

CUF Links

Monthly Newsletter of the Carbondale
Unitarian Fellowship
A Welcoming Congregation

a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist association



SUNDAY SERVICES

Held in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30
a.m. Our Sunday Services and Religious
Education are at 10:30 a.m.

They are open to all. Infant and toddler
care are available.

OPEN MINDS Open Minds meets at 8:45 AM in the Commons.

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

A New Year's Resolution!

Lately, I've heard some of us express the sense that our Fellowship's energy level is lower than it used to be. I, too, have noticed a gradual lessening of energy, and I've wondered what we might do about it. Whenever I think about this, I come back to one of our offering readings, the one written originally by Mary Allen Walden, then Minister of Music at Second Unitarian Church in Chicago. Her words remind us that this fellowship "... is made up of us. Its energy and resources are our energy and resources."

Our Fellowship is organized as a shared ministry, in which the ministry of the congregation – that is, our work as a faith community – is undertaken in a spirit of partnership between the congregation, its professional staff, and its elected lay leaders. Within the shared ministry model, there is no single source from which energy and inspiration emanate. Rather, energy from each dimension of the partnership is enhanced and amplified as it resonates through the others. The membership, the lay leadership, and the Fellowship staff each play an essential role in generating and increasing this Fellowship's energy.

When does that energy increase? The energy increases when people show up and are present for and with each other. It increases when people focus themselves, sending attention and effort in a shared direction. It increases when people say "yes" and work on behalf of the congregation and the values that we share. It increases when people let go of the familiar and venture into the realm of possibility. The energy increases when people take risks, though I recognize that taking risks seems a hard thing to do with a low energy level.

As the December congregational meeting and the subsequent discussions have made clear, this Fellowship faces some significant challenges. There is serious work to do, and we'll need to increase the energy level to respond to and work with the changes that may be coming. No one of us is expected to take any of those challenges on as an individual, but each one of us has some part in the work ahead. In facing these challenges, let's remember that even though we cannot control the future, individual choices and actions can make a huge difference!

Each one of us has a role to play – perhaps a unique one! – To help the Fellowship move forward. As New Year's resolutions, let's resolve to do our individual and collective parts in making possible a vibrant, compelling, and fulfilling future for the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship.

With best New Year's wishes to you,

Bill S.

Sunday Services Schedule: January 2012

1/1 Bill Sasso: "At the Turn of the Year"

Our service on New Year's Day will invite us to consider the possibilities that a New Year brings and encourage us to contemplate how we can help those possibilities come into being. Part of this is "letting go," and part is "taking hold," but how do we know what to hold onto and what to let go of? A burning bowl ceremony will conclude the service.

1/8 Bill Sasso: "Embodied Justice"

We often think of justice as a fundamentally abstract concept – like the North Star, we know it's there, and we use it as guidance as we move forward, but we don't really expect to "get there." What might "embodied justice" mean in each of our lives? How can we be part of a practical, everyday, "hands-on," kind of justice?

1/15 Gordon Gibson: "The Lived Theology of the Civil Rights Movement"

The "Civil Rights Movement," or "Freedom Movement," was about more than slogans or a seat at a counter or on a bus, or new laws. It was a re-framing of what America is or should be; it was a re-imagining of being fully human, and beliefs at the core of the Movement may be understood as theological. Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson participated in the Selma voting rights campaign in 1965 and was the Unitarian Universalist minister in Mississippi from 1969-1984. Now retired, he is part of the Living Legacy Project, which will gather Unitarian Universalist civil rights veterans this March and will offer a bus pilgrimage in October. Our Social Action offering will benefit The Women's Center of Carbondale. Bill Sasso will coordinate this service.

1/22 Brian Sauder: "Ecology and Faith"

Brian Sauder serves as Central Illinois Outreach and Policy Coordinator for Faith in Place, an interfaith coalition that emphasizes two great responsibilities common to all faiths: to love one another and to care for the creation that sustains all life. Its mission is to give religious people tools

to reflect deeply on these responsibilities, integrate the teachings of faith into practice, and work together for a just and sustainable future. Brian received his BS from the University of Illinois in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, as well as an MA in Religion. During seminary, he broadened his understanding in the field of Religion and Ecology, helped co-found the STEWARDship Workshop, and started the praxis-oriented group EcoEcumenical. Bill Sasso will coordinate this service.

1/29 High School Group Service

As we go to press in December, all the details aren't quite planned out for this service, which our high school youth will organize and present. Watch for more information after the New Year, but in the meantime, plan to attend and to experience something "outside the box!" Please contact Sandy Charlson for more information, if needed.

FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR

2012...Yep, by the time you're finally reading this, we should all have had a chance to practice writing down the numbers "2012." And while I had many wonderful experiences in 2011, I'm looking forward to this year. One of the things I'm going to be doing right off the bat is to offer the Our Whole Lives sexuality program to our 7th-9th grade youth. I already offered one parent orientation meeting, and I will offer another on January 15. (Call me if you want to attend.) Yes, folks, parents today have a lot to be concerned about when it comes to their children, and I applaud those parents who can get their youth to participate in this most excellent program.

And based on media reports, the internet, easy availability of drugs, and the like, the world is a lot more dangerous for our youth and a lot more difficult for parents than it used to be. OR IS IT?

Maybe things really aren't as bad as we might feel, if we believe what Rev. Debra Haffner has to say in her book, "What Every 21st-Century Parent Needs to Know." Rev. Haffner believes much of the anxiety parents feel today is due to the constant sources of bad news reported in the media 24/7. For example, she reports that kidnappings are not up, school shootings are rare, and teen pregnancies are near their lowest rates ever, yet we as parents hear about them more. And she goes on to note that today's parents have more tools and knowledge to face challenges than other generations of parents. Our children are healthier than any other generation of children in history. "The research bears out that we are doing many things right as parents today, and our children are benefiting," says Rev. Haffner, but she adds, here are some things we can do better:

1. Be parents first, friends second.
2. Treat your children's accomplishments as theirs – not yours.
3. Emphasize happiness before success.

I found this book to be helpful, encouraging, and full of useful ideas. It covers a variety of topics that are timely and is positive in tone. I can see perhaps using it as a resource for a parents' workshop in the near future.

See how you do on the following test from the book:

1. The teenage birth rate was highest in:
 - a. 1957
 - b. 1972

- c. 1999
- 2. Compared to 15 years ago, drinking among high school students has
 - a. Increased
 - b. Decreased
 - c. Stayed about the same
- 3. Children and teens are most likely to be abducted by someone they met:
 - a. On the internet
 - b. On the street
 - c. At a shopping mall
 - d. In their home.

You might be surprised how much research on children and youth contradicts the impression parents receive from media. While Rev. Haffner provides a more positive view of today's children and youth, the task parents have of raising safe and healthy children is still large and difficult. So stay involved, find a balance between being too permissive and too demanding, involve children and youth in setting limits, jointly agree in advance on appropriate consequences for violations, and stick to them. Talk to other parents, share ideas, and be the parent.

We will be talking more about this in the future, but for now, please enjoy your family and have a wonderful new year, filled with learning and happiness and success.

Sincerely,

Roy Sumner, DRE

(Answers to test: 1. a, 2. b, 3. d)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Congregational Meeting December 4 - Over 50 members (only 27% of total membership) attended the meeting and participated in a discussion about CUF finances. Thanks to all those who attended; your ideas and suggestions are all being considered. To those who did not attend, please understand that important information is shared and significant decisions are made during these meetings. As a member of the Fellowship and our democratic process, you can be a part of all CUF decisions. All you have to do is show up!

Tax Statement and Pledge Reminder – Each January members are mailed a statement of contributions to CUF for tax purposes. This year, you will also receive a pledge reminder. This reminder will state your pledge for the current fiscal year and encourage you to speak to our Treasurer, Lois Stewart, or me if you have concerns about meeting your pledge or wish to increase your pledge.

Media – Anyone attending a meeting or event, advertised to the public, should be aware that the media may be present. As a courtesy, all leaders of such events are asked to announce the presence of TV cameras or other media to the participants.

2013 Stewardship Campaign – The committee met Sunday, Dec 18, to begin making plans for the upcoming campaign. Members of the committee (*sans* a leader) are Jack Stewart, Astrid Mosely, Richard Norman, Jan Eisenhard, Mary Campbell, Miriam Link-Mullison, and Cathy Kline. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!** The Stewardship Event will be held Saturday, March 24! Be alert for upcoming publicity regarding testimonials, discussions, and more, more, more.

Talent Auction – MARK YOUR CALENDARS! A talent auction will be held Saturday evening, March 3! Coordinators for this event will be Jess Jobe, Al Babbitt, Lisa Gibson and Cathy Kline. Be thinking about items you or someone you know have created, that you would like to donate to the auction. You may also donate your time or talents; don't be timid! All proceeds will go to the Fellowship.

Happy New Year!

Cathy Kline, President

From the Office

Greetings and Happy Holidays!!!

Our shredder in the CUF Office is not working any more. So, if anyone has a shredder that they would like to donate, please let me know. We have a temporary old one, but it does not have a container for it and may not last long.

Thanks! DeSande R.

CUF MONTHLY MEETINGS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Environmental Policy Workshop! Want to learn more about the inner workings of Springfield?

Want to learn to advocate effectively for environmental legislation in our state? Then come join environmental activist Brian Sauder as he leads a workshop on advocating for better environmental legislation during the 2012 General Assembly. The workshop will include an informative presentation on the legislative process, as well as education on 2012 environmental legislative goals, role playing, and policy Bingo. Brian Sauder, Outreach and Policy Coordinator for Faith in Place, will lead a public environmental policy workshop on Sunday afternoon, January 22, 2012, at the Fellowship, beginning at 2 pm. All who are interested in promoting greater environmental responsibility by our state, our counties, and our local communities are encouraged to participate. For more information, contact Bill Sasso at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

Community Garden Project: Want to learn about biointensive gardening? Want to help grow nutritious food for those at Good Samaritan Ministries or the Women's Center? Want to help form a Fellowship team to reinvigorate our gardens under the supervision of an experienced master gardener? If so, please contact Al Babbitt (albabbitt@gmail.com) for more information! The Fellowship has been invited to participate in the first phase of the Carbondale Community Garden Project, and in order to do so, we will need to form a team of five committed gardeners by 1/15/2012! Thanks!

Mask Makers Needed! Nonviolent Carbondale is organizing a series of mask-making programs called "Let's Face This: An 11-Day Project on Community, Civility, and Compassion." These are planned for next April and May, so we have plenty of time to think creatively! If you would like to share your ideas about how the Fellowship can participate in this, especially in ways that might include children, please contact Bill Sasso at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

Our **January Social Action Offering**, scheduled for Sunday, 1/15/2012, will benefit the **The Women's Center of Carbondale**, which has provided safety, support, and services to at-risk women and children in our community and region for 40 years. For more information about The Women's Center, please visit <http://www.thewomensctr.org/>. Thanks in advance for your generosity in support of this program! To suggest a program as a recipient of a future Social Action offering, please email Social Action Council Chair Jess Jobe at jesj62901@yahoo.com!

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Reflecting on Your Chosen Faith? Join others in a study of John Buehrens and Forrest Church's [A Chosen Faith: an Introduction to Unitarian Universalism!](#) Bill Sasso will facilitate this five-session program at 7:30 Monday evenings, beginning 2/6 and ending 3/5. Participants must have a copy of the book (Bill has a few available), and must register by noon, Saturday, 1/28/2012. To register, or for more information, contact Bill at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

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MLK Community Choir: Marisa Winegar has arranged for four choir rehearsals to be held on Wednesdays, Jan. 4 & 11, at 7 pm and Saturdays, Jan. 7 & 14, at 11 am. All rehearsals will be held at the Church of the Good Shepherd UCC. Contact Marisa Winegar at 201-6933 or by email at marisakwinegar@yahoo.com. The Choir will sing as part of Southern Illinois Celebration of the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at 4 pm Sunday, 1/15/2012, at the Carbondale Civic Center. All are welcome to participate!

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A Southern Illinois Celebration of the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will be held at the Carbondale Civic Center on Sunday, Jan. 15, 2012, beginning at 4 pm. Begun in January, 2000, as a joint effort to share and extend the heritage of collaboration between the Rock Hill Baptist Church and the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship, this family-oriented program will include music, movement, and multi-media presentations, with refreshments served from 3:30 pm onwards. The organizers encourage those attending to bring canned food donations, which will go to food bank programs in this region.

Upcoming Events:

NEW HUMANIST FORUM *This group usually meets on the third Sunday of each month at 12:15.* January. 15. *"Are Corporations People?"* Richard Fedder, a local attorney, will present information and lead the discussion on the recent Supreme Court decision known as "Citizens United". This decision, which is blatantly political, allows corporations to make enormous, generally unregulated political contributions to PAC's, certain candidates, and causes of their choice, with limited oversight. (Think Koch brothers and other oil magnates.) The decision can be challenged, and Occupy and other grass roots protest movements in Los Angeles and elsewhere have already been successful influencing local and regional governing bodies to challenge the constitutionality of the decision.

We are expecting a large audience with possible media coverage, so we will meet in the Sanctuary, if available; if not, we will meet in the Commons. Invite your friends and neighbors especially students. Contact JoAnn, Marilyn, or Bob for additional information.

Update:

From Marilyn Smerken: The Open Minds group viewed the video, "El Andalon: Portrait of a Maverick Humanitarian," on June 19, 2011. As some may recall, the video presented a humanitarian, Sergio Castro Martinez, who worked with burn victims and helping to build schools and water treatment systems in Chiapas, Mexico. Donna Mann provided the video for viewing. After the showing, the group requested that the video be shown to the CUF Social Action Committee, then chaired by Bob White, to see if Sergio could be considered for a donation through one of the monthly CUF Social Action Offerings.

Bob White and I agreed that I would show the video at the next Social Action Committee meeting, which was held on September 28, 2011. It was shown, information about his web site was provided, and the possibility of donation briefly discussed.

The Social Action Council did not feel there was enough documentation beyond the video and web page to feel comfortable including Sergio in one of the CUF monthly offerings. I offered to send this follow-up e-mail to all concerned.

If one is looking for an end-of-year tax donation, and wants to make a personal donation to Sergio, here's the website: <http://www.yokchij.org/> Click on "To Help" then review your choices. Checks can be sent to TX or CA or on-line through your credit card or PayPal. As always, be sure if you make an on-line donation that the web page reads "https:"

We are in our 11th year, and learn something new at every meeting. Call Bob Camp at 351 0083 for additional information.

SISTERHOOD OF STITCHERS *This group meets weekly on **Fridays** at 11:00 a.m., in the Commons area. (Note date change.)* All are welcome, from persons learning knitting or stitching crafts to those well practiced and knowledgeable. Come to work on your projects, learn from others, share your ideas, and enjoy the camaraderie! For more info, contact Pam Jacobini at PJacobini@siumed.edu or Gloria Smiley at smileypins@yahoo.com.

CUF DRUMMING GROUP *This group meets on the third Saturday of each month at 2:30 p.m. in the Commons. **January 21**.* For more information, contact Debbie Czarnopys-White at bdcw@frontiernet.net.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION *This group meets every Saturday in the Fellowship Commons from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.* If there are other activities scheduled in the Commons, we meet in the RE area. For more information, contact Joy Price at 457-2405 or joyfully2356@yahoo.com.

THE AWAKENING HEART DHARMA GROUP *This group meets on Sundays in the Fellowship Commons at 7:00 P.M.* Insight, meditation, study, and discussion in a free flowing format. Everyone welcome. For more info, visit www.shawnee-dharma.org or contact Martha Shum at marthashum@hotmail.com

DREAMWORKS *This group meets the first Sunday of each month in 06 (RE wing) at 12:00 noon.*

No meeting in January. Utilizing Jeremy Taylor's insights and techniques for dream understanding, we will share and discuss our dreams in a non-threatening and respectful environment. Direct questions to Nilofur Zobairi at cadfael07@yahoo.com or Janet Harris at jelizah1949@yahoo.com.

ROUNDTABLE READERS *This group usually meets on the fourth Sunday of the month after the Sunday Service at Noon. **January 22**.* We will discuss *Cutting For Stone* by Abraham Verghese, which is a very long book. Everyone is welcome at our meetings, even if you have not read the book, but it's much more interesting if you have. Snacks are always welcome too!

SCIENCE IN SOCIETY *This group meets some Fridays of the month in the Fellowship Commons at 5:00 PM.* Contact Gina Paul at 351-1064 or rpaul@siumed.edu if you have questions.

VIDEO CIRCLE *This group meets on the third Friday of each month in the Fellowship Commons at 7:15 PM. **Meets next on January 20**.* For more information, contact Amy Weber at amyweber1@msn.com.

UNITARIAN FOLK ORCHESTRA *practices at 10:00 a.m. Saturdays, at the Fellowship.* For info contact Judy Aydt at aydt@siu.edu.

Financial Overview: As of Nov. 30, 2011, we had an Annual Operating deficit of \$6,677, over budget \$3,138. YTD Income was \$83,819, over budget \$10,405, due to receipts of annual pledges. Operating expenses were \$90,496, over budget \$13,543. Included in operating expenses are building maintenance and supplies not in the budget: \$450 exterminating for brown recluse spiders, \$412 for new hearing aid devices, \$3,897 for an A/C compressor, and \$7,670 for cleaning and painting the building exterior. Our current reserve is \$35,259. Please go to the members' website to view detailed financial information.

A Note From the Editor

Hello, Friends! Starting this month, Candy Davis and Mary Sullivan have taken over as co-editors of CUF Links. We are armed with information passed on to us by Cheryl Robinson and Yo Presley and hope to carry on their work without too many hitches.

The deadline for the February issue of CUF Links will be ***Monday evening, January 23rd***. You may leave items for the Newsletter in the CUF Links box in the Fellowship office, but are strongly encouraged to e-mail your information to us whenever possible to save paper and help us keep everything in one place! Pictures are always welcome!

CUF LINKS HARD COPIES are available at the Fellowship on the visitor table for anyone who would like this convenience.

Please take one! We now print as many as needed.

CUF Links is published once a month by the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship,
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