

The Sojourner

newsletter of the *Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown*
1565 South Keim St Pottstown, PA 19465
(610) 327-2662 uufp.jp.d.uua.org

February 2007

Sunday, February 4, 2007

Atheism, That "BAD" Word

Lay Leader: Clayton Mowrer

Presenters: Emily Quarles-Mowrer, Clayton Mowrer and Bob Jones

Admitting Atheists are a clear minority in the U.S.A. They are generally despised, thought of as evil, immoral and arrogant. As an eminent writer has put it, "Atheists receive about as much sympathy as a pedophile."

Our topic today defines, describes and defends Atheism. Our presenters will show that an Atheist may be more spiritual, more moral and more attuned to reality than those who deride them.

Included today are two songs by Emily and Bob

Sunday, February 11, 2007

Externalism On the Perils of Endless Invention

Lay Leader/Speaker: Cougar

Our culture invents external devices to replicate literally every human ability. A society of "externalists," we seem to think this liberates us. But what really happens to people in such an evolution? What would a society of "internalists," who always chose to maximize human skill sets, be like? Can we influence the speed and direction of technology so as to support human development as well?

Sunday, February 18, 2007

This We Do Covenant

Minister: Colin Bossen

Lay Leader: Emily Quarles-Mowrer

Over the course of the last several centuries Unitarianism, Universalism and now Unitarian Universalism have changed a lot. We have evolved from exclusively Christian to non-creedal polytheological communities. We have created, adopted and shed more than a few theologies along the way. One of the very few things that has remained with us throughout our evolution is our use of the covenant.

In this service we'll look at how the history and theology of covenants can teach us how to live together as a religious community.

Third Sunday potluck will follow after the service

Sunday, February 25, 2007

The Path to the UUFP

Lay Leader: Mary Ryan

We're all here at the UUFP. How did we get here? Not the drive, but the journey to becoming a UU. We've all come to the same place, but we've taken different paths to get here.

We'll have speakers discuss these different personal journeys and then open the floor to what should be a thought-provoking and lively discussion.



From the Minister's Desk:

We have reached the halfway point. I arrived in September and by mid-summer I will be gone. After we have parted ways you will face another year of transition before the arrival of your new settled minister in the autumn of 2008. In the time we have left I will be working with the Transition Team and the Board to examine and restructure the governance system of the congregation. This will be in addition to my continuing work with you on covenanting and membership.

The governance system that the congregation currently has, is designed for a small community. With around 50 members, the Fellowship is what sociologists call a family-sized congregation. As the name suggests, family-sized congregations tend to operate a lot like families. Most congregations of this size operate informally and make decisions more on the basis of personalities rather than policies. Being a family-sized congregation is not an inherently bad thing or something to be ashamed of. Many of the first Christian churches began as family-sized congregations and several historical Unitarian Universalist congregations were this size when they did their most important work.

However, if the congregation truly wishes to grow, it needs to change the way it operates. It must move from informality to formality, from looking at problems on the basis of personalities to solving them from the perspective of policy. Re-imagining and restructuring the governance system of the congregation will allow you to do this. In doing so the congregation will have the opportunity to put the structures in place that will allow it to grow in the future.

Such changes won't necessarily be easy. If they are to be effective, they may require some of you to think differently about how you work to get things done and who should be involved in what parts of the work of the congregation.

These changes might be painful or scary at times. Change often is. But change is a fact of life. Restructuring the congregation's governance system is a chance to change intentionally and break out of old patterns of operation. Continuing using your interim period as a time for intentional change is one way to increase the chances that your next settled ministry will be successful.

I look forward to working with you during the time we have together.

Love,

Colin

Colin Bossen
Contract Minister
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown
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President's Message

Soon, we will be having elections to select our UUFP officers for the 2007-2008 Fellowship year. As part of our Transition Team work, we are looking at restructuring our board and committees. We have multiple goals for doing this – to simplify our committee structure, to make a smaller board which better fits the size of our congregation, to clarify the responsibilities of all of these groups, and to better use the human resources of our Fellowship.

We will be having a congregational meeting on Sunday, February 18 to present our ideas of how we think this structure might work. We will be basing our nominating process on this structure. Our advice from UUA consultant Rev. Tom Chulak is to try the change for a year, and if it works, to revise our bylaws at that time. The Board and Transition Team appreciate your support and feedback as we try these new ideas.

As we look to our health and growth, the Board feels that we need to have policies in place to organize our Fellowship life. This allows us to have processes in place in times of crisis and decision-making, and also is a more democratic process which allows equal access to participation in the UUFP community life. I would like to review at a high level our current policies at the March congregational meeting.

Continuing the theme of Healthy Congregations, the team of Carla Johnson, Lynn Medley and Linda Pally will be attending a series of 5 Saturday workshops from January through May. This is a workshop for congregational leaders which examines the systems theory of how Healthy Congregations work, and how to examine our own congregation in this light.

Our minister, Colin Bossen is leading a series of workshops on Congregational Covenants to help us develop a congregational covenant. We started this work in the fall, and will build on it. The end goal of this is to have a covenant of behavior where we all agree to abide by the covenant as we live in community together.

We have placed our congregation's name on the list for needing interim ministry again for the 2007-2008 year. We will follow the same process as last year of selecting a search committee from the Board, and interviewing potential candidates. At the March meeting, we will need to determine what level of ministry we want for next year. Can we get back to ½ time ministry? I believe we should consider this as a goal.

In closing, I'd like to thank Colin, the Board, and the Transition Team for the visionary and growth work they have been doing. It's taken a great time commitment, and can be challenging and somewhat scary work at times.

In Peace,

Carla Johnson

Transition Team Report

As part of the interim period between settled ministers; the Transition Team, with the assistance of the interim minister, is re-evaluating the congregation's governance structure. Over the next couple of months the Transition Team will study Board and Committee structures to determine what structures are most suited for a congregation of this Fellowship's size. The size and culture of the congregation directly affect the volunteer and staff resources available to meet the congregation's needs. After evaluating the current Board and Committee structures, the Transition Team will suggest adjustments to the congregation's governance structure so that it better reflects the needs and resources of the community.

The process the Transition Team is following is three-fold:

1. Develop an outline of the current system of governance.
2. Based on conversations with committee chairs, Board members and UUA consultant Tom Chulak; determine what parts of this system are working and what parts are not.
3. Propose a new system of governance for provisional adoption by the congregation. The system of governance would be adopted for the church year of 2007-2008 and rejected, modified or finalized for the church year of 2008-2009. At the time of final adoption the new system of governance will be instituted in the congregational By-laws.

The committee will be submitting a draft proposal to the Board for approval at the February Board meeting. A final proposal will be submitted to the congregation at the March congregational meeting.

There will be a congregational information session February 18th to discuss the final proposal before it is voted on.

Respectfully,
Colin Bossen, Contract Minister

Upcoming Informational Meeting

The Transition Team will be sharing information on our vision for updating the board structure for the 2007-2008 year on February 18th after the service. This is a chance to discuss the Transition Team's report and proposal on congregational governance prior to our March 18th congregational meeting.

Hope to see you at this important meeting.

Love,
Colin Bossen, Contract Minister and Carla Johnson, UUFPP Board President

Opening the Heart

A Labyrinth Walk

Sunday Afternoon, February 11, 2007

**“It’s in everyone of us
To be wise
Find your Heart
Open up both your eyes
We can all know everything
Without ever knowing why
It’s in everyone of us
You and I.”**

Robert Gass

**Drop by the
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown,
1565 South Keim Street, Pottstown, PA 19465
Between 3:00pm - 6:00pm
(Last walker at 5:40pm)**

For this indoor labyrinth walk we will have:

- ◇ **Gentle lyre music played by Kerry Lee, and recorded music**
- ◇ **Opportunity to journal and meditate around the labyrinth**
- ◇ **Complimentary Reiki**

All are welcome

**For more information please call Sally Martin
(Labyrinth facilitator) at 610 323-3067**

Thank you to all who are participating

Sunday Service Committee

*Thig an nathair as an toll
La donn Bride,
Ged robh tri traighean dh' an
Air leachd an lair.*

Will we have six more weeks of winter or won't we? The tradition of weather prognostication is older than Bill Murray and Punxsutawney Phil combined. It's the time of St. Bride's Day, when she is said to walk among us, granting us her powers of healing and protection. It is the time of hearth and home as the days lengthen and the light begins to return. Many neolithic and megalithic sights, monuments of mathematical precision, were built so that the rising Imbolc sun shines down a passageway, illuminating an inner region.

The light is coming to the Sunday Service Committee in a slightly different way this season. As with many things here at UUF, it's taking the form of music and sound, rather than light. Our illumination is coming in the form of new sound equipment. How exciting is that! We discussed, at length, devices for assisted listening during services, but these devices are dependent upon the quality of the microphones from which they are receiving their sound. So, this spring, we're tackling the microphones. We're in the process of replacing one of the corded microphones with another one being donated. It won't be the same quality as the main podium microphone, but will give us some additional options. We're purchasing a new CD player and a new cordless microphone. If our budget will stretch that far, we're also looking at some additional speakers, at the

"The serpent will come from the hole
On the brown Day of Bride,
Though there should be three feet of snow
On the flat surface of the ground."

advice of Ron Hovis, who did the initial sound system analysis for us. Thanks Ron!

We'd like to **hear** from you, once we've made these purchases, whether or not it improves your Sunday morning experience. We haven't decided against the assisted listening devices, but as this is a costly item, are putting this in our budget for next year. It is our hope that a better quality input will result in better quality output.

We're still in the process of finding our UUF Sunday Morning heartsong, continuing healthy and challenging discussions internally and with Colin, as part of the transition process. Colin said something to me the other day that really resonated with this process. He told me that what was important was that our choices were intentional, implying that doing something "just because" isn't healthy for the congregation and may not reflect the truth of our heartsong. Choosing to honor our roots. Choosing to try something new and different. Choosing to blend the old and new. We'll keep you posted as the melody begins to reveal itself to us.

Bright Blessings,
Stefanie Fulwood

Aesthetics Committee

Spring Cleaning

During a service the other morning, Bob Jones said, "Welcome to our beautiful space." and it struck us anew how truly beautiful the UUFP building and grounds are. I think we don't always pay attention to this because the Clutter Monster has taken up residence in our closets, nooks and crannies. Our space is welcoming, but it could be more welcoming.

Many well-meaning folks have stored things for future use, which came and went or never came at all. This has really been brought to our attention with all of the successful activities organized by the Fundraising Committee and the need for storage that has arisen from their continuance. So, the Aesthetics Committee, with our hearts and our heads focused on the rich history of the UUFP, has tasked ourselves with vanquishing the Clutter Monster living here at 1565 South Keim Street. We are not going in with shovels and throwing things away. That's not our plan or goal. We are looking at what we have, what we need and effective ways to store it so that it is accessible to all and if someone isn't available, everyone else can still find what they need.

Our first task will be the front coat closet, so that visitors are greeted with a pleasing visual when they hang up their coat, that they will see reflected in our governance. If you would like to join us for an hour or two after services on February 11th, your presence will be welcome.

If you have questions, concerns or comments, please call or email Stefanie Fulwood. Your input is welcome and appreciated.

Stefanie Fulwood
Aesthetics Chair

Hold that Date!

Take note of these important upcoming UU dates and mark your calendars.

March 9-10: UUFP hosts the JPD board meeting.

March 18: UUFP congregational meeting.

Please plan to attend this important annual meeting where we elect the officers of our Fellowship for the coming year.

March 18: A large area worship service will be held at 3 pm at the Unitarian Society of Germantown. Our goal is to have participation from all of our area congregations. Come hear the latest planning details and find out how you can help us get the news out for what is sure to be an exciting event.

April 27-29: JPD Spring Conference, Harrisburg
This is a great event with keynote speakers, workshops, and a chance to meet other UU's from the district. You can attend for all or part of the weekend.

May 12: Kindling the Flame 2:

A day of networking and workshops for lay leaders and members on Saturday May 12 at the UU Church of Delaware County.

June 20-24: General Assembly in Portland, Oregon.

Religious Education Notes

Family Chalice Lighting for this traditional month of love:

This is a light of love,
A light of happiness,
A light that brings people together.
A light of friendship,
A light of compassion,
A light of truth,
A light that clears a path in the world of darkness.
A light of hope,
A light of peace,
A light of sorrows that will be made better.
This light is a light of love.

RE is getting back on schedule after the holidays with regular classes each week in February. The Pre-K class, led by Linda Pallay, will continue learning about their bodies and senses, and how they make each person unique and valuable. K-3, led by Suzanne Molyneux, will continue their exploration of ways to think and talk about god. The 4-6 class, led by Mary Alsayegh, will learn more about the Christian historical tradition's contribution to our culture and religious thought.

On February 13th Colin Bossen and Lynn Medley will be attending a Joseph Priestly District meeting of middle school RE groups to hear about current issues for this age group and participate in planning for future programming. We welcome your interest and input, and will bring back more details as we have them.

Thank you for sharing the love that your children bring every Sunday.
Lynn Medley, RE Chair

Our Gardens

Whoever has a blower & bags, please have them ready for use by mid-March. The river rocks between the Fellowship building & the flower beds are going to need a BIG BLOWOUT !!!

This is the first thing on the agenda for the flower beds.

The Gardeners
Dorothea Hamlin, Gardening Chair

From the Fundraising Front

Hello, all! As January comes to a close, we are wrapping up our Fair Trade Sale. It has been quite successful for our Fellowship, as well as being a good way to give back to the global community. Thank you all for your support in this effort!

As January ends, one other major change is happening to the fundraising committee. After many, many months of hard work and above-and-beyond-the-call service, Stefanie Fulwood is leaving our committee. I want to acknowledge that without her efforts, and the support and assistance of Vince, Nicholas and Conner, many of our fundraising events would not have happened. They certainly would not have happened with the style and touch of class we have all been able to enjoy. Stefanie has been a key member of the planning process, and right there at every step of the implementation of our events. I want to thank her tremendously for the sacrifices she has made to make all this happen.

With Stefanie withdrawing to put her energy into other activities, we will certainly have a void in our committee. I am asking for volunteers to join us. If you want to help with specific projects, such as the Chautauquas, Art Show, or Service Auction, please don't hesitate to let me know. The fundraising committee is budgeted to raise \$4000 this spring, and it is going to take the participation and support of the entire Fellowship to make this happen.

With that said, I am very excited to announce the UUFP 2007 Annual Art Show is taking place on February 24th, from 7-10 pm. We will again have live music, raffles, including a 50/50 raffle, fantastic food, and engaging works of art from some superb local artists. If you know of artists who might be interested, please pick up a registration form and information letter for them on the table by the front door. Please put this event on your calendar, and invite friends. We will also be looking for volunteers to help with set-up, food, and clean-up following the event.

We also have scheduled a Friendly's night on Tuesday, February the 27th, so come on out, and help us make our goal. We did not have a choice about how close these two events are together, I am sorry to say, because Friendly's books up so quickly. This will be our last Friendly's night for several months, so please sign up to sit by the door, or just come enjoy a good meal with your family and friends!

Can't wait to see you there!

Thank you all so much for your support!

-- Jeanne Bautista, Fundraising Chair

*Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Pottstown*
1565 South Keim Street,
Pottstown, PA 19464
610-327-2662

Saturday, February 24th

For directions, please visit our
website: <http://uufp.jpduua.org>

**The 2007 UUFP
Art Show**

- Live Harp Music by Kay Rutter
- Raffles - 50/50 and gift certificates
- Refreshments, including wine and cheese
- Entrance Donation of \$5 is requested
- Adults only event, please

For more information contact:
Jeanne Bautista
Phone: 484-363-0576
Email: JeanneBautista@msn.com

About Us

Who's Who at the UUFPP

Sojourner Policy/Deadlines

The Sojourner is the voice of the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown. Notices pertaining to the Fellowship, its activities and members, and denominational news may be submitted to the Fellowship in writing or by email.

The submission deadline is the 15th of each month.

**Please note the email address for the Sojourner:
UUFPPNewsletter@aol.com**

Interim Minister: Colin Bossen

Board of Directors:

President: Carla Johnson

Vice President: Jeanne Bautista

Treasurer: Open

Secretary: Mary Alsayegh

Sun. Services: Stefanie Fulwood

RE: Lynn Medley

At Large: Albert Jenkin,
Matthew Molyneux

Committee Chairs:

Caring Committee: Ruth Daly

Aesthetics: Stefanie Fulwood

Finance: Judy MacDonald

Fundraising Committee:

Jeanne Bautista

Hospitality/Kitchen: Open

Publicity: Ron Hovis

Membership: Kay Price

Ministerial Committee:

see Transition Team

Social Justice: Open

Sojourner Editor: Kay Price

Transition Team: Mary Alsayegh

Website Updates: Bob Gross

Choir: Marianne Yarnall

Building/Grounds:

Matthew Molyneux

Sunday Morning Teams:

Judith van Beek

Gardens: Dorothea Hamlin

Address changes and email changes: Address changes? If you have changed your home or email address please send your updates to uufppmailings@aol.com.

Meditation Moments...



*When you are compassionate with yourself and others,
your world becomes compassionate.*

Gary Zukav, "Seat of the Soul"

Come join us for meditation the first Tuesday of the month in
Fellowship Hall from 7pm - 8:30pm.

No experience is necessary, just a desire to take some quiet time for centering and
development of inner calmness.

Any questions, please call Sally Martin 610-323-3067

February 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Yoga: 7:00	2	3
4 Choir: 8:30 Service: 10:00 Transition Team Mtg:12:00 UU Covenant Class 3-5	5	6 Meditation with Sally: 7-8:30 Membership Mtg: 7:00	7	8 Yoga: 7:00 Women's Group: 7:00	9	10
11 Choir: 8:30 Service: 10:00 Aesthetics Cleanup: 11:30 Covenant Class: 3-5	12 Board Mtg: 7:15	13 Transition Team Mtg: 6:45	14	15 Yoga: 7:00	16	17
18 Choir: 8:30 Service: 10:00 Congregational Mtg: 11:30? <i>3rd Sun Potluck</i>	19	20	21	22 Yoga: 7:00	23	24 UUFP Art Show 7-10 PM
25 Choir: 8:30 Service: 10:00	26	27 Friendly's Fundraiser: 4-9 PM	28			

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP OF
POTTSTOWN

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*Pottstown Cluster food pantry collection during service
every third Sunday of the month.*