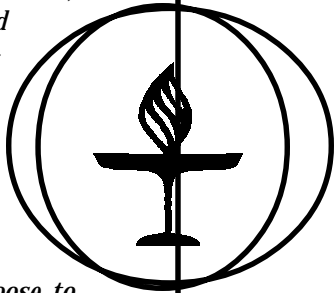




THE SEARCHLIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF COLUMBIA, MO No. 9, MAY, 2004

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 (442-5764).



Announcing.....



....GLBTQA movie night!!

Friday, May 14th 7:00-9:30 p.m.

(movie will begin at 7:15 p.m.)

“It’s in the water”

1998, 100 minutes, Subjects: Romance & Comedy

Rated: NR

Director: Kelli Herd

Starring: Keri Jo Chapman; Teresa Garrett; Derrick Sanders

... is a fun indie set in the conservative Southern town-”Azalea Springs, Texas”. The movie focuses on the antics of residents as they react to the opening of an AIDS hospice in their community. The title refers to a comic subplot-a rumor that drinking the local water turns people gay.

FREE!! Popcorn & soda provided!!

*Sponsored by the Welcoming Congregation Committee
For more information, call Christy Hutton.*

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MINISTER'S MONTHLY MUSINGS

MAY IS . . .

May is when the fullness of spring finally gets here. Through April, we witness the parade of blossoms and flowers, each in its own time and place, at its own pace. By May, the trees and shrubs have finally and fully leafed out, and the sparseness of winter branches stabbing into the inconsiderate sky is crowded with abundant foliage. The luxury of shade is a reality.

May is also when the fullness of our church year is realized. Through the coursing of the previous months, we witnessed the parade of activities, services, programs, fundraising and fellowship, also each in its own time and place, at its own pace. It looks like the sparseness of our membership growth is giving over to the abundance of new people joining our community. We are not ready for the luxury of numbers, but we are bathed in the luxury of meaningful programming and thoughtful activities.

May is when we begin to wind down the intensity of the church machinery of institutional activity. Some things continue unabated – Sunday worship services and meetings of the Board of Trustees. Otherwise, by the end of May, the fullness of the summer months come into view. May is when plans are firmed up for summer events and outings and retreats. In the coursing of the church year, each moment has its rewards and achievements. May is the time to take stock and reflect upon what and how we traveled. With this and the final arrival of spring, in the fullness of our reflection with gratitude upon the mystery of spring and community life, it is enough to say, “May is.”

Peace and Love, Bill.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia is:

- * To keep our commitment to the seven principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association;
- * To act upon these principles through a caring and friendly religious community for persons of all ages and diverse religious views;
- * To promote spiritual growth and the quest for truth;
- * To build our covenant with fellow Unitarian Universalist Congregations.

Adopted by the Congregation on May 22, 1994

From the desk of the Church Administrator:

Please take a moment to check your address and zipcode on the label of this newsletter. Then call the church office if a correction is needed. (573-442-5764) The postal service requires that we verify and correct all addresses and zipcodes at least once each year. Thanks, Kathie Bergman

Visitor Orientation

One Sunday of each 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, May 16th.

Celebrating Our New Members Ingathering Planned

To acknowledge those who have joined our church this year, we are planning a New Member Ingathering on Sunday, May 16, 2004 as part of the Worship Service. All new members having joined since November 2003, and others interested in now joining the church are invited to participate. Contact the church office to let us know that you will participate or if you have any questions.



President's Report

I was on my way to the airport for work the other day, thinking of all the chores I had still to do. Projects at work, repairs at home, tasks for church, the list was long. This wasn't a calm reflection. I was caught in a cycle of "If only ..., my life would be better." If only I finished certain tasks, achieved certain things, my life would be better.

For some reason I asked myself, "Better than what?" That got me to thinking about what I have instead of what I haven't done. I have a lovely house, a fantabulous husband, an interesting job, money in the bank, a garden, friends, faith, family. The list is long.

It is so easy to fall into the trap of "not good enough" these days. It is easy to feel that we ourselves don't measure up. There are so many ways that we can fall short. We are constantly given messages about how we could look better. There are messages on how to be better parents. How to make more money. How to have a lovelier home. No wonder we are so dissatisfied and often see the proverbial glass as half full.

I realized that we carry this over into church. That dissatisfaction of not having what we think that we should or what we have been told we should have. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that we don't have enough - members, money, programs. Or to think that we have too much - programs, problems, repairs. It is easy to compare ourselves to other congregations, perhaps a previous one that we belonged to - or to other denominations - perhaps a more conservative one that we feel competitive with.

It is this temptation of dissatisfaction that prevents us from seeing what we do have. What we have is a vibrant, caring congregation. We have had over 30 people join since the fall. Our programs are strong and cover a wide range of interests and needs. We have a lovely building. Our canvass was successful, raising about \$10,000 more than the year before - and that with an uncertain economy.

True, we still need to rebuild our reserve funds. And, yes, there are repairs to be made and maintenance to be done. Yet giving into the temptation to be dissatisfied will only dissipate our energy. Rather we should embrace what we have and have achieved. Then, with joy instead of frustration, we can roll up our sleeves and do more.

Rebecca Graves, Board President



Conversations, Etc.

Conversations, Etc. will meet for a brown bag lunch and fellowship at noon on Wednesday, May 12th at the church. All women and friends of the church are welcome to attend. Please join us. Sally Brown will present a program at 12:45 p.m. She will talk about women who were "movers and shakers" in the founding and growth of the Fellowship/Church-past and not-so-past. Conversations, Etc. will continue its monthly meetings throughout the summer. Program suggestions may be offered to Betty Cook Rottmann or Roberta Jones.

Everyone is invited!
First Sunday Potluck Lunch
May 02, 2004
Immediately following the worship service
In the Greeting Area at the church
Bring a dish to share!

YRUU Led Service May 9

YRUU Teens will meet at the Church for a Lock-in May 8 to finish last-minute planning for the YRUU-led service May 9. This is a chance for the rest of our congregation to see us and get to know us, and for us to run the show. It is also a chance for us to answer the question "Why Are You You?" All YRUU teen should plan to be at the lock-in to help plan and participate at 6:00 PM Saturday May 8. Midnight Mass will be held at Midnight (of course).

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.

May 02 “To Educate and not to Indoctrinate”

166 years ago, the concept of education and not indoctrination became the norm for our liberal religious tradition. Today we would add a spiritual and ethical dimension to that ideal. The children will be with us at the opening of the service. Our monthly potluck luncheon follows the service.

May 09 Layed service-YRUU

In this hot month o’ May, we got some cool stuff coming up. YRUU is gonna grace you all with their own creative chaos this Sunday, May 9th with their very own, YRUU “teen-led” service. So kick back with your glass o’ lemons and get ready to rip-roar your way through a showcase of the way “today’s youth” would go to church.

May 16 “Membership and Commitment”

Being a member of a free church is a matter of free choice. What is involved in that choice? How is it best acted out? The service will include the UU Singers and an In-gathering of new members.

May 23 “Islam’s Reformation”

Religion is at the root of the political and violent confrontation between the West and the Middle East. With extremist Muslims center stage, is there a moderate voice of Islam? Is it realistic to think a democracy can work in the Islamic world?

May 30 “Your Own Spirit”

This, the last of our worship services of the scheduled church year, will recognize the overlooked importance of Memorial Day. Is it appropriate that our war-machine mentality should take over this day of remembrance?



The UU Book Discussion Group will meet **Friday, May 14 @ 5:30pm @ Formosa Restaurant 913A E. Broadway.** Bring a book you have read to discuss. Call Pam Springsteel for questions.



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.

May 2 Iraq and the Future

Herbert Tillema, Professor, political science, U of Mo.-Columbia.

May 9 Amnesty International Defending Human Rights

George Frissell, Teacher and students, Hickman High School

May 16 Enforcing the Sunshine Law

Doug Crews, Executive Director, Missouri Press Service, Inc.

May 23 Advancing Civil Law

Daniel Ray Dunham, Attorney, with Carlyle Foley Office

May 30 Patriot Act



A Message from the Youth Religious Education Committee

The RE Committee members recently surveyed many of the families of our RE Children regarding the new format of RE. For those who are not familiar with the new format, we start with an expanded Centering time. This is designed to be the primary time

to impart/discuss UU values and traditions. The children then divide into “interest groups,” including Games, Social Action, Nature and Science, and Arts. These areas are multiage (K through 5th grades). The Potter (preschool) children have their own class.

Our goals in this format are to build community, create a fun experience for the children, so they want to come to RE, and to address some of the discipline issues that were arising in the old classroom format, particularly with some of the more boisterous children.

Here is a summary of the feedback we received: Overall, most families like the basic idea of the multi-age interest groups. The major exception to this was among families whose children are more quiet or shy and have gotten overwhelmed by the relative chaos of choosing interest groups, and put off by the uncertainty that results when an interest group has not been available because of a lack of teachers. Centering time was seen as “too long” by the parents of the younger children, and “geared too young” for the older children. There have definitely been fewer discipline issues than in past years.

In response to these concerns, we are implementing some changes next year:

1. Centering will start out with all of the children for an opening rainbow chalice lighting and offering, but then the Potter children will go to their classroom for an age appropriate story or activity, allowing the rest of centering to be pitched to the school age children.
2. We will make it a high priority to always offer the Games option and the Arts option, to increase consistency and to meet the needs of both the quietest and the most energetic children. We still hope to offer both the Social Action and the Nature and Science options, and will always offer at least one, but as always, we are dependent on the availability of volunteer teachers.
3. We will continue to serve snack in the interest groups, a change that was made after Christmas, and certainly seemed to lessen the confusion.

Also, we will continue keeping class lists, and reminding children of what interest area they are signed up for.

If we didn’t get your input, or if you have further thoughts and suggestions, please feel free to contact any member of the RE Committee:

- Val Bader
- Kyna Byerly
- Allie Gassmann
- Ellen Thomas

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. Come join us in the Channing Room downstairs. Drop-ins are welcome. No registration required.



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.



Caring Committee Announces

Anne Robins will be the Caring Assistant in May. 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. Jan Swaney and Allie Gassmann, co-chairs

Sudanese Family Settles Into Columbia Neighborhood

Our new Sudanese family is doing wonderfully, thanks to the many U. U's who have shared with them in so many ways. Although they have been in the United States only about 3 weeks after spending 10 years in a refugee camp, they have made a good start on the process of becoming a part of their new community. Their apartment is cozy and comfortably furnished, thanks to the members of Olivet Christian Church, the refugee center, as well as the U.U's, and they are adequately supplied with food, clothing for all, and some toys for the children.

Said (14) started West Junior HS Monday; Yusuf (9) and Zara(7) started Field Elementary School last week and are beginning to learn English and make friends. They all seem to have excellent teachers. Two and a half year old Mustekbel and 5 year old Nura are happy to be in pre-school while their parents attend classes at the Family Learning Center. All have completed their initial medical evaluations and vaccinations. They are on the way!

Mr. Tota was ready to start a job at Tiger Ice, only to find out that it is near Boonville and that he won't be able to commute that far. He was very disappointed but he will continue to study English at the Family Learning Center until he can find a job.

They are very appreciative of the help they have been given, but would like to become independent as soon as possible. Until then, they will need assistance with rent, which is \$500.00 per month. Our church did not make a commitment to pay a set amount of their rent or expenses, but the refugee center will need to help them with whatever we cannot. With that in mind, our church has started a fund designated to assist with rent. We would welcome large or small contributions to this fund, which currently has a balance of \$1,000.00. Please call Margaret Tyler, or Kathie Bergman for more information, or you could send a designated contribution to the church. They are a wonderful family and they have been a great joy to work with.

Margaret Tyler, Project Coordinator



Social Action Report

Southern Poverty Law Center: May Special Collection Recipient

The Special Collection planned for May 23 will be for the nonprofit Southern Poverty Law Center, known for the legal victories it has achieved against white supremacists, its exposing and tracking of hate groups, and its tolerance education programs. SPLC was founded in 1971 as a small civil rights firm, but its work has greatly expanded since then. In its three decades, SPLC "has achieved significant legal victories, including landmark Supreme Court decisions and crushing jury verdicts against hate groups."

Co-founder Morris Dees has received numerous awards, as has SPLC. Dees has spoken at many colleges and universities, including at least twice at UMC. (I remember hearing him here and being awed by Mr. Dees.)

Social Action Report cont.

SPLC's "Teaching Tolerance" magazine and teaching kits are distributed free to over 500,000 K-12 educators around the country. They are designed to help teachers develop respect and understanding in the classroom.

The Center's "Intelligence Report" follows activities of hate and white supremacist groups around the country. These are also terrorist groups. By representing injured parties in civil law suits, SPLC has been able to shut down some of these groups.

You can learn more about this worthy organization by visiting www.splcenter.org. I have personally contributed to SPLC for many years, and I assume others of us do also. I hope you will come on May 23 prepared to make a financial contribution to SPLC on behalf of our church. Steve Mudrick

Thank you to all:

The second Special Collection, taken on March 28, brought around \$500 to Amnesty International USA. Thank you to all who contributed.



WE DID IT!!

Do you know what you have done? You gave a gift to your church, and in doing so you gifted yourself with a caring community which can begin to manifest more of its visions and promises.

The Generosity Team was convinced that you would pay for what you value, and you have. We asked you to find your vision for this church and help to manifest that vision. You responded as generously as we had hoped. The canvass/pledge drive has been a great success. All of us who pledged have given ourselves and this church a gift-the gift of our commitment to a shared vision. As we gather to vote on next year's budget, I want all of you to pat someone on the back and say "Congratulations", because each of us deserves it.

OK, so the canvass drive is finished. It's time to start on next year's drive. The first order of business is to expand the Team. It says something about how much fun this has been that those who have served this year are continuing with the Team, but we also need some new blood. That could be you. We would like to add to our team:

**A star or two who have been in the church a year or less-for the perspective of a newcomer to our community.

**A star or two with children in our Sunday school. Right now we have only one of these people on the Team, and need to expand that part of our vision.

**A star or two who knows something about public relations work, so that we can advertise our process even more effectively.

**A star or two who are creative and imaginative, to give us new, creative ideas.

**A star or two who are really good at selling and enthusiastic about selling the church.

**A star or two who are just plain enthusiastic.

You could come up and volunteer-tell Barbara or Linda or some other member of the Team that you are interested. Tell Bill Haney, or Kathie Bergman, or someone on the Board. Or-we can buttonhole some of you after a service one of these Sundays. One way or another, we would like to have our Team in place and starting to function by the end of May. Come on in and join the fun. Barbara Carter and Linda Lenau

A Reminder from the Board of
Trustees:
Congregational Meeting
Unitarian Universalist Church
Sanctuary
Noon on Sunday, May 2, 2004

UU's & God Study Group Will Form

"A study group is forming out the 'UUs & God' presentation given on April 18. It will be led by Loretta Willems and will begin by reading a recent book by UU minister Gary Kowalski, *Science and the Search for God*. This book is an excellent introduction to Process Theology, a theology that has both theist and non-theist forms. Books may be ordered through the book table. If you would like more information feel free to speak to Loretta at church or call her at home, phone number in the directory."



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. Both groups meet in the Centering Room at the church from 10 a.m. until noon.

Mixed group May 1 and 15
Women's group May 8 & 29
On June 12 both groups will meet at Linda Lenau's for end-of-the year picnic.

THE SEARCHLIGHT

The Unitarian Universalist Church
2615 Shepard Blvd,
Columbia, MO 65201-6132



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**Mark Your Calendar for the
All Church Indoor Recycling Festival (Garage Sale)
Friday and Saturday May 7 & 8th,
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Collection days: Tues, Wed., Thurs. nights (5/4 - 5/6), 6-8 p.m. Bring your items to the church. Pre-marked prices are great, but optional. Pickup is available for those lacking transportation.

Items needed: All household, yard and garage items, except Adult Clothing. Children's items, sports articles, books, furniture, luggage, toys, electronics, computers, rugs, decorations, fabrics, live plants and troublesome, cluttering items from your drawers, attics and storage spaces are badly needed.

Please note that really special art or antique items should be reserved for the fall UU Art & Antique Festival (Oct. 16-17), which begins at 4 p.m. with a wine/cheese reception and silent auction of art & antiques.

Help is still needed to prepare and hold the garage sale. If you have two hours to give the week of 5/3 - 5/9, please let us know a.s.a.p. Available jobs include table setup, refreshments, merchandising, sign management and inventory control. Many great helpers have already volunteered, but we need more help!! You'll have a great time, by the way. Workers get to buy at the early bird sale on Thursday night!!!

For more information, to volunteer or to request a pickup, please call Marianne Erickson. This is your opportunity to help our green sanctuary efforts and improve the church's financial status in one fell swoop!