop we will explore how trauma has affected children in war-torn countries and how we may apply some of the lessons we have learned to our own raising of children. We will examine the effects of traumas, large and small, upon children's behavior and what kinds of actions by caregivers are helpful in encouraging resiliency. Two types of reactions deserve particular attention, aggressive acting out by one group and social isolation and withdrawal by another. Special attention will be placed on methods of anger management to help these children achieve peaceful solutions. Facilitators: Psychologists Drs. Wayne and Carla Anderson.

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.

Writers' Groups

New writers are always welcome! Writing the stories of our lives can lead us to laughter and tears, deepen our spirituality and connections to our families and friends. The only requirement is to bring a favorite writing instrument and some paper to these Saturday morning sharing times. The women's group meets on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 10:00 A.M.; the mixed (men and women) group meets on the first and third Saturdays at 10:00 A.M. Both groups meet in the Centering Room at the church.

UU Infidels Publishing Newsletter.

The UUI, Unitarian Universalist Infidels, is a UUA-Related Organization whose purpose is to support and work to maintain a place at the UU table for atheist, agnostic, skeptic, and secular humanist UUs. This spring it will publish the first issue of a semiannual (twice yearly) newsletter that will provide a voice for viewpoints and opinions not usually represented in *UU World* magazine. You can order this year's spring and fall UUI newsletters by sending your name and address and a check for \$3.00 to UUI, 16265-D Dahlgren Road, King George, VA, 22485. (If you care to send more, it will go toward the fee for the booth we are going to have a General Assembly.) We plan to include a section titled "Talkback to UU

World" and invite your comments. The *UUI Newsletter* will also be published on-line at www.uu-infidels.org, and if you wish, you can join the UUI discussion group by sending an email to uui-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Bible Study

All are welcome to the current series of Bible study, co-led by Steve Blower and Rev. Haney. The sessions are scheduled for 9:00 AM on the second and fourth Sunday of the month, with a follow-up "intersession" on a Monday evening, at 7:30 PM, eight days after the morning session. If you are interested, call the church office, 442-5764, for information about the session and resources that are available. You may also email Rev. Haney at whaney@coin.org.

Tour Civil Rights Sites

Have you ever wanted to see some of the sites of the civil rights movement: the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma, 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, the store in Money, Mississippi, where Emmett Till allegedly "talked fresh" to a white woman? These and many more are included in a tour being offered this spring by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart, IN. The March 27-April 4, 2004, tour has been planned and will be led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, minister of the Elkhart UU Fellowship, who was involved in the early stages of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and

was the Unitarian Universalist minister in Mississippi 1969-84. The tour, by luxury motor coach, will include all admission charges, overnight accommodations, and most meals. Videos on the bus and visits with 1960s activists will supplement the site visits. The tour will begin and end in Nashville, Tennessee. For full details on cost and schedule, you can go to the Elkhart Fellowship's web site at www.uufe.org. You can also request a printed version by writing UUFE, P.O. Box 584, Elkhart, IN 46515 or e-mailing judygibson@juno.com. Registration is on a first-come basis with less than 25 seats still available, and registration closes soon.

Celebrate! Celebrate! Celebrate!

Central Midwest District and the UU Women's Federation plan the 40th Anniversary Celebration for April 2-4, 2004 in Bloomington, IL. Information available in your church office or email Pat Goller dome@interserv.com



Action Steps for Becoming a Welcoming Congregation

The objective of the UU Church of Columbia's Welcoming Congregation Committee is to work to complete these action steps. To see details about the progress we are making, please see the poster located in the greeting area near the Welcoming Congregation bulletin board. Thank you to everyone who is contributing to this process. We appreciate your efforts. If you would like to become more involved, please attend our committee meetings, which are held the last Sunday of each month at noon in the Forum room downstairs at the church.

Education

1. Offer religious education that incorporates lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) life issues, including the workshop series from the Welcoming Congregation Program.
2. Promote participation by the congregation's minister, religious education minister or director, president, and/or moderator in the Welcoming Congregation Program.
3. Offer a congregation-wide workshop program(s), with follow-up opportunities for study and reflection.
4. Use the Unitarian Universalist sexuality education program, [Our Whole Lives](#).

Congregational Life

5. Form a broad-based Welcoming Congregation committee to offer programs and monitor progress.
6. Adjust congregational bylaws and other relevant documents to include an affirmative nondiscrimination clause concerning membership, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals.
7. Use inclusive language and content as a regular part of worship services, and provide worship coordinators and speakers with guidelines on inclusive language.
8. Provide main worship space and ministerial services for LGBT rites of passage, such as services of union and dedications of children.
9. Welcome LGBT persons in the congregation's brochure.
10. Ensure that publications, public information, and programming reflect the requested status of any individual as s/he sees appropriate; recognize same-gender couples in directories and other publications as they desire.

Community Outreach

11. Celebrate and affirm LGBT issues and history during the church year (possibly including Gay Pride Week in June or [National Coming Out Day](#) in October).
12. Participate in and/or support efforts to create justice, freedom, and equality for LGBT people in the larger society.
13. (again) Provide main worship space and ministerial services for LGBT rites of passage, such as services of union and dedications of children. (This guideline is also listed as number 8 under Congregational Life.)
14. Establish and maintain contact with local LGBT groups to offer support and promote dialogue and interaction.
15. Advertise in the local press and/or other media that reaches the LGBT communities.
16. Provide use of building space on an equivalent basis with other Unitarian Universalist organizations when requested by members for programs and meetings of an [Interweave](#) (Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns) chapter.

An additional note:

Once a congregation feels it has achieved all applicable action steps and has taken a congregational vote in affirmation of being recognized as a *Welcoming Congregation*, a brief description of how each action step was met should be sent to the [OBGLTC](#) along with notification of the congregation's completion of their process. Upon receipt of this information the Office of BGLT Concerns will send the congregation a letter of congratulations, along with a poster that proclaims that they are a *Welcoming Congregation*.

Submitted by Stephanie Dorman, Welcoming Congregation co-chair

THE SEARCHLIGHT

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WORSHIP SERVICES

**Sunday Services: 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary
(Meditation Time 9:30 – 10:00 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.

07 Mar “*What Are You Doing Out There, Mr. Emerson?*”

Probably no one took the Transcendentalist view more seriously than Henry David Thoreau. What was his contribution to our spiritual life? The Choristers will be a part of the service. Our monthly potluck luncheon follows the service.

14 Mar “*Green Beer and Identity*”

With St. Patrick’s Day upon us, what does it mean to be “Irish?” What form does one’s identity take? When is establishing identity “roots” important? The UU Singers will be a part of the service.

21 Mar “*What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist?*” Scott Denson is the coordinator of this lay-led worship service.

28 Mar “*Of Ministers and Ministries*”

Church life can be diverse in its programming and activities. The real issue is, “What do we have to offer to those who come to us looking for a church home?” The UU Singers will be a part of the service.