



June 2009

The Sojourner

newsletter of the

Unitarian-Universalist
Fellowship of Pottstown

1565 South Keim St

Pottstown, PA 19465

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www.uupottstown.org

Sunday, June 7, 2009

Walk a Mile in My Shoes

Lay Leader: Stefanie Fulwood with Lynn Medley and the RE Children

That's such a powerful phrase...walk a mile in my shoes. It challenges us to change our perspective completely and see a situation or event from someone else's viewpoint. That's a powerful tool for examining our lives and being open to growth. This Sunday we are going to see the UU principals, our *Moral Compass*, through the eyes of our community of children. We will be given a glimpse at how these beautiful, unencumbered minds interact with our principals and own them in their lives. This isn't a service for parents to be proud of our children, though of course we are always proud! This service is a gift of a new perspective that will help us grow as UUs.

Sunday, June 14, 2009

Building Your own Theology

Rev David Farrington

Eight members and friends of UUFP came together for ten weekly meetings to discuss and learn about some of the fundamental elements of theology, covering topics such as ultimate reality and the human condition. Along the way we created some pretty wonderful prose and poetry which will be shared during this service.

Sunday, June 21, 2009

The Sacred Masculine

Lay Leader: Rich Daley

Man's role in society has become increasingly more difficult to define. In a world with fewer sexual labels, today's man walks a tightrope between traditional male roles and the modern demands of his partner and family.

Through interactive discussion and other activities, we will celebrate and pay homage to the men that are closest to us in honor of Father's Day. This is an inter generational service.

Third Sunday potluck will follow the service.

Sunday, June 28, 2009

Emerson's Divinity School Address

Rev David Farrington

This is the second of what UU historian Conrad Wright has called the "three great utterances of Unitarianism." Emerson's address to the graduating class at Harvard's Divinity School was widely regarded as scandalous and decried by clergy in Boston and throughout America.



From the Minister's Desk

Well, congratulations to the noble eight! The eight folks who signed up for the *Build Your Own Theology* course. We met for ten consecutive weeks with only four absences, at least two were job-mandated. Quite a record.

Like any good adult educational effort, there were outside readings and exercises to compliment the in-class curriculum, but the real learning took place in telling and hearing our own stories. Our backgrounds and experiences were widely varied.

The formal topics included developing a liberal religious theological model, writing a personal spiritual biography, exploring varieties of religious experience, human nature, ultimate reality (God?), family religious inheritance and traditions, ethics, making meaning in our own lives and finally a personal theological statement or *credo*.

Each week participants were asked to journal their thoughts on the topics covered both in preparation for the meeting and afterwards, with the benefit of having shared in the experiences of others. The goal of the journaling was, of course, the personal theological statement.

We ended by sharing those *credos*. Some of the statements were a summary of the course material as it spoke to those individuals. Interestingly, others were personal statements seemingly stimulated by those materials. The latter included a moving appreciation for the support UUFP had provided over a span of many years and the resultant freedom to even have a personal theology. Still another expressed gratitude for being welcomed so openly and fully by UUFP and the growing realization that being a UU is a lot of work.

This latter was the point that came home to me as well. A religion which does not mandate any particular belief, creed or dogma, but rather encourages individuals to find their own and offers support for the journey in a variety of ways, that is a religion requiring work – a lot of it.

This was the introductory piece of a three part series, each offering a different theological topic for ten consecutive weeks. Many of the recent “graduates” expressed interest in the second unit, something we will revisit in the Fall.

Others, perhaps inspired by these “graduates,” have enquired if there will be a repeat of the Introductory unit. That depends entirely upon your interest. If another eight or more are interested we would happily do it again. Just let me know!

Blessings,

Dave

Rev. David W. Farrington
Consulting Minister, UUFP
610-850-3728

President's Message

An eventful year in the history of our Fellowship is about to conclude. I hope your memories include enjoyable moments and spiritual enrichment as well as a sense of achievement for the contribution you have made to our Fellowship.

We have accomplished much together, and I would like to share with you some highlights from this year.

- Our increased denominational presence is an important step toward creating a dynamic and healthy congregation. The significance of this cannot be overestimated. Throughout the past year we have had representation at the annual Joseph Priestley District Conference, and several members attended district sponsored meetings and workshops. Four of our members will be attending the General Assembly of the UUA in Salt Lake City in June.
- The Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM) and Committee Council have been of great assistance to the Board in meeting the challenges of growth, particularly in the area of governance. The governance model has been a work in progress and has been tweaked over the past two years to better meet our congregation's need.
- The tireless commitment of the Board members attending numerous meetings as they manage the business of the UUFP and set goals for the year that focused on our Vision and Mission statements with an emphasis on growth. The energy of the Committee Council to develop the plans and steps necessary to accomplish these goals.
- The exceptional work of the Committee Council and CoSM developing a Committee Approval Process to ensure that initiatives are aligned with the established congregational goals.
- The steps taken toward activities required for our growth initiative. One of which was the effort to complete the Chalice Lighter grant application and draft the job description for the Office Administrator. This resulted in the JPD Growth and Extension Committee awarding the UUFP a Chalice Lighter Grant for an Office Administrator position. The grant is available for five years from the date of offering.
- The persistence of the Stewardship Committee securing a line of credit, providing financial reports, and leading the Pledge Campaign.
- The completion of our consultant ministry search with the appointment of Rev. David Farrington in November.
- The revisions made to our Membership Policy clearly defining the Path to Membership. Path to Membership classes were held in February, and two of the attendees became new members.
- The revision of the Bylaws to correspond with our new system of governance and to prepare for congregational growth. The revised Bylaws were presented at an informational session in May and will be presented at the June congregational meeting for approval.
- The UUFP information booth constructed by our dedicated members and those who manned the booth to spread the message of UUism.
- The initiation of the Melting Potts Program introduced new Winter/Spring class offerings and offered a fun way to explore spirituality at the UUFP.
- The commitment of many to organize the Music and Message concerts, to participate in Social Justice activities, and to initiate a KIVA microfinance program at UUFP. This includes the commitment of our children who held a bake sale and donated proceeds to the Heifer Project.

As my two year term comes to an end, I want to let you know that I feel honored to have been President of the UUFP. At times it has been challenging; but it has also been very rewarding. I have had the opportunity to work closely with many wonderful people, to learn from them, and to form lasting friendships. I have grown as a leader, as a spiritual being, and as a UU. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served such a special group of people and to have spent my time and energy promoting Unitarian Universalism.

I encourage everyone to strive for a strong, united community that will allow us to carry forward our UU tradition. Each one of us is the lifeblood for our Fellowship, for one another, and for the larger community. You and I - we - are the ministry of the UUFP.

Religious Education Notes



Family Chalice Lighting:

Come into the circle of love and friendship.
Come into the community of justice & goodness.
Come and you shall know peace and joy.

Curriculum

Our 2008-9 curriculum is called Moral Tales, from the Unitarian Universalist Association. You can see it at: www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/moraltales. Each month we will introduce 1-2 new moral concepts consistent with the UU 7 principles (below in purple). This month our topics are:

June 7th: Skit practice for RE Service

June 14th: **RE Service** - the kids will teach you what they've learned!

June 21st: **Father's Day Brunch immediately following service**

Summer RE Hiatus

June 21st ends our RE program until the fall. The nursery will extend its age allowance through age 5 years for the summer. There will not be programming for children ages 6 and up until we resume RE in September.

June Events

Our second annual **Father's Day Pancake Brunch** will be held immediately following service on June 21st. Bring your father, your grandfather, your neighbor, your daughter or son – anyone you love who is a father, or with whom you as father would like to celebrate.



Nursery Position

Still available! If you know anyone you think might enjoy these bright, creative, joyful kids a few hours on Sunday mornings, please have them call Lynn Medley at 215.527.5903. If you know of someone I should contact, or will post fliers near your home or work, you can call me, or see me at church. Please help!

Happy Father's Day! Lynn Medley, RE Chair



UUFP Calendar

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Membership Mtg: 7:00	4 Yoga 7:00 Women's Group 7:00 Sunday Service Mtg 7:00	5	6
7 Choir 8:30 Service 10:00	8 Board of Directors Mtg 6:45	9	10	11 Yoga 7:00	12	13
14 Choir 8:30 Service 10:00 Annual Cong Mtg: 11:30	15 <i>Sojourner Deadline</i>	16	17	18 Yoga 7:00	19	20
21 Choir 8:30 Service 10:00 <i>3rd Sunday Potluck 11:30</i>	22	23	24	25 Yoga 7:00	26	27
28 Choir 8:30 Service 10:00	29	30				



Notes of Abundance

Notes of Abundance is a place to share our thanks for one another and to celebrate the abundant gifts that are given at the Fellowship every day. Join us in this new, joyful, way to recognize one another. Submit your ideas to a committee chairperson, or a letter directly to the Sojourner.

Note to Mary Alsayegh:

Dear Mary,

Please accept this thank you for the countless hours you have spent on tedious detail, from governance to budget and oil spill to minister searches. Thank you for also keeping your eye on the big picture of our mission, and of who we are as UU's. Thank you for urging us to grow in membership, in leadership, and in our understanding of ourselves. Thank you for doing all of this without fanfare, and most of the time, without the notice of the rest of us. Thank you for your gifts, and for the abundance you bring every day to the Fellowship.

In love,

Lynn Medley, and the Committee Council

The Women's Group

The Women's Group is holding their business meeting one month early this year. It will be held on June 4th at 7:00 PM at the Fellowship.

Our agenda will be to plan next years sessions, discuss Kiva micro-lending as a UUFP program, and review our DVD fund drive. We will also start looking over donated items from Peggy Jones, in honor of her late husband and our dear friend, Bob Jones. Some of the items will be on display at a later date at UUFP for all to reminisce and enjoy.

All women are welcome to attend.

Linda Pallay,
Women's Group chair



Healing Network

If you or someone you know is physically ill or struggling with a mental or emotional problem, you may ask to have that name added to the TRIUNE OF LIGHT Healing Network. While not a project of the UUFP, the network offers its services completely **free of charge** to all interested persons, including members of UUFP, their families, friends, co-workers, etc. Network members come from a variety of backgrounds -- some are trained reiki healers; some are traditional medical professionals; some are a combination of both. They perform long-distance, absentee healing and keep patients' names on the healing list for as long as you request.

The only information you need to provide is the full name of the person requiring healing. No details of the illness or any other personal information is requested. Please feel free to send healing requests to the TRIUNE OF LIGHT project coordinator, Deni Gross, who will then forward the information to network members. Talk to Deni in person at the Fellowship, phone her at 610-404-1185, or send an e-mail to cfpeace@hotmail.com.

Former patients have reported excellent results after being added to the healing list. Please note, however, that the network makes no claims to being a replacement for any form of



GETTING TO KNOW UU: An Interview with Lyn Bassett by Deni Gross

Lyn is one of our newer members, having joined the UUFP last Fall. A native of Havertown, she currently lives in Phoenixville close to the hospital, where she works in the Health Information Department coding inpatient records.

Her “roommates” include one dog and three rescued cats.

An ad in *Yoga Living* magazine originally drew Lyn to the Fellowship. She appreciates what she calls the Unitarian “philosophy” – being environmentally conscious, accepting everyone with dignity and respect, and practicing social justice. What keeps her coming back to the UUFP is the company of like-minded individuals, the opportunities for spiritual growth and learning, making new friends, and the chance to “connect to something larger.” She is currently organizing the Fellowship library and can be seen volunteering in the kitchen every second Sunday.

Following a vegan diet, Lyn is committed to a cruelty-free lifestyle. Vegans do not eat or wear anything obtained from animal sources. Lyn is “totally against” any forms of animal exploitation, including factory farms, circuses, and horse or dog races. Lyn enjoys experimenting with vegan recipes, and visitors to the Sunday potlucks can taste some of her creations like vegan chili or tofu lasagna. She studied nutrition at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition in New York City and likes to think of food as medicine, “looking at the energy of food and how illness can be cured by giving our body and mind what they need to function properly.” Additionally, Lyn is a member of several animal welfare organizations, like CARE (Compassion for Animals Respect for the Environment) of West Chester.

In her spare time, Lyn enjoys amateur photography. She also recently participated in an 8K running race in Philadelphia to raise money to promote vegan outreach and help animals. Although she has not had time to stick to a regular running schedule, she plans to begin training in order to once again participate in running events that raise money to help animals.

Please join Lyn at the next potluck for tasty vegan cooking and friendly conversation. She certainly looks forward to meeting UU!

continued ...

medical care, medicines or therapy, nor does it encourage participants to discontinue seeing their current health care providers while on the healing list.

Deni Gross
Caring Committee

My Credo

Dear Friends,

I wrote this letter of Love and Faith to you during the course of the recent seminar called "Build Your Own Theology".

My cat, Cosmo, was named by the children of his mother's owner. I like to think that his name is a shortened form of Cosmos or Cosmic. Cosmo sustained me through the time that my younger son went through a deep depression at the age of thirteen and I felt lost. I cried buckets of tears into the warm, yielding fur. Several years later Cosmo was called back into duty as Therapist-at-Large when my older son was deployed to Iraq and I went through the Year of Anxiety. A soft, sleek, grey creature, Cosmo cuddled and purred around my neck during the tough times the same way he had during the happier times; when my sons were youngsters, Cosmo had curled around my neck while I read stories aloud to them. The constancy - faithfulness, if you will - of Cosmo's devotion and affection is a lesson in love.

In addition to just being his little cat self, however, Cosmo's behavior represents a larger reality.

You, my friends of the Fellowship, are even more constant than Cosmo. There is no one here - from recent and former members and friends to charter members - who would have refused a phone call from me at three in the morning during the hard times or the not-so-hard times. I have always felt free to speak with you. Many hearts have opened and many confidences have been shared. Your particular safety net in this web of life has caught me and held me, more so than the high quality professional help I found, beneficial as it was. Your understanding and acceptance extended into a period when I needed to be away for financial reasons; I was working 48 out of 52 Sundays for over five years. We were never really out of touch, and your welcome home to me for Sunday services in January of 2008 was heart and soul warming. Greater than any specific words you ever spoke, your BEING HERE is valued.

I BELIEVE that any positive or non-harmful connection which living beings can create between each other is the entity often felt and referred to as god or an ultimate reality. I am speaking of communion between any manifestations of nature as a whole or of so-called "separate" beings, be they plant, human animal, other animal, stars, snow, or sunrise.

All of these connections are Sacred. They all invite and deserve our participation, admiration, and protection. Those acts are sacred as well.

Shanti

Lisa Jakiel

Who's Who at the UUFP

Minister: Rev. David Farrington

Board of Directors:

President: Mary Alsayegh

Past President: Carla Johnson

Board Secretary: Linda Pallay

Finance Secretary: Paul Nemeth

Board Member: Lynn Medley

Board Member: Tara Boroson

Board Committees:

Committee on Shared Ministry: Carla Johnson

Congregational Committees:

Committee Council Chairs:

Chair: Lynn Medley

Stewardship:

Chair: Paul Nemeth

Bookkeeper: Courtney Daley

UUAction:

Chair: Carla Johnson

Worship:

Chair: Stefanie Fulwood

Sunday Service: Stefanie Fulwood

Choir: Marianne Yarnall

Member Services:

Membership: Courtney Daley

Greeters: Judith Van Beek

Sunday Coffee Teams: Judith Van Beek

Newsletter: Kay Price

Website Updates: Bob Gross

Facilities:

Chair: Jon Price

Religious Education:

Chair: Lynn Medley

Important email contacts:

Minister@uupottstown.org – Rev David Farrington

President@uupottstown.org – Mary Alsayegh

PastPresident@uupottstown.org – Carla Johnson

BoardSecretary@uupottstown.org – Linda Pallay

Board@uupottstown.org - Board members

Committees@uupottstown.org – Committee Council

Office@uupottstown.org – Office staff

Mailings@UUPottstown.org-Judith Van Beek

Newsletter@uupottstown.org – Kay Price

UUAction@uupottstown.org - Carla Johnson

Programs@uupottstown.org – Stefanie Fulwood

MemberServices@uupottstown.org– Courtney Daley

Facilities@uupottstown.org – Jon Price

Finance@uupottstown.org - Paul Nemeth

Stewardship@uupottstown.org - Paul Nemeth

Sharedministry@uupottstown.org: Carla Johnson

Webmaster@uupottstown.org – Bob Gross

Change of email, phone or street address? Email your new contact information to mailings@uupottstown.org or hand over new info in person to Judith Van Beek.

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: newsletter@uupottstown.org**

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP OF
POTTSTOWN

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Email:

office@uupottstown.org

Website:

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