



C U F L i m k s

The Monthly Newsletter of the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship

A Welcoming Congregation

a member congregation of the unitarian universalist association

Volume 08, Number 9

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE THE PRESENT IS A GIFT!



A friend of mine sent me an email this summer, and it spoke to me in ways that I didn't expect. I'd like to share my own (freely adapted) version of that email message with you, and I invite you to share its message with others as you feel the call to do so!

At the time of a serious loss, such as the death of one we love, it is only natural to feel regret. Sometimes, we

regret what we have done, and some regrets are for the things we meant to do, but never got around to. This might be telling others how much we love them, or how important they are to us, or how much we respect them, and why. Sometimes, we hold off from sharing these words because we want to save them for a special occasion. But I'll offer you this as my advice: "Never save something for a special occasion. Every day in your life is a special occasion." One person who heard those words expressed her sense that they changed her life in these words:

Now I read more and clean less. I sit on the porch without worrying about anything. I spend more time with my family, and less at work. I understand that life should be a source of experience to be lived up to, not something we hope to survive. I use crystal glasses every day. I'll wear new clothes to go to the supermarket, if I feel like it. I don't save my special perfume for special occasions; I use it whenever I want to. The terms "someday" and "one day"

are fading out of my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing, I want to see it now. If it's worth doing, I want to do it now.

We don't know how much more time we have here, do we? We do know what is most important in our lives today, and today we have the ability to thank those whose lives have made a significant difference in our lives. Today, we do have the ability to change aspects of our lives we find debilitating, or to begin the process of changing them. Today, we can take at least a few moments to appreciate that which is most beautiful to us, whether it is present in nature, in art, in human relationships, or in some other dimension of our personal experience. Tomorrow, things will change, and possibly in ways that we may not anticipate. Some opportunities we have today will not be available to us tomorrow, though others may appear.

So today is the best day to call that friend, or write that letter, or take that walk in the woods. Today is the best day to spend time with a child, or to serve others. Today is the best day, for each day, each hour, and each minute can be as special as we make them! The "some day" that we so often talk about may never arrive. Today is here right now. As one of my Unitarian Universalist ministerial colleagues put it: "Today is a gift – that's why we call it the 'present.'"

One of my favorite readings in our hymnal, attributed to the ancient Indian philosopher Kalidasa, concludes with these words: ". . . today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day."

Yours in the spirit of this special day, *Bill S.*

Minister's Office Hours: Beginning September 9th, Bill Sasso will be in the Fellowship office on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, 9 to 11 a.m., and Thursday afternoons, 3 to 5 p.m. Bill is also available to meet by appointment. To schedule a meeting, please contact him at bsasso@juno.com or at 618-529-2439. Please call before coming over to the Fellowship, as Bill is sometimes called away for meetings or pastoral emergencies. Thanks!

A Note from Friends of Cuba, July 2, 2008

Thank you so much for assisting in hosting the Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba at the Fellowship. Janet and Jess were very helpful and put in long hours helping with set up and clean up. A total of \$485 was given by generous donors, and an additional \$359.75 was given at the dinner, for a total of \$844.75

The event was attended by 60 or more people. They thoroughly enjoyed the Afro-Cuban drumming by

Continued on page 9



SUNDAY SERVICES

Services begin at 10:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall

September 7 Homecoming Sharing of the Waters

Our children will join us in this intergenerational service that celebrates our connections throughout the world, sharing waters, rocks, and possibly other items that symbolize our travels. This year's service will take a somewhat different form, as we attempt to connect more deeply with the sources of our concern for the environment. Whether you have water from the beach at Cedar Lake, a drinking fountain at Morris Library, the Puget Sound, a glacier on the side of Mount Everest, or none at all, plan to join us! Bill Sasso will coordinate this service.

September 14 Bill Sasso: "The Quality of Mercy"

According to William Shakespeare, "The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth as the gentle rain upon the place beneath." What is mercy, and why is it important? Is it always good? Might it sometimes be inappropriate, or even counterproductive? In recognition of the coming 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, this service will begin a series in which we revisit Lincoln's perspectives on mercy and other issues that our nation and society face today.

September 21 Mary Campbell and Bill Sasso: "Opening Our Eyes and Our Hearts: Homelessness in Our Community"

A grassroots effort in our UUA Central Midwest District has invited us to explore homelessness in our region and consider what work we may be called to do. Mary Campbell, who works at Good Samaritan House, Carbondale's shelter for the homeless and those in many forms of need, will share not only from her own story but from the stories of her clients at Good Sam. Bill will add his perspectives on the needs of those in our communities, and a few of the opportunities our Fellowship might have to make a difference!

September 28 Bill Sasso: "Service as a Spiritual Discipline"

The Bhagavad Gita counsels us that the wise work not for themselves, but for the welfare of the world, and this theme resonates through the scriptures of many world religions. We are called to serve others, but how is that supposed to work in our society? What do modern-day Unitarian Universalists learn by thinking about our service as a spiritual discipline? Does it make sense for like us to link these two concepts together?

And coming up . . .

October 5 Sam Goldman: "The Jewish High Holy Days: A Message of Forgiveness"

Inside this Month:

Sunday Services Schedule	p.2	Spotlight on Music	p.6
Membership News	p.3	Political Activity Policy	p.7
From the Office	p.3	Committee Leaders	p.7
From the RE Director	p.4	Monthly Meeting Schedule	p. 8
Choir Invitation	p.4	HIV Update	p.10
Social Action Update	p.5		
New Day Prison Ministries	p.5		
Zambia Trip Planned	p.5		
New Aging Program	p.6		

CUF Links is published once a month by the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship, 105 N. Parrish Lane, Carbondale, IL 62901
618-529-2439 www.cuuf.net
carbondleuu@verizon.net -- Yolán Presley, editor
The Rev. William Sasso, Minister

Membership Committee News

A Warm Welcome for Visitors and New Members *by Judy Ayd*

We often describe the Fellowship as our spiritual home and the congregation as our faith family. It's a great joy for members of the Fellowship to welcome visitors and new members into our home. It's an even greater joy when new members become part of our family.

The principal goal of the Membership Committee is to help ease this transition from visitor to member; specifically to:

- Welcome visitors, friends and members to Sunday service, religious education and coffee hour.
- Give visitors information and a connection that will foster the transition to membership.
- Celebrate new membership with enthusiasm and hospitality.
- Nurture members' participation and involvement with fellowship and personal attention.

Now here's the catch. A committee can write objectives and reports, create budgets, and plan activities and events in support of these goals; but it takes the combined efforts of all members of the congregation, all committees, programs, activities, and all professional staff to really do the job!

So how can you help? As the old song says "little things mean a lot." Here are some little things you can do to greet and welcome visitors and new members:

- Look for visitor badges! Give our visitors a warm welcome! Ask about their interests! Introduce

them to other people. Offer to give them a tour of the building!

- Watch the New Members' Bulletin Board. Welcome new members and get to know them!
- Leaf through the new members' photos book on the visitor's table and learn to match names to faces and children to parents.
- Write a brief bio of new members for CUF Links.
- Be a Welcomer at the visitor's table.
- Send notes to Sunday visitors.
- Participate in our Orientation Program (for new members and for visitors wishing to explore membership).
- Attend and/or assist with our early winter Membership Potluck.
- Create a photo bulletin board of Fellowship activities.
- Join the Membership Committee! (Okay, you may not consider the last item a "little thing", but the Membership Committee always warmly welcomes new committee members

If you have any ideas to add or would like to volunteer for any of the above activities, please let us know!

(committee co-chairs Cathy Kline and Rob Gallegly)



FROM THE OFFICE

by Melanie Bray

Is it just me, or did summer seem to fly by? I can't believe that it is already September. My kids are back in school and Carbondale has been "invaded" once again by students starting Fall semester.

September also brings a busy schedule back to the fellowship. Groups are starting to meet again and more and more announcements are appearing in the bulletin. Please keep me informed on what is coming up – I can make sure items appear in the bulletin and on the online calendar. The best way to share your information with me is by email carbondaleuu@verizon.net or a phone call 529-2439. Please enter your meeting times in the big white building schedule book that is on the desk in the office. You can call me and have me enter your meeting times also.

Five new members have joined the fellowship over the summer. We would like to welcome Dinah Siebert, Ruthanne Rehfeldt, Mark Dixon, Joseph Robbie and Bill Rose. Look for these new members on Sunday and take time to get to know them.

Gentlemen, please remember to register for the upcoming CUF men's retreat. Send in your registration and payment to the office. You will receive a confirmation letter with more information concerning the event.

This month I also celebrate my first full year as your office assistant here at the fellowship. I have thoroughly enjoyed the job, and my favorite part is meeting and getting to know many of you. Remember that I work on MWF from 9-1pm if you need anything.

~Melanie

FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR



I was looking through some papers (actually, it was a stack of old jokes), and I came across some comments that were attributed to Maya Angelou during a visit on the Oprah Winfrey Show. She said, “I’ve learned that even when I have pains, I don’t have to be one.” And, “I’ve learned that people

will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

I find the second comment especially resonates with me, as that is something I’ve tried to share with our volunteer teachers during our orientation meeting each year. New teachers are often very concerned about their competence, about sticking to the details of the curriculum, of leading the activities correctly, or locating that exact story that was suggested. It’s natural to want to do a good job, but really, just what do our children need from us, and what will they remember?

During workshops I’ve attended in the past, where participants were asked to share what they remembered about their religious upbringing, people eventually were best able to recall how they felt at the time. Events, activities, dates, names and faces all get blurry over time...but those feelings for some reason stay fresh. That’s why our focus should be on how welcoming we are, on how special we make each child feel, and to do this while being true to ourselves, by being who we are.

The Religious Education Program benefits from a variety of volunteers, bringing as many different skills and life experiences as the people that step forward to help. We want another adult, besides the teacher, in every classroom every Sunday this year. Our classes are bigger, and frankly, the teachers need the support. And you will make a difference, if you come with love, and simply be yourself. The simple rule, of treating others how you’d like to be treated, is all the training you need to be a helper. See me when you’re ready to help, and I’ll get you involved.

Summer is fading fast, as usual this time of year. I’ve noticed some bird migration beginning, and I’m excited to get to the first football game. I’m also very pleased at how our summer Sunday program for the children went this year. Thank you to all that came and shared your travel experiences with the children. I’ve had several parents comment about something their child told them about what they learned about Spain, or Guatemala, Antarctica, or China. If you didn’t get a chance to share your adventure this year, look for the chance again next summer, as this program seems well worth repeating.

I look forward to meeting the children again, their parents, and their friends and relatives. Let me and others on the RE Committee know how you “feel.” And if you’ve taught in the past, and find a copy of one of our curriculum, just bring it in the next time you’re with us.

See your smiling faces soon,
Roy Sumner,
Director of Religious Education

INVITATION!

If you find joy in singing, please come join the CUF Choir! Our first rehearsal this season is on September 4 from 5 to 6 p.m. in the fellowship sanctuary. Even though you may love to sing, you might have one or more of the following reservations about joining the choir:

- 1) *“I can’t read music.”* -- Don’t let that stop you. Some of our old faithfuls in the CUF choir can’t either! If you can carry a tune and like to sing, you qualify. Of course, if you have basic music skills, that’s even better -- and where have you been, I ask you?
- 2) *“I’m afraid I won’t pass the audition.”* -- What audition? We wouldn’t dream of holding embarrassing “tryouts”!
- 3) *“I don’t want a guilt trip every time I have to miss a rehearsal”* -- Well, we do appreciate a certain level of dedication and commitment, but it’s okay to miss a rehearsal once in a while. You can usually just jump back in with no problem.

If you have further questions, please call me, Geri McKee, at 549-2814 or e-mail me at gerimckee@verizon.net.



September Social Action Update

by Jess Jobe

Sharing bananas makes us happy... Just a little story about some new research from Emory University: Apparently our relatives the capuchin monkeys like to share. The study from Emory found that the monkeys prefer to share food with relatives or friends in their social group instead of only serving themselves. It seems to make the monkeys happy to give. I'm not any kind of authority on evolution myself, but I think our desire to help even those we don't know shows there is some hope for humanity yet. So I thank everyone who brought in food for the Good Samaritan Food Pantry in August. I didn't see any bananas, but lots of other fruits and vegetables!

The September Social Action Sunday Collection will be on Sunday, September 21 and will benefit the Knoxville Relief Fund. According to the UUA website, "The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) in collaboration with the Thomas Jefferson District has established the Knoxville Relief Fund to bring ministry, spiritual care, and practical financial assistance to those affected by the tragedy in Knoxville, Tennessee. Your gifts will assist the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church and the Westside UU Church and their members, and will show them that they are not alone during this time of shock

and grief." Checks can be made payable to Knoxville Relief Fund.

"It's time to cleanup, cleanup, everybody do your share..."

Ok, that's a preschool song, but what a good idea, right? The next opportunity to cleanup our Adopt a Highway spot, Big Rock, will be Saturday, September 27 at 9 a.m. Meet at the Moose Lodge on Old Highway 13—our stretch of road is from Pump House Road to the junction of old 13 and 127. Need more info? Contact Jess at jesj62901@yahoo.com or 549-2653.

SOCIAL ACTION FALL PLANNING MEETING:

Please plan to attend our fall planning meeting on Sunday, September 14 after services. We have a lot of planning to do for this year and this meeting will include developing a schedule for the next six months of Social Action Sunday collections, developing a plan and dates for a service project focused on homelessness and poverty in our local communities, and discussing other social action ideas for the fall and winter months. Everyone and their ideas are welcome!

New Day Prison Ministries

by Lois Hayward

In August we again delivered school supplies for the children or indigent mothers at Dwight, as well as personals and clothing for the women there and books, games, and toys for the library, visiting rooms, and day rooms.

As you may remember last summer we took baby items to Decatur for the new Mothers and Babies wing. However, in order to be sent there the pregnant inmate must be within two years of her out-date. The result is that babies are still being born at Dwight in significant numbers and the newborns have to be picked up by family members or friends in a matter of days or else they go into foster

care. The Family Services Administrator, Mrs. Thompson, has asked us to prepare a diaper bag with various items for babies for each baby going home from Dwight. In the next few weeks you will see an announcement of the items we need in the Fellowship Commons. We will begin with eight diaper bags and then continue to supply one per month after that. Karen Swenson is coordinating this effort.

Mrs. Thompson has asked for financial help in getting good quality long johns for all 1200 women there as Christmas gifts. State-issued underwear is too thin to provide much comfort in the cold winters there. We will be asking for contributions for this purpose.

Zambia Trip Planned

Carla Feldhamer and Debbie Czarnopys-White will be traveling again to Zambia to visit our partnered hospice in Kabwe. The departure date is October 11 and they would like to gather items as early as possible to help plan for packing their suitcases as full as possible. Items needed include infant's Tylenol, Advil, and vitamins, women's wide toothed-combs, tooth brushes, and small toothpastes, men's shorts and t-shirts, women's cotton nightgowns (XS-M), women's small bottles of personal supplies, shampoo, soap, lotion, Desitin, A and D ointment bandages, READING glasses (not regular personal prescription glasses).

We appreciate the donation of prescription glasses but they are very difficult to use in Africa without the proper diagnostic equipment. Also useful would be colored pencils, adult coloring books...i.e., mandalas or intricate designs, children's paperback English dictionaries, math books for preschool and elementary, and the little stuffed cloth dolls. Money would also be appreciated to buy what we see is necessary once we are there. This can cover emergency food or clothing or medical supplies. Thank you for your support and continued generosity.

Spotlight on Music - by Melanie Bray

Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. - Berthold Auerbach

This famous quote about the affects of music encompasses how most of us feel about music. Whether we hear music at our place of worship, a community event, or even on our ipod – music has the ability to lift our spirit and transform our thoughts.

Think for a moment what a Sunday service would be like if there was no music. No beautiful organ music, no hymns, no piano and no choir. I believe that our experience would be very different and people would leave the service feeling somewhat less fulfilled.

The music committee chaired by Alan Christensen, has the ongoing task of scheduling musicians for the Sunday services. The wide range of musicians has included organists, pianists, singers, guitarists and even a harpist. Many of our regular instrumental musicians are members of the fellowship. Some of our talented members consist of the CUF Recorder Group, the Unitarian Folk Orchestra, Alan Christensen, Geri McKee, Joyce Shepherd, Carolyn Moe, Joy Price, Charlie Maxwell, Pat York and Andrea Stader. (Please forgive me if I omitted anyone!) Our members perform voluntarily and enthusiastically, so make sure you show your appreciation for their talent and time.

We also rely on many non-member musicians. This ever changing group is made up of talented community members and visiting musicians. Each musician that is not a member receives a small monetary gift as a token of our appreciation for their playing at our service.



Our choir is strong and growing under the direction of Geri McKee. Alan Christensen continues as the accompanist for the Fellowship Choir. The members of the Fellowship Choir are Vennie Anderson, Judy Aydt, Nancy Bowman, Paula Bradshaw, Bob Camp, Dave Christensen, Carolyn Davis, Pat Gates, Janet Harris, Thelma Herschbach, Joan Juul, Charlie Maxwell, JoAnn Nelson, Pat Nunley, Joy Price, Inge Rader, Kris Summers, Bob White and Rich Whitney. (Again, please forgive me if I omitted anyone!) Their voices are joyful and provide us with beautiful music that fills the fellowship hall on most Sunday mornings.

It just so happens that the choir is getting ready to start-up again after a short summer break. The choir rehearses every Thursday evening from 5-6:00pm in the fellowship hall. All members are welcome and encouraged to participate - You do not need to read music and there are no auditions.

Take time and really listen to the beautiful sounds that are made at our services, appreciate the exceptional abilities of our musicians and let the music “cleanse” your soul!

Aging: the only way to live!

(Everyone IS aging, perhaps some more rapidly than others!)

The Program Committee is planning a series of discussions on social and emotional aspects of aging.

What have you learned on your path to wisdom? How has your understanding of yourself possibly changed, your views of past and future, changing expectations for yourself, family, and friends? It has been said that “radical changes in self-understanding are possible.” Are they?

The great spiritual task of aging, that is, human development during the later years, has been described as the “shift from doing to being.” This shift has implications for inner and well as outward changes in one’s sense of self in relation to others.

With insights from Erik Erikson and from Bill Sasso’s fine dissertation on “Unitarian Universalism and Aging,” as well as other sources, we will provide opportunity for par-

ticipants to explore and revisit emotional issues from earlier life, as these may reemerge during the later years: autonomy and initiative, identity, a sense of intimacy vs. despair, and the integrity of wisdom. What factors or strengths contribute toward one’s own version of integrity and wisdom?

Before we finalize how these sessions may work we ask your input on other issues or specific questions that would be fruitful, and we invite anyone who would like to be a panel member or participate in some other way, to please come forward.

We need you; we’re all in this together!

Jo Ann Nelson, for the Program Committee: Janet Harris, Chair; Karen Gallegly, Inge Rader, Nillofur Zobairi. Thank you!

Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship Policy on Political Activity at the Fellowship

The Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship both respects the separation of church and state, and affirms and promotes the right of conscience and use of the democratic process within our larger society. Especially during an election season, these two commitments can sometimes seem at odds with one another. To help everyone understand what types of activity are and are not appropriate, the Board of Trustees has adopted this “Policy on Political Activity at the Fellowship.”

The Board actively encourages non-partisan programs and events that support informed participation in the democratic process. Such activities include voter registration, “Get Out the Vote” drives, encouragement to vote in the Fellowship’s various communication channels, advocacy on specific issues, and other non-partisan voter education efforts.

The Board regards the following activities as partisan and therefore not appropriate:

- Political Fundraising: No fundraising for a political party or candidate will be allowed within the Fellowship property.
- Political Endorsements: Neither the Fellowship nor its lay or professional leadership will endorse an announced or potential candidate for office, or a political party or movement.[1]
- Political Donations: The Fellowship will not make donations or loans to political campaigns, parties, or specific candidates. The resources of the Fellowship will not be used on behalf of a political campaign or candidate.

- Political Advertising or Signage: Signs or other advertising for candidates or political parties will not be posted on the Fellowship property. No Fellowship communication – the Order of Service, Bulletin, CUF Links, or any other Fellowship publication – will include advertising for or endorsement of a political party or a candidate for office. .

- Targeted Voter Registration or Election Support Activities: Any voter registration drive, or “Get Out the Vote” effort undertaken by the Fellowship or groups within it should address the entire community/region, rather than any specific group within the community. For instance, a voter registration drive may not restrict itself to people of a particular party affiliation, age, socio-economic status, etc.

- Political Labor: The Fellowship will not organize groups to work for any political campaign or candidate.

- Distribution of Partisan Political Materials: There will be no distribution of partisan political materials on the Fellowship property.

Anyone considering circulating a petition at the Fellowship should consult with the Minister, the President, or the Vice-President before doing so to ensure that the petition is in accordance with this policy.

[1] As private individuals, leaders of the Fellowship may endorse candidates, parties, or movements in the other contexts of their lives. However that endorsement may not be made in the name of the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship or in a letter to the editor signed (for example) as “Minister, Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship.”

Current list of group/program/committee leaders

AIDS/Africa Partnership: Carla Feldhamer
 Art/Aesthetics Committee: Barbara Lesar
 Building and Grounds Committee: Loren Cocking (bldg) & Al Babbitt (Grounds)
 Buddhism Study & Practice Group: Judy Carter
 Bulletin Board: Lois Lembcke
 Campus Unitarian Universalists: Herman Peterson
 Caring and Sharing: Cheryl Robinson
 Carol’s Lunch Bunch (women’s lunch group): Mariann Douglass
 Chalice Lighters (Fundraisers): open
 Chalice Lighters (Sundays): Roy Sumner
 Choir: Geri McKee
 Committee on Ministry: Joyce Webb, Joe Schmit and Matt Stronkoski
 Communications Committee: Yo Presley
 Community Forums: Bob Camp
 Covenant Group Ministries: Bill Sasso
 CUF Links (monthly newsletter): Yo Presley
 Denominational Affairs: open
 Dreamwork: Janet Harris
 Finance Committee: Ed Phillips
 Greeters & Coffee Hosts: Joyce Webb
 Health Ministry/Congregational Nurse: Vennie Anderson, RN
 Hospitality Committee: Janet Harris & Patsy Maxwell
 Humanist Group and Roundtable: Bob Camp
 Interfaith Council: Ken and Kathy Starbuck
 Intergenerational Potluck: Roy Sumner
 International Student Coffee Hour: JoAnn Nelson & Nillofur Zobairi
 Library Coordinator: Janet Levie
 Mailing List Manager: Melanie Bray

Membership Committee: Cathy Kline & Rob Gallegly
 Music Committee: Alan Christensen
 Nominating Committee: Dave Clark, Alan Christensen, Jan Eisenhard, Janet Harris and Jean Bernstein
 Open Minds: Dave Christensen & Bob Lembcke
 Order of Service: Russ Trimble
 Pastoral Care: Bill Sasso, Coordinator
 Personnel Committee: Miriam Link-Mullison
 Press Release Coordinator: Melanie Bray
 Prison Ministries: Lois Hayward & Karen Swenson
 Program Committee: JoAnn Nelson & Janet Harris
 PSI Symposium: Astrid Mosley & Mary Campbell
 Religious Education Committee: Roy Sumner
 Round Table Readers: Janet Levie
 Sisterhood of Stitchers: Elaine Seymour
 Social Action Committee: Jesslyn Jobe
 Stewardship Committee: Jerry Molumby
 Sunday Services Committee: Samir Aouadi
 Supper Club: Janet Banerjee
 Transgender Support Group: Krissy Summers
 Unitarian Recorder Ensemble: Judy Ayd
 Unitarian Universalist Service Committee: Amy Weber
 Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office: Dave Christensen
 Unitarian Folk Orchestra: Charlie Maxwell
 Video Circle: Amy Weber & Bob White
 Web Site: Yolan Presley
 Weekly Bulletin: Russ Trimble
 Welcoming Congregation: Judy Groskind & Jean Bernstein
 Women’s Retreat: Pam Jacobini & Vennie Anderson

CUF MONTHLY MEETINGS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming:

ORIENTATION PROGRAM, Saturday, October 4, 2008, 1:00 to 5:00 pm at the Fellowship. Childcare will be available. This program is designed for the visitor thinking about becoming a member and members who have recently joined the Fellowship. Call Cathy Kline at 457-7885 or Rob Gallegly at 351 - 0138 for more information.

CUF 2008 MEN'S RETREAT is scheduled for September 19-20th at Touch of Nature. All men are encouraged to register and attend. Registration forms and brochures are available on the visitor's table at the fellowship. Send registration forms and fee to the fellowship by September 7th. For additional information please call Bill Rose at 351-1474.

MLK EVENT PLANNING MEETING: All who would like to help plan the January, 2009, joint Carbondale/Murphysboro MLK event are encouraged to join us Tuesday evening, September 16th, at 7:00 pm at the Fellowship. For more information, contact Bill Sasso at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday evening, November 15th! That's when the Fellowship will host a folk music coffeehouse fundraiser for the AIDS/Africa, featuring both local musicians and special guests from out of town! Mark it on your calendar, and watch for more details!

Study Groups:

SUICIDE GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP: Judy Ashby, MS, LCPC, will facilitate a group for those who have lost a loved one to suicide at the Fellowship on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning Sept. 9th, at 7:30 pm. This group will offer safe and understanding conversation about loss and healing, as participants open their hearts to grief. For more information, contact Bill Sasso at 529-2439 or bsasso@juno.com.

BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY is a Unitarian Universalist adult curriculum focusing on five major questions: Who am I? How do I know? Who or what is in charge? What is my purpose in life? and What does my death mean? These five big questions form the framework of the course; at each meeting, we will deal with one of these questions. Our Fall, 2008, session will meet Wednesday afternoons, 12:30 to 2 pm, October 15th to November 19th. Registration is required; each session requires advance preparation. To register, or for more info, contact Bill S. (529-2439 or bsasso@juno.com).

"CIRCLES OF RENEWAL," third Wednesday evenings, from 7:30 to 9 pm, beginning September 17th. Each month we will use music, prayer, readings, and silence together to create a spiritual focus. This intentional experience is open to all who come in respect and trust. For more information, contact Bill Sasso at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

Ongoing:

BUDDHISM STUDY & PRACTICE GROUP *This group meets on the first and third Sundays in the Fellowship Commons at 7:30 PM. For more information: www.shawnee-dharma.org or Judy Carter at 529-3110.*

September 7. Meditation, Chanting, Study, Discussion in a free flowing format. Everyone welcome.

September 21. (ditto above)

THE DREAM WORKSHOP. *This group meets the first Sunday of each month in 06 (RE wing) at 12:00ish.*

September 7. This month we invite everyone who is interested in sharing their dreams in a warm and supportive atmosphere to join us.

HUMANIST GROUP. *This group meets on the second Wednesday of each month in the Fellowship Commons at 2:00 PM*

September 10, TBA

HUMANIST ROUND TABLE. *This group meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Fellowship Commons at 2:00 PM*

September 24, TBA Call Bob Camp for additional information.

PSI SYMPOSIUM. *This group meets the second Sunday of the Month in Room 06 at Noon*

September 14. We will start with a pot luck at noon and the program will begin at 12:30pm. Marsha Forrest will show the video "Tinamit Junan Uleu-Earth Peoples United". Connecting people to the natural and spiritual world, and bridging the wisdom of the Ancient Ones with the world of today, so that the diversity of life can flourish for future generations... Come view this beautiful video. Marsha will discuss her work with this group and how we can participate.

ROUNDTABLE READERS. *This group meets on the fourth Sunday of the month in Room 05 after the Sunday Service at Noon September 28.* Discussing books of our own choosing, whether fiction or nonfiction. All interested are welcome. The meeting on September 28 will be to select books to read in upcoming months, from a list of titles proposed by members and friends of the group. For more information, contact Janet Levie (phone 618-833-4971).

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

SISTERHOOD OF STICHERS will be on vacation until November 11th.

SOUTHERN IL TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP. *This group meets the second Monday of the month in the Fellowship Commons at 7:30 PM.*

September 8. Monthly meeting. Contact Krissy Summers at krissysummers@hotmail.com for more information.

VIDEO CIRCLE *We are happy to report that Amy Weber and Bob White have volunteered to jointly lead the Video Circle. If you would like to help suggest/decide future video circle choices, email Amy Weber at amyweber1@msn.com. She is creating a Video Circle email list.*

INTERNATIONAL CONVOCATION OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN

To Be Held In Houston, TX February 26 to March 1, 2009:

Thursday, 4 PM (opening reception), February 26 to
Sunday, 12:30 PM, March 1, 2009, Houston, Texas

The Convocation focuses on education, faith, action and transformation:

Celebrate with, worship with and learn from extraordinary women with inspiring stories about women's successful action in local communities in many cultures;

Energize the U*U Global Village network, a primary Convocation initiative;

Learn about grassroots organizing for women's rights and social justice through education, healthcare and safety, leadership development, and economic empowerment in the context of sustainable environments;

Bring these strong messages back to your home congregations and organizations;

Develop action ideas and plans that can continue, ignite and expand local initiatives that improve opportunity and women's lives in your communities and in locations across

the globe; and

Enjoy art, culture, worship and music along the way!

Gather Together to Explore Ways We Can Improve Women's Lives around the World...

The call we hear today is not unlike the one issued nearly a century and a half ago, by Julia Ward Howe:

Arise all women who have hearts...Let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day of counsel...Let us then solemnly take counsel with each other as the means whereby the great human family can live in peace.

Carla Feldhamer and Debbie Czarnopys-White are planning to attend and possibly participate in a program on Women and AIDS.

REGISTRATION DISCOUNT IF SUBMITTED BEFORE SEPT. 1ST, 2008.

A Note From the Editor

Greetings! CUF Links has been published on-line now for two years. When I began helping with the newsletter, Anne Sharpe was the editor and I was only doing the formatting and the web publishing. When Anne moved away, the task of editing really fell to me by default. Although I have enjoyed putting my "stamp" on the newsletter, I think it's time for another member to try out their creativity as editor of CUF Links. I could continue to assist with web publishing, but I would be happiest if I could simply get a .pdf file once a month to upload to our site. Remember you now get three months off in the summer!

Also, the Communications Committee needs to reorganize.

If you are interested in furthering the communication needs of our congregation, including web design, graphics, newspaper ads, CUF Links, press releases, etc., please email me. We will have a meeting soon.

The deadline for the October issue of CUF Links will be **Thursday evening, September 25th.** You may leave items for the Newsletter in the CUF Links box in the Fellowship office or email me at: yo@astroslueth.com or Melanie at: carbondaleuu@verizon.com Pictures are always welcome!

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

Yo Presley

As many of you may know, in 2007 we were designated as a RED RIBBON CONGREGATION by the UU Global AIDS Coalition because of our commitment and partnership with Ranchhod Hospice in Zambia and support of local HIV/AIDS projects. The President of the UUA, Bill Sinkford, recently released this statement regarding UU's and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

A Note from William Sinkford | Posted August 7, 2008

This past Saturday, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed fears that the incidence of HIV in America has been underestimated. New figures from the CDC show that -- for more than a decade -- the annual rate of HIV infection has been forty percent greater than reported. According to the CDC, about 56,300 Americans are infected with HIV every year. While this news is harrowing, I applaud the CDC for giving Americans what we desperately need but rarely receive: the truth.

As a religious leader, I am committed to understanding and addressing the truth about HIV. The truth is that HIV is most often spread through sexual contact and that comprehensive sexuality education is critical to reducing HIV infection rates. But the U.S. government has been unwilling to fund comprehensive sexuality education programs that would provide life-saving information.

During the past twenty-five years, the government has spent \$1.5 billion on domestic abstinence-only programs -- even though abstinence-only education does not work. A year ago, the British Medical Journal released a study concluding that sexually transmitted infection (STI) and pregnancy rates were unaffected by abstinence-only programs. Similar results have been found in American studies.

As I have been saying for years, "Just Say No" didn't work in the Garden of Eden, and it doesn't work today. In Unitarian Universalist congregations, we do not avert our eyes from the truth about HIV/AIDS. Instead, we acknowledge that comprehensive sexuality education is the key to helping young people stay healthy, and we provide that education in our own congregations through age-appropriate courses from a unique curriculum called Our Whole Lives.

But programming in religious venues is not sufficient to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic; we need government funding for comprehensive sexuality education in public schools.

Abstinence-only education has had a detrimental impact on the African American population. AIDS is the leading cause of death among African American women between 25-34 years of age. It is apparent that the students and recent graduates of public schools are becoming infected. By failing to fund comprehensive sexuality education, the U.S. government is withholding information that could save the lives of young African Americans. To me, and to many other people of conscience, this is worse than dishonest--it is immoral.

The danger extends beyond young African American women to the entire African American community. The Black AIDS Institute recently released a study (PDF file) showing that the population of black Americans living with AIDS outnumbers the populations living with AIDS in each of the following countries:

Botswana, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Namibia, Rwanda and Vietnam. These are seven of the fifteen countries that receive support from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). HIV/AIDS is a pandemic that crosses every border, and effective prevention efforts are needed worldwide.

With HIV/AIDS infection rates spiraling out of control, many are lauding the U.S. administration's global response, saying that it will be President Bush's legacy. That public sentiment led to the U.S. government's reauthorization of PEPFAR last week. The legislation included an increase in the five-year funding target from \$15 billion to \$48 billion, a target of recruiting 140,000 new health care workers, and a repeal on the travel ban on HIV-positive visitors to the United States.

Fortunately, an earmark, which caused one-third of the past five years of prevention funding to be spent on abstinence-until-marriage programs, has been removed for future spending. However, it was replaced with a requirement that countries file an explanatory report with Congress if they spend less than half of their prevention funding on abstinence and fidelity programs. Once again, our government is unable to fully acknowledge the truth about HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention.

On last year's World AIDS Day, I gathered outside the White House with hundreds of activists, many of who are currently in Mexico City for the International AIDS Conference. I led that gathering of activists in a prayer, which I return to now with an even greater sense of urgency.

My prayer is that we will summon the moral courage to honestly confront the spread of HIV/AIDS. My prayer is that we will open our minds and our hearts. My prayer is that our intelligence, our compassion, and our tolerance will allow us to face the truth. Because only the truth--not ideology or wishful thinking--will help us end the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Rev. William Sinkford is president of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Thank You ... Continued from page 1

SIWADE, the delicious Cuban dinner, and the informative talk by Manolo de los Santos, Assistant Director of the Caravan to Cuba.

The aid included a wide range of items - toothpaste, vitamins, pens and pencils, wheelchairs, walkers, bath seats, tennis rackets, a flute, Spanish Bibles and many medical supplies. Three cases of spray paint were donated for the Hip Hop Without Borders Exchange.

Updates on the Caravan can be checked at www.pastorsforpeace.org. We are truly grateful for your part in this outstanding effort to work for better relations with our neighbor.

Shalom,
*Georgeann Hartzog, Margie Parker and
 Celeste Williams*
