



CUF Links

The Monthly Newsletter of the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship
A Welcoming Congregation

A member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

December 2008

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Where Our Christmas Has Come From

Before there was Christmas, there was the planet Earth, with its particular rotation pattern, which creates our seasons, including the winter solstice. At the solstice, December 21st, the northern hemisphere is tilted furthest away from the Sun. The winter solstice is the shortest day and the longest night, marking the end of Autumn.

Before there was Christmas, people recognized the solstice. In imperial Rome, there were major celebrations, intended to celebrate or encourage the re-birth of the Sun, in this time of its greatest weakness. One of these celebrations took place on December 25th. It was called "natalis invicti," or the birth of the unconquered god. In the fourth century, when Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, the pagan "natalis invicti" festival was "converted" to Christianity by changing its focus to the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Over time, Christmas became a sort of winter carnival, perhaps more like a cross between Mardi Gras and Halloween than what we know as Christmas today. Between the 16th and 18th centuries, sources describe the holiday as consisting of mummers, people dressed in costumes that often served as disguises, traveling about in the middle of the night, waking up gentlefolk, serenading them with something intended as music, and demanding that they offer, in exchange, good food and strong drink, preferably of the alcoholic type. If those serenaded

were not willing to comply, stones were thrown through windows, doors were battered in, and sometimes the mummers simply entered the premises and helped themselves. We can see traces of this tradition in today's practice of caroling, though it has become more genteel over the years.

This Mardi Gras/Halloween version of Christmas often led to licentiousness and criminal activity. At the time of the Reformation, Protestant religious leaders tried to abolish the celebration of Christmas. For instance, the Puritans denounced Christmas as a "wanton Bacchanalian feast." At one time, Christmas celebrations in England were forbidden by an Act of Parliament. In the early days in New England, the first Pilgrims worked as usual on Christmas Day, neglecting completely any form of Christmas festivities. The colony of Massachusetts passed a law stating that ". . . anybody who is found observing, by abstinence from labor, feasting or any other way, any such days as Christmas Day, shall pay for every such offense five shillings." The Puritans not only considered the riotous activity of the carnival "unchristian," but they also declared that there was no scriptural basis for the celebration of the Nativity on December 25th.

However, these attempts to abolish Christmas never succeeded, in part because it's not easy simply to remove an element from the social fabric. So, having failed to eliminate Christmas, in the late 18th century, some Puritans began to change Christmas into a pious, temperate holiday. This transformation changed it from a public holiday — one celebrated primarily in the streets — into a domestic holiday that was celebrated primarily within the home, by the family itself. Over time, this change was successful — the streets are surprisingly tranquil on a typical Christmas Eve. Families celebrating Christmas today typically send greeting cards to friends and relatives, attend religious services, dine together, and

exchange gifts. Aside from the mayhem of shopping, Christmas has become pretty domesticated.

But even with the knowledge of its origins, Christmas carries significance for us. Amidst these long nights and short days, Christmas invites us into warmth and celebration. Christmas festivities offer us comfort and community. The lights of Christmas remind us that the days will soon grow longer. The green of Christmas trees and wreaths foretell the coming of Spring and renewal. These meanings have been present in Christmas for generations, and I value their presence. I hope that you will be able to pause, amidst all the busyness of the holiday rush, and experience these parts of Christmas, too.

So I hope that your holiday season will include warmth and celebration, comfort and community, hope for the future, and a sense of coming renewal. May you enjoy the holiday season, and may the coming New Year bless you in many, many ways!

In the spirit of the solstice,
Bill Sasso



Director of Religious Education

Hard to believe we're already halfway through another year. After not having seen most of the older kids through the summer, it takes a while to adjust to how much they've grown in the warm summer sunshine. So, while I'm adjusting to these new young men and young women in our midst, our new leaders, half a school year has zipped by.

For me, it's been fun to meet with the Religious Education committee, to plot the makeup of the classes, to decide the focus for the year, and to find

and recruit wonderful volunteer teachers. I also enjoy getting to know the constant stream of new parents and their children. I have found that being involved in the Religious Education program means never having to worry about being bored, or facing a pattern that appears routine.

I guess if I were asked to describe our RE program with one word, I would have to say change. If we've got mostly the same teachers back, they're not the same teachers they were the year before. They've got another year of experience, and they are more confident, and they have more to offer. The same children are not the same children, as another year of questions and experiences and growth change them. They grow from infants, to toddlers, through the 'it's all about me phase,' into the helpers and leaders of now, and tomorrow. By now I know the pattern, but I never know the when or who.

And while we certainly learn things from our books, and songs, and posters, we do stuff, too. Fun stuff! We go camping and kayaking and canoeing. We gather food from the Farmers Market and take it to the food pantry. We gather donations for UNICEF. We get together at the monthly intergenerational potluck. We might greet you at the door and give you an Order of Service. We bake bread for the Women's Center, and the Good Samaritan House. We go ice skating, and we care deeply for those who hurt. We make kites, and learn how to make fire without matches (remember that, parents!).

I'm very grateful for being able to see all this unfold around me. I can show up on a Saturday afternoon, and do no more than watch, as parents and kids dig in without prompting, and produce 20 loaves of Chunky Monkey bread. I can watch the child who is just too shy to be in the holiday play, on their own initiative, come up with something helpful to do to assist in the production. This is a pretty wonderful place to be, so remember, the door is always open if you'd like to join us.

I'd like to extend best wishes to all of you in this season of solstice, nativity, and thankfulness. May you enjoy each day with loved ones, and be the change you want to see happen.

Peace and love,
Roy Sumner

Sunday Services 10:30am Fellowship Hall

12/7 "Remembering World AIDS Day"

For more than five years, our Fellowship has been an active partner with Ranchhod Hospice in Kabwe, Zambia. In recognition of World AIDS Day, Deb Czarnopys-White and Carla Feldhamer, who have recently returned from a working visit there, will share their reflections, and Kathy O'Laughlin will add a local perspective on HIV/AIDS in our own region. Bill Sasso will coordinate this service, which will also include a special recognition of our newest Fellowship members.

12/14 Children's Holiday Program (intergenerational)

Each year the children of our Fellowship share their special insights into the winter holidays. This year promises to be both energetic and creative as they juxtapose familiar and creative approaches to the holiday season. There will be no live announcements in the service – please make sure to get your info to Russ Trimble so it can be printed in the order of service! Bill Sasso and Roy Sumner will coordinate this service.

12/21 Bill Sasso: "At the Winter Solstice"

On the morning of the year's shortest day, we find a special appreciation of the cycles of nature and the earth-centered traditions that celebrate them. Join Bill as he explores the wisdom in those customs in relation to us, at the point of the year where the light strengthens and the darkness begins to recede.

12/24 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

All are invited to join in this evening service of traditional readings and carols as we re-visit the story of Jesus' birth! This is also a special time to welcome back our college-age students and young adults. If you know a college student or young adult who might like to participate in this service, please contact Bill Sasso. Light refreshments will follow the service. No live announcements – make sure to get your announcement info to Bill S. for inclusion in the order of service!

12/28 Cheryl Robinson: Burning Bowl Ceremony Service

Elements of a "cleansing fire" ritual has roots in traditions as diverse as winter solstice Pagan celebrations, some New Age practices, and Unity church services of renewal, to name a few. Join us in this intentional mental and behavioral exercise. It is meant to help each of us lose some mental/emotional "weight", by making a conscious effort to let go of dwelling on negative experiences, limiting thoughts or practicing unwanted habits. Free yourself up to go into the New

Year with renewed confidence and spirits! Cheryl Robinson will preside, and Pat York will offer special music.

And coming up . . .

1/4/2009 Dinah Seibert: *"The Power of Five Wishes"*

The *"Five Wishes"* are a powerful and loving gift you can give to your loved ones and yourself. Their development helps you understand and express your preferences for end of life care. Because life is almost always "too short", why wait to prepare and give this gift? Dinah's passion for this topic comes from her own experience of its ability to affirm life!



From the Office

By Melanie Bray

I thought I would use this month's space to offer a few reminders. I am sure these are things that you are aware of *but* I believe it never hurts to have our memories refreshed from time to time.

- ✓ *December is upon us and this is always a busy month. Many meetings and programs will be not meeting because of the approaching holidays. Please let me know if you are not meeting so that I can give accurate information in the bulletin and on the website calendar.*
- ✓ *Please take a moment and walk through the kitchen to see if you have any items that you need to take home with you. I have watched the counters fill up with bowls, trays, plates and various serving dishes. With all of the potlucks and gatherings we have here at the fellowship it is easy to accumulate these items. Please check soon...all items left after the first of the year will be stored and sold at the yard sale.*
- ✓ *The office is open M-W-F from 9am – 1pm.*
- ✓ *Remember to sign up for serving as a coffee host and/or a greeter. If you are a greeter on Sunday morning before the service, please remember to do an attendance count and write it in the back of the guest book.*
- ✓ *Send your information for the weekly bulletin to the office at carbondaleuu@verizon.net by every Wednesday morning 10am.*
- ✓ *Items for the Order of Service are sent to Russ Trimble at russtrim@verizon.net by every Thursday 2pm.*
- ✓ *If you have a key to the fellowship that you no longer use, please return it to the office.*
- ✓ *If you are the last person to leave the fellowship, please remember to turn off all of the lights and properly secure the building.*

Be safe in your holiday travels and I hope you share the holidays with people you love. Take care and stay warm!



From George Feldhamer – President

There will be a Congregational Meeting immediately following the service on Sunday, 7 December. The meeting is to solicit suggestions and comments from members to determine priority initiatives for the Fellowship for the next fiscal year. These priorities will help guide budget planning and committee action. We will also vote on motions dealing with the Green Sanctuary Initiative and a second one dealing with the Mortgage.

Everyone should have received this announcement either by letter or by e-mail, along with a copy of the past list of priorities, which ones have been accomplished or are ongoing, as well as several new suggestions. Again, people at the meeting can add additional new priority items prior to voting on the top issues to pursue.

Please plan to attend and provide your input.

Announcements and News

Special Presentation: Wednesday evening, December 3rd, the Fellowship will host Kemal Akkaya speaking on "Gulen Movement: A Dynamic Movement of Peace and Dialogue in Turkey ." Fethullah Gulen is a prominent Turkish scholar who is considered a contemporary Rumi. He promotes dialogue, tolerance, education and peace. Gulen is a retired preacher, prolific writer, a sensational poet, a religious scholar and an interfaith activist. The Gulen movement is non-sectarian and apolitical, and it is organized around the socio-cultural needs of the society. The three main principles of this movement are practicing the faith, emphasizing on education and promoting inter-faith dialogue. Plan now to attend!

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"Abe Lincoln on Religion" will be the subject of a brown-bag lunch discussion at noon on Thursday, 12/11, at the Fellowship. Bill Sasso will facilitate the conversation, and will gladly share readings in advance of the meeting with those who request them. For more info, please contact Bill at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

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Circle of Renewal meets each 3rd Wednesday evening, from 7:30 to 9 pm. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 17th. We 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.

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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, 12/2, at 7:30 pm at the Fellowship. For more information, contact Bill Sasso at bsasso@juno.com or 618-529-2439.

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Suicide Grief Support Group: This group supports anyone who has lost a loved one to suicide (parents, siblings, grandparents, other relatives, friends, co-workers), and meets at the Fellowship on Tuesday evening, Dec. 9th, at 7:30 pm. The group meets the second Tuesday of each month and is facilitated by Judy Ashby, MS, LCPC. For information, contact Bill Sasso at 529-2439 or bsasso@juno.com.

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Kids Christmas Store: The store will open after the service on 14 December. Bring any items you'd like to contribute and leave in the first classroom on the right (room 02). Time is short, so bring those items in quickly. If you can help with setting up the store, and/or helping on 14 December, let Roy know. The kids love to shop for these precious gifts, donated by our generous Fellowship members. Proceeds go to the Good Samaritan House.

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Vespers Service: This service will be 19 December (Friday night), and will begin with a potluck. Doors will open at 6PM, and we will plan on eating at 6:30PM. We will entertain each other with selections from our little red holiday song book, view a Night Before Christmas in the Puharich/Sronkoski home (always a favorite), and perhaps be joined by members of the UFO, Dulcimer Group, Recorder Group, or some combination of them. Bring a dish to share, your own drinks, and friends and family and join the celebration. If you have something you'd like to share with the group, please let Roy know of your request.

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PSI Symposium will be welcoming speaker - Steve Eberhart, who will speak to us about Edgar Cayce. Steve has been to the Cayce Foundation in Virginia numerous times & hosts a Cayce study group locally. December 14th, after the service in the High School RE room. Bring a potluck dish to share. All are welcome.

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CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE GROUP Our December meeting date will be 12/19 and NOT 12/12 as previously announced. We will still be making buns as planned, and bringing them to the Vespers potluck at 6. Meeting time is 5 p.m. as usual. If you have any questions, or have any suggestions for future meetings, please email Karen (robandkaren@email.com).

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Hi, our next **Humanist Group meeting** is December 10, 2:00pm at the Fellowship which will be our last meeting of the year. I misplaced my video copy of Audacity of Hope be our President -elect. If I can't find it by the 10th, I will substitute it with one about Obama's economic plan etc. Our discussion will be about what his first 100/1000 days as president could include. He will need our support and patience.... for a monumental FDR program. Come share...all welcome.... please bring a friend. Bob Camp

Open Minds, December 7, 8:45 AM. Commons," Race and the 2008 Election" David Slavin, Ph.D. is a visiting faculty member of the SIUC History Dept. He has been visiting CUF and is a member of the Atlanta, Ga. UU congregation. He has extensive experience as active participant in community groups which foster diversity and racial harmony. He will present his action research and offer perspectives on the impact of race in the 2008 election. All welcome.

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UU KITCHEN IS OVERCROWDED!

The fellowship kitchen has become the "dumping ground" for bowls, serving plates, serving utensils etc.... that have been left there following potluck activities. The counters are so crowded that it is difficult to find workspace. PLEASE check the table by the kitchen and the kitchen counters for anything that you may have forgotten about

December Social Action Update - by Jess Jobe

“Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart.”-Washington Irving

I always miss my dad most at this time of year. He loved to do something like the Spirit of Christmas program in years when our family could afford to and sometimes when it felt like we really couldn't afford it! We would read together every year, *A Christmas Carol* and *The Story of the Other Wise Man*. And of course, we watched *It's A Wonderful Life*. My father was a lot like George Bailey, come to think of it. And then there was Washington Irving-his essay "*Christmas*" was my dad's favorite and he would read it aloud every year. I recall being bored from hearing it so often, but I miss it now. Whatever you are celebrating this winter season, I hope it will be a time for memories, family, friends, giving and fun.

CUF has already been in the holiday spirit, with the **Spirit of Christmas** gift giving program in full swing, under the direction of Angela Chen and Matt Schlesinger. **Gifts are due at CUF by Sunday, December 7.** Contact Angie and Matt if you have questions. Thanks for giving a gift to someone in our community who will appreciate your kindness and generosity.

If you find yourself looking for that perfect gift, stop by the **2008 Southern Illinois Alternative Gift Fair on Sunday, December 7 from 2-7 p.m. at the Carbondale Civic Center.** Many charitable non-profit groups will be represented, selling merchandise or certificates representing a gift of a donation. Organizations participating in this year's gift fair include: Heifer International, Habitat for Humanity, Sierra Club, The Women's Center, Good Samaritan Ministries, the Humane Society of Southern Illinois, PAWS, Rainbow Café, CUF Zambian AIDS Partnership, For Kids Sake Bangladesh Project, RBF Dome, Boys and Girls Club of Carbondale, Michael Wolff Memorial Wetland project, Free Again Wildlife Rehab and the Southern Illinois Center for a Sustainable Future. Music, light refreshments and a children's activity table will be available at the Fair.

December's Social Action Collection will take place on **Wednesday, December 24** (the Christmas Eve service) and will benefit the **Williamson County Family Crisis Center** in Herrin. Family Crisis Center is a homeless shelter available (as space allows) for anyone from the area (Franklin/Williamson/Jackson area). Individuals and families can stay for up to 30 days. Staff will support residents as they find permanent housing, providing referrals and education.

Feed My Sheep Update: Thank you so much to our first volunteer kitchen crew that cooked, served and delivered meals at the Feed My Sheep community kitchen on November 4. Volunteers were led by the very capable Al Babbitt and included Astrid Mosely, Richard Norman, Bill Sasso, Cheryl Schmit, Joyce Daisy, Joe Schmit, Carla Feldhamer and Jess Jobe. Our first time out was fun, rewarding and most of all, well received by those eating that day. About 100 meals were served between delivery and dine in meals.

A reminder that our Feed My Sheep day is the 1st Tuesday of each month. Al Babbitt has graciously agreed to serve as head chef again on **Tuesday, Dec. 2** to lead the team of Frank Nall, Bill Sasso, Ken Starbuck, Kathy Starbuck, Darby Ortolano, Judy Aydt, Joann Nelson and Bob White. Volunteers please remember to bring a hat. Cooking begins at 9 a.m. and lunch is served to those dining in at noon. Delivered meals go out about 11:30 a.m.

Finally, a few fun things to share about our November cooking date—Al Babbitt so impressed Pastor Rick Jackson at Bethel AME that Pastor Rick asked Al if he would be able to fill in on dates when Pastor Rick is unavailable, to direct kitchen activities! We were also asked if we could commit to cooking once a week, instead of just once a month. At this point, I don't think we are ready for that kind of commitment, but maybe eventually as we have more Fellowship members involved with this local social action, we can take on that challenge. Thank you to everyone who has already signed up to participate in the Feed My Sheep kitchen dates! If you have questions about how everything works at Feed My Sheep, talk to Al Babbitt or Jess Jobe. The sign up sheet for future months is located in the Fellowship Commons.

And speaking of food and fun and a rewarding activity, **thanks to everyone who participated in some way in the Fall Food and Folk Festival to benefit Ranchhod Hospice on November 15.** Those who helped are too many to list since we had so many great cooks and behind the scenes helpers, but some stand out for special mention—big, big thanks to Janet Harris, who organized the cook-off and did a lot of kitchen cleanup, Kris Summers who coordinated ticket sales, Cheryl Schmit who provided our cook-off supplies, and George and Carla Feldhamer, Matt Schlesinger, Joyce Webb and Chris Wissmann who set up for the event. Thanks also to the talented musicians who played the concert, Tom and Candy of Parsley and Sagebrush Band and Susan and Phil of February Sky and to Bill Sasso for getting us started on the folk concert concept. Congrats to: Rob Gallegly (Most Unusual Chili), Sam and Linda Foskey (Best Meat Chili), Yo Presley (Best Veggie Chili) and Kathy O'Laughlin (Grand Champion).

Coming in January...Winter into Spring Social Action Planning Meeting, date TBA!



Zambia-Nightgowns and Knickers

By Debbie Czarnopys-White

Upon returning from Zambia this year, I realized that what we bring when we visit Ranchod Hospice are things that can be used throughout the year. In particular, nightgowns for the ladies have become very welcome items. Mary Chidgey, the Director of Ranchod Hospice, said that the ladies really seemed to like the pattern we used last year. It is Simplicity #4048, style C, and we use cotton material. We hope to make multiple sizes, but primarily the smalls and mediums, with some occasional extra-small as well. This is open to both men and women. Guys, you work with tools and such. You measure (maybe twice before cutting), and then enjoy the finished product. Gals, we're always measuring something. If you really don't like to sew - don't. Just cut out the nightgowns and hopefully we'll find others who would sew them. The pattern is pieced so it requires a little extra time to cut and pencil-mark the notches to be matched. These ladies aren't looking for perfection, just something home-made from the people who care for them. Men and women patients of the hospice are oftentimes there for remedial medicine therapy, for TB or malaria and such, and are released back home when they have stabilized.

Others receive the love and care of the staff and home-based care givers as a last resting place before departing this life. In either case, the gowns are enjoyed and most welcome.

What in the world are knickers? It's another term for underwear. We will be constantly collecting these also, and in cotton. Sizes for both men and women are small and medium, with an occasional large. Styles for both genders would be briefs.

Thanks to Allida Plumer, we discovered that boxes are available from the U.S. Postal Service in various sizes. The ones that I've ordered hold 20 lbs. and can be shipped for \$50 each. This may sound expensive, but compared to the shipping prices we've paid shipping in other boxes, this is reasonable. Whenever 20 lbs. of items for this project are gathered, I'll be sending them off. Patients are waiting to use them, so let's see if we can get this rolling again and continue the momentum. I have much previously donated material available. Let me know if you need material or have any questions - phone 618-787-2929, e-mail: bdcw@frontiernet.net Also, check out the poster boards of Debbie's and Carla's. They contain information about this project as well as the school fee adoption program for the children.



Membership Committee

by Cathy Kline

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

January 20, 2009 - The next Membership Committee meeting, 4:15 at the Fellowship.

There will be no meeting in December.

February 7, 2009 - Orientation Program 1:00 to 5:00 pm at the Fellowship.

February 28, 2009 - Potluck for all members. More information will be available later.



From the Communications Committee

by Yolan Presley

Since Joseph took over as editor of CUF Links, I have been thinking about the overall communication and publicity needs of our Fellowship and researching what other congregations around the country are doing. This used to be a fairly simple and straightforward issue. We had a weekly bulletin and a monthly newsletter and both were produced and mailed out to all members and interested friends. Times have changed!

We also have had public radio ads, newspaper ads, and a very visible wayside pulpit. When I joined the Fellowship in 2004, the bulletin was already digital, but *CUF Links* was still being printed and mailed, as were important notices. When Anne Sharpe and I took over *CUF Links* in 2006, we took the logical step and created a digital - web accessed *CUF Links*. This has certainly saved us quite a bit of money, as only those members and friends who don't have internet access get a printed copy mailed to them and that number is now less than 30! In

retrospect, however, saving money and trees may not be the best solution to meet our Fellowship's communication needs.

On December 7th, at our Congregational Meeting, you will have a chance to weigh in on this issue. We need to hear from you about how you would like to receive information and about how best to promote our congregation to the area.

This is already a priority in our 06-11 Strategic Plan that states in Objective 1.4: *Improved Access to Information*. Within the Fellowship community, we will develop effective new means of sharing information about the activity schedule, roles and responsibilities of various members, and opportunities for service (e.g. a "Help Wanted" column in CUF Links). We will consider suggestions for new ways to present event schedule information to achieve this goal.

I will also add that there is plenty of room for more members on the Communications Committee. With so many communication vehicles to choose from, we now need to evaluate what we have and come up with a comprehensive plan. Please talk to me if you would like to get involved.

What we have done or are doing to promote CUF:

1. Newspaper ads (current but less frequent – rates have gone up)
2. PSA's to local papers (current)
3. Website (current)
4. Print copies of *CUF Links* (current)/ Mail copies (past) Web copies (current)
5. Word of Mouth promotion (current)
6. PDF flyers and posters emailed to relevant people, organizations, etc. (current)
7. Emailed bulletins and announcements. (current) Mail copies (past)
8. Wayside Pulpit (past)
9. Under-writing NPR programs (very expensive – past)

What we might add in the future:

10. A CUF email List Service (would simplify emailing and make members responsible for correcting their addresses)
11. A CUF blog on Facebook (see: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/blogging/119149.shtml>)
12. Develop an email list by asking members to share names. (too much spam already?)
13. Hold special events or weeknight services on the SIU campus through our newly activated RSO (our RSO has many possibilities for outreach to the campus community)
14. Sign that lists the topic of the Sunday Sermon etc./and-or a New wayside pulpit. (cost?)
15. Roadside directional signs. (cost?)
16. Coordinated campaign with other local churches to buy NPR spots. (has anyone tried this?)
17. Electronic postcards on the website. (see www.uumilwaukee.org)
18. Local radio sponsorship – WDBX (have we tried this?)
19. Your Great Idea here.



CUF MEN'S ALLIANCE

by Bill Rose

Youth who have attended Rainbow Cafe meetings speak out about why Rainbow Cafe is important to them:

Rainbow Café means I have a place to go to and know I'll be accepted for whoever I am, regardless of race, gender, creed, social status or of course sexuality.

Rainbow Café means so much to me to know that I have a place to go and be myself, open and accepted. I am 17 years old and I love Rainbow Café!!!

School, work, and family all pressure me to hide who I really am but at the Rainbow Café I feel free.

Since I discovered Rainbow Café, I have become more open with myself and others. If not for the Rainbow Café and knowing there are other people who are just like me, I probably would still be in the closet.

When I came here I found out that there are others out there like me. I finally realized that I don't have to feel so alone.

It's great to have a place where I can be honest about myself and not be told to beat it!

I went to Rainbow Café unsure about myself and dedicatedly closeted. Within a month I'd come out to all and my confidence went through the roof.

Rainbow Café helped me come out as well as helped me understand that it's okay to be gay.



UU Joke of the Month

"Gods Rest Ye, Unitarians" (Holiday Song)

Gods rest ye, Unitarians, let nothing you dismay; Remember there's no evidence there was a Christmas Day; When Christ was born is just not known, no matter what they say, O, Tidings of reason and fact, reason and fact, Glad tidings of reason and fact.

Our current Christmas Customs come from Persia and from Greece, From solstice celebrations of the ancient Middle East. This whole darn Christmas spiel is just another pagan feast, O, Tidings of reason and fact, reason and fact, Glad tidings of reason and fact.

There was no star of Bethlehem, there was no angels' song; There could not have been wise men for the trip would take too long. The stories in the Bible are historically wrong, O, Tidings of reason and fact, reason and fact, Glad tidings of reason and fact!

UU Trivia Quiz

Which three of the following famous people were not Unitarians?

1. Florence Nightingale (famous nurse)
2. Millard Fillmore (US President)
3. Frank Lloyd Wright (famous architect)
4. Bela Bartok (famous composer)
5. William Howard Taft (US President)
6. George Bernard Shaw (famous playwright)
7. Louisa May Alcott (famous author)
8. P.T. Barnum (circus guy)
9. Ray Bradbury (famous author)
10. Robert Burns (famous poet)
11. Buckminster Fuller (famous C'dale resident)
12. Paul Newman (famous actor)
13. Christopher Reeve (Superman)
14. Pete Seeger (folk singer)
15. Alexander Graham Bell (telephone guy)
16. Charles Darwin (evolution guy)
17. e. e. cummings (lower case poet)
18. Ralph Nader (consumer advocate)

CUF Links Newsletter – Contacts:

For suggestions, advice and compliments: jsphrobbie@yahoo.com

For complaints and refunds: bsasso@juno.com

NEXT DEADLINE: December 22nd