



Summer CUF Links

The Monthly Newsletter of the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship
A member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

A Welcoming Congregation
Volume 08, Number 6

From The Minister

Cherish your choices!

Editor's Note: This column was reprinted from the October, 2005 issue of [CUF Links](#).

If you are a member of the Fellowship, every couple of months you should receive an issue of [UU World](#), "the magazine of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations." [Please note: sometimes it takes a few months to get the new member information to the UUA, so if you have just joined the Fellowship, you may not have received a copy yet. But if you have been a member for three months or more, and have yet to receive an issue, please let the Fellowship office know, so we can take appropriate action!]

While there are many different articles and items of interest in [UU World](#), the Fall 2005 issue contained an essay that I found particularly helpful. Written by Doug Muder, a member of the congregation in Bedford, Massachusetts, it was titled "Who's Afraid of Freedom and Tolerance?" It presents a contrast of the different and competing worldviews of fundamentalists and religious liberals. Since our region includes both these worldviews, to at least the same degree as Massachusetts does, if you haven't seen it, I urge you to read it!

Muder argues that it helps to recognize a basic distinction between liberals, who value freedom in the form of individual choices, and fundamentalists, who find personal meaning within tradition expressed as a network of roles and obligations. When a liberal couple chooses to define their relationship in a non-traditional way, the fundamentalist feels threatened. When a fundamentalist couple understands and defines its relationship in a traditional manner (without even considering alternatives), the liberal feels perplexed. When the fundamentalist criticizes the liberal for making a choice that is non-traditional, the liberal feels angry and persecuted. When the liberal criticizes the fundamentalist for failing to exercise his or her individual freedom, the fundamentalist feels angry and persecuted. It's easy to enter and escalate a cycle of

criticism and anger, especially when the liberal and the fundamentalist are people who do care about each other.

But what's the alternative? An acceptable alternative has to value choice as the expression of our heritage of religious freedom. But it should also make it clear that our commitment to choice is not a commitment to "whatever feels good right now." Rather, it is a commitment that uses choice to reflect values that we have tried and tested over time, values such as freedom, reason, tolerance, and love (for example). It is a commitment not to "the easy way," but rather to "the right way, as we understand it," and part of that understanding is that it may not be the right way for everyone else.

Doug Muder suggests that we "need to explain why we want freedom and choice . . . to talk about the committed life and how committed liberals escape the superficiality and nihilism that the [fundamentalist] fears and assumes we represent." And in doing so, we need to speak with a sense of love for our opponents and to bless with hope those who may curse us with anger. As we do so, we embody the full power of our religious heritage.

One of my favorite readings in our hymnal begins "Cherish your doubts, for doubt is the attendant of truth." We choose to doubt, that we may find a better understanding of what is true. And as "doubt is the attendant of truth," so I believe choice is the embodiment of freedom. So I hope you'll choose to spend some time with Doug Muder's full article!

Yours in choice (signed) Bill S.

P.S. If you'd like a copy of Doug Muder's article, please contact me at bsasso@juno.com or 618- 529-2439

JUNE SUNDAY SERVICES held in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30 A.M.

June 1 Terry Bowman: "A Paradigm for Living with Global Warming"

As the evidence of climate change continues to grow, the immediacy of this global problem increases. We have to do something, but what? Terry will share his perspective on what we can do now at the individual and collective levels. Bill Sasso will coordinate this service.

June 8 Bill Sasso: "Is Reverence Dangerous?"

Should we as Unitarian Universalists fear the concept of reverence? Or should we embrace it? A few years ago, the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association commented on the importance of a "language of reverence" and set off a whirlwind of controversy. Join Bill as he explores this topic, and judge for yourself whether the dust has yet settled!

June 15 Bill Sasso: "Advice for Fathers (and Mothers)"

On Father's Day, let's consider parenthood - how is it supposed to work, anyway? Bill promises to share from the wisdom he has accumulated over eight years of fatherhood, augmented by the guidance of better-known gurus of parenthood over the past two hundred years. Find out what we think we know, and test it against your own experience as a parent and/or as a child!

June 22 Judy Ashby: "Aftershocks"

A suicide produces emotional shock waves that reverberate throughout a community. Those left behind struggle with wide-ranging and often conflicting feelings and wonder how to cope with irrevocable changes. Judy Ashby, M.S., L.C.P.C., will share her process of surviving and thriving after her son's suicide 22 years ago and how this process informs her spiritual journey. Drawing upon life experiences, she will offer support, understanding, and guidance for both preventing and coping with suicide and reassurance that joy and laughter will return. Bill Sasso will coordinate this service.

June 29 Matt Schlesinger: "Spirituality and Science"

Fellowship member Matt Schlesinger, a cognitive psychologist at SIUC, will examine the interactions between the scientific and the spiritual, and attempt to identify the dimensions of human experience and thought where each holds - or should hold - sway. He'll draw from the thoughts of deeply religious scientists as well as his own understanding.

And coming up . . . July 6 Russ Trimble will coordinate "A Sharing of Favorite Readings"

JUNE OPEN MINDS held in the Fellowship Commons at 8:45 A.M.

These meetings and the topics will be announced in the Weekly Bulletins throughout the Summer!

President's Column

We are a generous community. We give of our time, our talent and our money. And when we do it as a community, we generate so much more.

At the Annual Meeting for the Fellowship, this generosity was very obvious. First, we passed a budget for the coming Fellowship year. It is the collective generosity that allows us to maintain our beautiful building and retain our most competent staff. Many worked hard to communicate with the members, not only what they were willing to contribute, but what they wanted to contribute to.

We then elected officers and trustees to the Board. These members give of their time and talent so that we can live out our values in a beautiful and well maintained building, led by competent and dedicated staff. These leaders use their talents to address current needs and plan for the future. We are blessed by their generosity.

We also elected 2 new members to the Nominating committee. These members conduct some very important business. They make sure we have competent leaders in the near future. It is hard but gratifying work.

Finally, we approved a plan to share our abundance with the rest of southern Illinois. We voted unanimously to

From the RE Director

It's with a grateful heart that I thank all those who participated in the Religious Education program this year. Our children and youth were the recipients of the care and giving of many, who gave of their time and talents. It was certainly a memorable year, and again, thank you for stepping forward and making a difference.

Remember that beginning June 1, we will no longer have individual classes. Instead we will have a one-room church school for our younger children. This year we will be treated to various members sharing their adventures of travel. The UU Travelers program will have up to 12 different members sharing with our children their experiences as they traveled the globe. Children younger than kindergarten are welcome to join us, with the company of their parent, or they might prefer to help the even younger children in the nursery. Those older than 4th or 5th grade are invited to help in the UU Travelers program, or to join their parents in the main service. Of course adults are invited, and needed, to help the presenter each week in the Travelers program; just see the sign-up sheet and schedule posted in the RE Commons kitchen area. And I have been asked to remind parents to leave their child's toys, cards, or other games home or in their cars, as these too frequently prove distractions.

Our SWAP (Summer Weeklong Awesome Program) will take place July 7-11, from 9AM to noon. This year's theme is AIR, and yes, we'd love to have your help with anything from bringing a snack, to helping with a song or activity or story. See me if you would like to help.

And finally, don't forget to join us for a great camping experience at Lake Glendale (see poster on glass beside the door entering the RE Wing). There is no cost for camping, but Lake Glendale does charge admission (I think \$2 or \$3) to the beach. We will be camping June 13 and 14 (camp Friday and Saturday nights, and leave on Sunday). Bring your best camp fire story and join us both nights, or for just a day.

Have a wonderful summer, and remember to save some water from your destinations to be shared with us during the fall Water Communion service. Remember, life's not a rehearsal for something else...get out there and dream big.

Peace,
Roy Sumner, DRE

Notes of Gratitude

Greetings to all,

I want to thank all the members of the Fellowship who have completed the stewardship process. We have all remained flexible this year in how each member chose to participate. The board members helped run small groups. Jerry Molomby, Carla Feldhamer, Cheryl Schmit and myself did personal home visits. Ed Phillips kept the books as the stewardship cards were returned. You have all been generous of your time and talents this year in many Fellowship programs. Your generosity during the stewardship process provides the financial base for the Fellowship to continue offering our varied programming. I look forward to sharing many pleasant and productive hours with you as we move into our new year.

Thank you for continued personal and financial support.

Joyfully and gratefully yours,
Mary Campbell, Stewardship Chair

CUFF Links Editor:

Please post this letter on the next CUF Links. Everybody needs to know how much of an impact they have had on these kids.

Matt Sronkoski

Matt,

I just wanted to tie up the year with one last word of praise to you and the rest of the congregation.

I owe so much to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Carbondale and I wish I could only begin to thank you guys for being there for me and for everything you do. The past nine months going to the church has left me with none other than wonderful memories, beautiful friendships, and virtues that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. You and the rest of the fellowship have guided me through my adolescence in ways no one else could, with such love and compassion, teaching me things that I'm sure I could learn no where else. I take great pride in UUFC, and you all should too. I look forward to many more years with you guys, thank you so much again for everything.

If there is a God, may he bless you all for my wonderful experiences at the fellowship. Matt please feel free to share this with the rest of the congregation. I hope we can keep in touch over the summer, my home email is socrotos@inbox.com.

Love is Love,
Zach

Friendshipment Caravan to Cuba

Coming to Carbondale - June 25

Local Friends of Cuba, with help from the Peace Coalition and local churches, will host the 19th Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba on Wednesday, June 25th at the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship, 105 N. Parrish Lane. You are cordially invited to the event, which begins with a drumming performance from SIWADE at 5:30 pm followed by a Cuban dinner at 6 pm and a presentation from Manolo E. De Los Santos, Assistant caravan coordinator, at 6:45 pm.

Manolo, born in the Dominican Republic, is a young Christian student activist involved in the struggles for peace with social justice across the world. He is currently a student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice-CUNY with plans to later get a Masters in Divinity from Union Theological Seminary. For the past two years Manolo has also been a member of the parochial board of Iglesia San Romero de Las Americas-UCC and has represented his church in both local and regional UCC events. He has participated in the 17th and 18th US-Cuba Friendshipment Caravans.

The Caravan will pass through a number of U.S. and Canadian cities to collect material aid donations and to help build public awareness that Cuba is not an enemy or a threat. Due to the increased cost of diesel fuel monetary donations are especially necessary and welcome. Checks can be made out to the Peace Coalition and can be mailed to 1702 W. Taylor Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901.

Friends of Cuba will collect donations of material aid from June 1 - 16. There will be a collection box at church if you'd like to donate. Some of the most useful aid items include educational supplies, new or good condition sports, art and cultural equipment, and simple medications and supplements with expiration dates no earlier than February 2009.

A focus this year is on supplies and equipment to help seniors maintain independence (folding walkers and wheelchairs etc.). Also accompanying the caravan will be the HipHop Without Borders Exchange with the aim to equip and decorate a new hiphop cultural center in Havana. Welcome items would include new cans of high quality spray paint and sound equipment, records and musical instruments useful in hiphop music. Due to the increased cost of diesel fuel monetary donations are especially necessary and welcome. For questions or more information, or to volunteer to pack or cook, call Margie Parker, 549-7193 or Georgeann Hartzog, 521-4239.

Announcements

ROUNDTABLE READERS will meet on Sunday, June 22, after the service, to discuss **The Anatomy of Hope** by Jerome Groopman, M.D. Subtitled "How People Prevail in the Face of Illness," this book by a humane scientist-practitioner of hematology and oncology is a meditation based on both clinical and personal experience. He begins with two questions: "Why do some people find hope despite facing severe illness, while others do not? And can hope actually change the course of a malady, helping patients to prevail?" He concludes that hope is "the very heart of healing." It is a journey worth taking with him. There will be two copies of the book in the CUF library.

MYANMAR CYCLONE RELIEF: The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Association have joined to launch a humanitarian relief fund to help survivors of the recent Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) cyclone. Both organizations strive to coordinate strategic response to natural or man-made humanitarian crises, especially when rights are threatened or when those in need are overlooked or neglected by traditional relief approaches. Aid, coordinated through the UUSC, will be channeled to humanitarian relief work in an effort to help survivors - especially those left out of traditional relief strategies - regain their lives and livelihoods. Please support this relief effort. To donate online go to www.uusc.org/info/support_cyclonenargis.html For donations by mail, please direct contributions to: UUSC-UUA Cyclone Nargis Relief Fund, P.O. Box 845259, Boston, MA 02284-5259. Thank you!

MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS: During the summer, Bill Sasso's regular office hours will be Wednesday, 9 to 11 a.m. and Thursday, 3 to 5 pm, and by appointment. Please call before coming over, because Bill is sometimes out of the office for meetings, pastoral visits, or other commitments. To schedule a time to get together with Bill, please email bsasso@juno.com or call 529-2439. Thanks!

SIGNATURE STORIES: What do you consider the most important stories about our Fellowship, the ones that best describe our identity? Would you like to share a story or two? Or would you like to help record them? Please contact Bill Sasso (618-529-2439 or bsasso@juno.com) if you have ideas about the stories of the Fellowship. Thanks!

YARD SALE: Of course you've all heard about the annual social action yard sale, coming Friday, June 13 (3-6p.m.) and Saturday, June 14 (7 a.m.-1 p.m.). Many folks have signed up to help, with pricing and set up the week of the sale, with advertising and press, with selling, and with cleanup. It's not too late to get involved. We will need lots of help Monday, June 9-Thursday, June 12 with pricing and set up. Stop by during the day or early evening hours and someone's bound to be around. And of course, we'll need nice stuff to sell. Folks can start bringing in gently used yard sale goods on Sunday, June 1 through Wednesday, June 11. Look for signs on the doors of the RE classrooms. Proceeds from this year's sale will again support Ranchod AIDS Hospice and Orphan Care Center in Zambia, the work of New Day Prison Ministries and local social action activities of the Fellowship. Contact Carla Feldhamer (hospice88@aol.com) or Jess Jobe (jesj62901@yahoo.com) for questions or further information.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD: As we have previously, we will participate in Bread for the World's Offering of Letters on Sunday, June 8 after services. CUF members and friends will have the opportunity to write elected officials on issues of hunger in America and throughout the world. Stamps, stationery and talking points will be available at coffee hour on June 8. Specifically, Bread for the World encourages letters to Congress advocating for increased action on the Millennium Development Goals with an increase of at least \$5 billion towards global anti-poverty assistance and passage of the Global Poverty Act. To learn more before June 8th- Check out www.bread.org

SHARING AND CARING REQUEST: As coordinator of the Sharing & Caring program, from time to time I am asked to find readers for CUF members who are blind or having vision problems. At the present time, Tom Dickey in particular would like to have more readers than he does at present. He enjoys magazine articles read to him from the many humanist and other liberal publications he receives monthly. It is also a good way for him to see and talk to other members, as he is mostly homebound at this time. If you are able to commit to a two-hour block of time weekly to visit and read to a particularly wise and delightful CUF member, please contact Cheryl Robinson at 364-6499 or email me at cherrob1@msn.com

NEED A LITTLE HELP? Emily Denis (daughter of Matt Denis) will soon be home from college for the summer, and is available to do Child care, pet sitting, house and yard work, web design, and odd jobs. Call Emily at 618-527-6514 or Matt 618-527-8358.

PSI SYMPOSIUM does not meet during the summer. The first meeting will be in September. Date of the meeting will be published in August.

YOGA FOR ZAMBIA is temporarily disbanded.

FAIR TRADE: New shipment coffee, nuts and cranberries and chocolate of course! Fair Trade items for sale will be on a table after the service along with price list and cash for change.

SISTERHOOD OF STITCHERS: A request has been received regarding making winter adult women's hats for the prison ministry. Therefore, SOS has decided to change their emphasis at this time. Memorial Hospital of Carbondale is very appreciative of the preemie hats and blankets the SOS has donated as part of their previous project. SOS is happy to accept donations of yarn and persons who are working at home may drop off their completed hats on Sunday after the morning service or Tuesday noon at the Fellowship. For additional information contact: Elaine Seymour, sapoded@gmail.com or 618-985-4549.

HUMANIST GROUP will meet June 11, 2:00 PM. James Luther Adams: Theologian of the 20 th. Century, Ken Starbuck will present the program and coordinate the discussion which follows. Bring a guest.

HUMANIST ROUNDTABLE will meet June 25, 2:00-3:30 PM. Open Forum, bring a topic for discussion, rant or rave. Example: Task: As the Next President Your First 100 Days in Office.. Others..? Humanist Group coordinators will facilitate the discussion. Bring a guest.

PASTORS FOR PEACE: CUF is hosting the Pastors for Peace Cuba Caravan dinner on Wednesday, June 25. If you'd like to attend the dinner or would be interested in helping prepare the meal and/or acquaint the organizers with our kitchen, please contact Margie Parker at 549-7193. A Cuba Caravan collection box will also be set up at the Fellowship beginning June 1, collecting items for Cuba. See larger article for details.

~From the Summer CUF Links Editor~

You probably have noticed a big difference in this edition of your newsletter. Normally, there are no newsletters published in the Summer months, but this year we decided that this would be the perfect time for me to learn the process of "building" the newsletter under the watchful eye of Yo Presley (who is looking forward to a short break).

I have chosen to use a different, less restrictive format that saves time and yet conveys all of the information that is desired and needed by our members. I will try new things and become more creative with each new edition. As always, I welcome your feedback.

The July CUF Links deadline will be on Friday, July 25th. Please send your information to carbondaleuu@verizon.net or call the office at 529-2439.

Thank you for your continued support and have a safe, happy Summer!

~Melanie