



CUF Links

The Monthly Newsletter of the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship
A Welcoming Congregation

- a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist association -

JUNE 2010

SUNDAY SERVICES

held in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30 a.m.

6/6 Image Spinners

Don't miss this service as our own "Image Spinners" share their creative talents, both through their writings and their music. Image Spinners is a small group of members and friends of CUF who love to write. They meet monthly at members' homes to read their poems, stories and memoirs and to talk about what influences their work. Several members of Image Spinners share an instrumental talent not previously displayed within our sanctuary. Be sure to attend this debut of music, song and the written word for a morning of inspiration and joy.

6/13 Bill Sasso: "The Art of Courtesy"

Encounters with many uses of today's media – email "flaming," shock radio, and so many others – might give us the impression that courtesy is a thing of the past? Is courtesy, in fact, obsolete? Or does it have something worthwhile to offer us in these days of instant communication, "hardball" interviews, and multitasking? Join Bill as he explores these questions in a "courteous" way!

6/20 Bill Sasso: "Our Parents, Our Children, and Us"

Relationships are so central to our individual human development, and few, if any, work in the same ways as the relationships between parents and children. In honor of Father's Day, Bill will share from some of his own experiences, as a child and as a parent, and will try to make sense of some of the ways that each of these relationships has changed over the years.

6/27 Christine Bauer: "Celebrating Gay Pride Sunday"

Our recognition by the Unitarian Universalist Association as a "Welcoming Congregation" means that we have committed ourselves to celebrate the lives of all people and welcomes same-sex couples, recognizing their committed relationships and to work to promote justice, freedom and equality in the larger society. As part of our ongoing Welcoming Congregation initiative, Christine will lead us in a special recognition of Gay Pride Sunday.

And coming up . . .

7/4

Russ Trimble will coordinate a Sharing of Favorite Readings

OPEN MINDS

meets at 8:45 a.m. each Sunday in the Commons Area

Topics To Be Announced in weekly bulletins this month. Contact Terry Elliot at elliott1@wildblue.net if you would like to lead one of these Sunday discussions, or for more information.

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As the Summer Begins . . .



Within our Fellowship, there is a flurry of early June activity with the social action rummage sale, and then things seem to settle down to a somewhat more relaxed pace than usual. Some of our groups, like our Choir, take the summer off, and others “morph,” like the way our

Religious Education program changes into its “one-room schoolhouse” format. There are changes, to be sure, yet many of the dimensions of Fellowship life continue in their regular form, like services each Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

We are here throughout the summer, for each other, because our lives – with their joys and their sorrows – don’t stop during these warm and humid months. But you know as well as I do that we are not only present through the summer for each other, but also for those who come “looking for us!” In other words, we are here through the summer for those who might arrive new in town and wish to connect with us. In order to welcome newcomers, we have to be on hand ourselves!

The summer brings its special opportunities, as well. Our Religious Education Committee is already busy planning the Summer Weeklong Awesome Program (SWAP), which will meet from Monday, August 2nd, to Friday the 5th. In this

special time, we have a flexible opportunity for the adults and the children of our congregation to enrich each other’s lives, and I hope that many of us adults will want to be part of that experience! This year’s theme is “Time Travel,” which certainly offers a great deal of scope for learning, meaning-making, and just plain fun! If you’d like to become one of the time travelers, I encourage you to contact our Director of Religious Education, Roy Sumner, or the new Chair of our Religious Education Committee, Jodi Ruffner.

Finally, it’s almost a given that the coming summer will include adventures, some planned and some arriving unexpectedly. Whether your adventures take you far afield, or happen in your own backyard, I encourage you to keep our September 5th communion of the waters service in mind. If possible, try to collect some water, or a rock or a stone that recalls your summer’s adventures and experiences. It need not be much – even a little shampoo bottle’s worth of water is plenty, or a small stone or sea shell. As you add the symbols of your summer to those already present at our table of recognition, you help us recall both who we are as a community, and how interconnected and interdependent we are with each other, and with all people and species here present on our Mother Earth!

Wishing each one of you a fulfilling summer,

Bill Sasso

FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR



Today is May 26th. It's my daughter Tara's birthday. She's 25, married, and living in North Carolina. Wow, that happened fast!!

Of course, it did take 25 years, but when you remember so vividly holding those tiny little

hands, it can seem like time sped by. To me, it's simply amazing to be able to watch the development of a healthy, happy, productive member of society, whether it's my child or another's child. It is also nice to have had a role in the development, to have offered something sustainable and positive, like love and optimism. Growing is not always pretty and clean, because, for example, to learn to walk you have to let go, fall, and get up...again and again. And learning that life is not fair can be a bit unsettling. My friend says, "Life's not fair...get a helmet!" – I like that, as it's honest, to the point, and encouraging with a bit of advice (be assured, hard knocks will find everyone).

Many, if not most of you, have had a role in the development of our Fellowship's children and youth. I have enjoyed listening to you as you have discussions with the youth, and how easily you say, "I don't know the answer to that, what do you say we look into it and maybe talk to others." Or if really pressed, you offer an answer that is

prefaced by, "Now this is my opinion based on what I know at this point in time, so tomorrow I might say something a bit different, depending on what I learn"...or something along those lines.

Or you do something that shows interest and respect, like when you ask a child, "Now, tell me your name one more time, so I don't confuse you with another beautiful child." And the respect is extended even further anytime you ask a child, "how does that make you feel?" I like what Barbara Kingsolver means when she says, "The friend that holds your hand and says the wrong thing, is dearer than the one that stays away."

While I always make a point of thanking our teachers for their dedication (hard to offer classrooms each Sunday without teachers), be sure, there is no gesture of interest, respect, or attention that is too small. Many times it is those little things that really makes someone's day.

So, thanks to all of you who have crossed paths with our children and youth this past year. And there are always opportunities to find a role, to engage, to make a difference in the development of our children and youth...just wander down the hall to the left and be available for a moment.

Peace be with you,

Roy Sumner

New Day Prison Ministries is celebrating its Fifth Anniversary in Mid-July!

We have accomplished a lot, but the needs are still great. We will meet for an anniversary luncheon in mid-June, to discuss where we have been and where we want to go. Also in the works is a trip to Dwight women's prison, where we will meet with inmates and have a tour of the facility. We will be collecting various items beforehand. Lists of things needed will be available in early June. - Lois Hayward

BENEFIT TO BE HELD AT FELLOWSHIP IN JUNE

Nicholas Ginsburg is the extremely musically talented youngster who often plays for us during our services. He is also the son of one of our newest members, Nan Sorrels. There will be a benefit for Nicholas on Thursday, June 10th at the fellowship, from 7-9PM. The purpose of the benefit is to enable Nicholas to

attend the summer program this year at Interlochen Center for the Arts in Interlochen, MI. Proceeds will be used to assist with tuition costs, uniforms and travel expenses.

It will be an evening of entertainment and fun, featuring performances by adults and youth. Nicholas' teachers who will be performing include Jen Presar (french horn), Reiko Schoen (classical piano), Donna Glaub (flute), Luke Fleischer (clarinet) and Marisa Winegar (vocals-opera). Some of the youth performers include Nicholas (piano and french horn), Diana Shepherd (dance), Eleanor Hughes (voice), and others. Helen Lant will exhibit her artwork.

Silent auction items will include a framed print from Herb Fink, an antique print of Mozart, a digital photograph titled 'calililly', and other art. Raffle items will include gift baskets with a theme - SIU, wine/food, 'green' items, and gardening. All silent auction and raffle items will be on display at the fellowship before and after the service on June 6th. If you would like to buy raffle tickets or place a bid, you can do so then.

Again, the benefit is on Thursday, June 10th, with doors opening at 6:30 and the concert from 7-9. Hors d'oeuvres will be served after the concert. The suggested donation is \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids, but Nicholas and Nan are most interested in having everyone join them for food, fellowship and fun. If you are able to attend, you can show Nicholas your support, encouragement, and appreciation, as well as enjoy an evening of great entertainment. Most CUF members have seen Nicholas perform, and therefore know that if any young person deserves to further his musical talents by attending the summer program at Interlochen, it is Nicholas!

CUF REGULAR PROGRAMS & MEETINGS

WOMEN'S GATHERING The June Women's Gathering meets on Wed., June 16, at 7:00 p.m. at CUF. Contact Cathy Kline at klinejc@earthlink.net for more information.

SISTERHOOD OF STITCHERS *This group meets weekly on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m., in the Commons area.* 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 smileyspins@yahoo.com.

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.

BUDDHISM STUDY & PRACTICE GROUP *This group meets on the first and third Sundays in the Fellowship Commons at 7:30 PM.* **Meets this month on June 6 and June 20.** Meditation, chanting, study, and discussion in a free flowing format. Everyone welcome. For more info, visit www.shawnee-dharma.org or contact Judy Carter at 529-3110.

DREAMWORKS *This group meets the first Sunday of each month in 06 (RE wing) at 12:00.* **Meets next on June 6.** Using Jeremy Taylor's technique, we share and discuss our dreams in a respectful, safe, and comfortable environment. For more information, contact Nillofur at cadfael07@yahoo.com or Janet at jea49@Care2.com.

PSI SYMPOSIUM *This group meets the second Sunday of the Month in Room 06 at Noon.* **Meets next on on June 13.** We start at noon with light refreshments. Please bring a dish to share. For more info, contact Mary Campbell at 521-0851 or mpurple1999@yahoo.com.

ROUNDTABLE READERS *This group meets on the fourth Sunday of the month after the Sunday Service at Noon. Meets this month on June 27.* All interested are welcome! For more info, contact Janet Levie at jmlevie@verizon.net.

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 June 18.* Movie selection to be announced. Free popcorn! Contact person is Amy Weber at amyweber1@msn.com.

UNITARIAN FOLK ORCHESTRA practices at 10:00 a.m. Saturdays, at the Fellowship. For info contact Charles Maxwell at cmaxwell@siu.edu.

NOTE: THE SUICIDE GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP has suspended its meetings indefinitely. If there is renewed interest at some point in the future, Judy Ashby is willing to return to regular meetings. In the meantime, Judy is willing to speak with those experiencing loss around a suicide. Judy can be contacted through Bill Sasso, at 529-2439 or bsasso@juno.com.

NEW CUF MEMBER - We have a new member since our last newsletter. When you meet her during or after a service, or see her wearing her new nametag, please welcome **Pat Elsaid**, who hails from Carbondale.

Dispatch from Arabia

Part Ten

By Joe Robbie

Now, please correct me if I'm wrong, but as I understand it, we Unitarian Universalists are an open, liberal and reasonable group of spiritual seekers. We tend to be dubious of the dogma and blind faith tendencies of the traditional and well-established world religions, while at the same time recognizing and honoring those aspects of their theologies which make sense and reflect universal humanistic goodness. Despite our skepticism, we do not dismiss as a whole any of the major, or for that matter, minor religions. Rather, we study, we consider and we evaluate them based on the concept of reason, in search for the concepts of truth and value.

As this is the case with Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and the others, should it not also be the case with regard to the occult? Are occult beliefs not also another form of religion? And as such, should they not be similarly evaluated, without prejudice, to recognize which values and truths they may contain? Yet, while WE are an enlightened and well-educated group with the best of intentions (admit it, and be proud), literal witch hunts continue to this day in many parts of the world.

Which brings us to the 'trial' of Ali Sibat here in Saudi Arabia:

"Religious police arrested Ali Sibat in his hotel room in Medina where he was on pilgrimage before returning to his native Lebanon. Before his arrest, Sibat frequently gave advice on general life questions and predictions about the future on the Lebanese satellite television station Sheherazade, according to the Lebanese newspaper Al-Akhbar and the French newspaper Le Monde. These appearances are said to be the only evidence against Sibat." (from Arab News)

Making predictions on a TV talk show - that's not even a crime in his native Lebanon. However, Mr. Sibat was tried under Sharia law and convicted of sorcery. His sentence? Death by decapitation. This story, understandably, elicited outrage in

many quarters internationally. Notably, those noble organizations, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, got involved, helping to generate substantial publicity worldwide. That, coupled with the strong diplomatic involvement of the Lebanese government (pressured by the populace), may have saved Sibat's life.

The Saudi ambassador to Lebanon recently informed that country's justice minister that the execution of Sibat will not proceed. What happens next is unknown, but for the moment, we can take some solace in the fact that Sibat has been spared the death penalty, and hope that this means he will soon be reunited with his wife and family.

Whew – that was a close one.

To be continued...

Have You Heard About the Hunger Sale's Success?

By Margie Parker, Chair

Church Women United of Carbondale is thrilled to report that the 2010 World Hunger Sale came very close to last year's record. The \$13,598.53 proceeds were within \$125 of the 2009 total.

Huge thank you's go to all the church and community members who volunteered many hours to make the fundraiser such a success. There is great joy in working together for a good cause. If you were among those who drove a truck, moved tables, set up clothes racks, brought donations, sorted, priced, baked, cooked, sold, purchased treasures, packed up leftovers, swept floors, recycled cardboard, or restored the Newman Center to its "normal self," know that your participation was appreciated. We couldn't have done it without you!

On May Friendship Day, CWU voted to distribute the proceeds as follows:

CROP	\$2200	Women's Center	\$600
UNICEF	\$2250	Attucks Tutorial	\$325
ECHO	\$500	Guadalupe Fund	\$400
Marion Medical	\$610	New Zion Sum. Food	\$625
Heifer Project	\$500	Bethel Feed My Sheep	\$1010
For Kids' Sake	\$200	"I Can Read"	\$350
Good Samaritan	\$3003	DYA Family Advocacy	\$325
Senior Citizens	\$600	Newman Center	\$100

CUF LINKS HARD COPIES are available at the Fellowship on the visitor table.
Deadline for July CUF Links: Friday, June 25. Please honor this deadline.
Send your articles to Cheryl Robinson at cherrob1@msn.com or to Melanie Bray at
cufvolunteers@verizon.net **on or before Friday, June 25.**

Thanks! – Cheryl Robinson, Editor

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The Rev. William Sasso, Minister

An inspirational thought:

*“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious.
It is the source of all true art and all science.
He to whom this emotion is a stranger,
who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe,
is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.” – Albert Einstein*