



Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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February 2006
Vol. LIII No. 6

The Forum

Of Cabbages and Kings

Welcome to flu season. You know what to do for the flu: basically, you ignore it, and if you're otherwise in pretty good health, it will go away. There are also "viruses" that infect congregations and if you ignore these, not only will they not go away; they will infect the entire body. To contain this kind of virus, the uninfected members of a healthy congregation need to respond, like white blood cells, and disarm it. Peter Steinke, a writer on church systems, has discussed this at length. Recently, I came across another article on the subject in an excellent book called *Churchworks: A Well-Body Book for Congregations*, by Anne Odin Heller. Heller lists twenty viruses to watch out for. Here are some of them, freely adapted:

1. The toxic personalities virus: If a person is chronically mean, critical, or dissatisfied, no matter what is going on in the congregation, suggest she talk to the minister about why she is so unhappy here.
2. The tyranny of the minority virus: The person who claims to speak for the whole congregation or who intimidates or overwhelms others into being silent needs to be told his behavior is unacceptable. Talk to the minister or a board member if you need to. (UU congregations are particularly vulnerable to this virus because we tend to prize free speech at all costs.)
3. The single-issue/ambush virus: The person who inserts his or her own agenda into every discussion or attempts to turn the work of a committee or group to his own purposes should be told when this is inappropriate. If this doesn't work, ask the minister for help.
4. The gossip/rumor virus: If it is not your news to share and sharing it would serve no purpose, don't say it. Refuse to carry rumors; correct rumors you know are false.
5. The dangerous person virus: The person who is a predator, thief, or threat to others needs to be reported to the minister or the board.
6. The bad mouth virus: The person who habitually puts down every person, project or idea needs to be told, "I'm not interested." Refuse to listen to the person who constantly criticizes others behind their backs.
7. The "We tried that and it didn't work" virus: Consider that a congregation is constantly changing. What didn't work before may work better now.
8. The secret group virus: Refuse to join a cluster of people who meet privately to criticize, complain about or try to get rid of people or changes. Tell them they need to talk directly with the source of their complaint.
9. The triangulation virus: Never let yourself get put between two people in conflict. Insist that they talk to each other about the issue, not to you.
10. The manipulation/pressure virus: Say no to tasks you will not enjoy or feel good about doing.
11. The blackmail virus: To someone who threatens to quit or withdraw her pledge if she doesn't get her way, say, "I'm sorry you feel that way. We'll miss you and will welcome you back if you change your mind."
12. The sitting-on-the franchise virus: The refusal to accept any change and the overt or covert attempt to discourage new members who may rock the boat. Explain that growth is healthy and brings change with it. Encourage him to talk to the minister or a board member about his concerns.

(Article continued on page 5)



Martha Hodges

VISION STATEMENT *We are a welcoming spiritual congregation encouraging one another on our personal journeys, embracing diversity, nurturing community, and working together for social justice. We actively promote the liberal religious principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association.*

Remember to bring fresh produce, baked goods as well as canned or packaged food and diapers to donate during Second Offering every Sunday!

FEBRUARY SERVICES

Sunday, February 5 – 11:00 AM

Effective Mental Health

Mental health expert **Joe Szoke** will speak on the challenges to our community and society for administering effective mental health care. The choir will sing.

Sunday, February 12 – 11:00 AM

The Spiritual Side of Generosity

Part of living a spiritual life is living a generous life. Come join the Alternative Worship Experience as we share stories of spirit-nurturing generosity.

Sunday, February 19 – 11:00 AM

A UU Perspective on Spirituality and Religion

There is a difference between religion and spirituality. People often come to religion looking for spirituality, but religion all too often serves to impede the spiritual, rather than promote it. We will explore what this means to us as Unitarian Universalists. Our director of lifespan religious education, **Persephone**, will speak. Special guest musician **George Eninger** will perform.

Sunday, February 26 – 11:00 AM

UU Connections

Although you are a Unitarian Universalist, you may not really feel like part of a large and diverse worldwide network of religious liberals. Sure, you get that *UU World* magazine and hear that there are others out there, but there is richness to our religion you could be missing. Find out how connecting with the wider UU community can be gratifying and fulfilling beyond measure. After the service, during coffee hour, there will be a special information fair with people to answer questions and materials to peruse.

Announcements

Place brief, written announcements in the “announcement folder” (in the MVUUF front office), no later than 10:30 AM on the Sunday of the service to have your announcement read by the worship associate. If you wish to make the announcement yourself, sign up on the form inside the folder. See the worship associate or the minister for exceptions. ***Joys & Concerns announcements are not affected by this new procedure.***

Martha Hodges, Interim Minister

Office Hours: Daily except Tuesday, call for appointment.

Email: hodges.m@att.net

Dale Bockhorst, Bookkeeper

Email: dalebockhorst@yahoo.com

Jeanette Filbrun, Choir Director

Choir Practice Wednesdays, 7:30 PM

Email: musicfil@aol.com

Barbara Kelley, Administrator

Office Hours: Monday—Thursday 9:00 AM—3:00 PM

Email: admin@mvuuf.org

Jesse Minnefield, Custodian

Persephone, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Office Hours: Sunday AM and by appointment

Email: dre@mvuuf.org

Chris Price, LRE Assistant

Office Hours: Sunday AM

Email: chris_p_rice27@yahoo.com

Barb Weber, Transition Coordinator

Office Hours: Wednesday 11 AM—1:30 PM, Sunday AM

Email: BLW622@yahoo.com

MVUUF Board of Trustees

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Dave Rengel
Vice President

Scott Leonard
Treasurer

Bill Wendel
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Joe Zimmerman
Operations Trustee

The Forum

The Forum is published monthly by the Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8690 Yankee Street, Dayton, OH 45458. Subscription price is \$20 annually and is included in membership. The Forum is edited by **Barbara Kelley** (admin@mvuuf.org). Thank you for help from **Gail Cyan** (PR Trustee), **George Henderson** (Mailer) and **Carol Narigon** (Proofreader). **The next Forum deadline is February 14.** The deadline for the Sunday bulletin is 10:00 AM on the preceding Monday.

Board and District

Summary of the Congregational Meeting of January 15, 2006

Kriss Gang, MVUUF president, called the meeting to order and welcomed all members present.

Genevieve Harvey, nominating committee chair, officially announced the slate of candidates for the ministerial search committee by making a motion. After a congregational vote, the committee was announced: John Bierman, Jim Faulconer, Sean Halpin, Alice Lizee, Jamie McQuinn, Ann Snively and Phil Wise.

The governance committee members made a presentation to the congregation providing highlights of the proposed draft governance model. Gail Cyan made a motion for a congregational vote of confidence of the proposed model and supporting the continued effort of the governance committee to go forth with the objective of presenting a final model at a congregational meeting to be held in April. Mr. Gang asked for approval of the motion. It was approved.

Bill Wendel made a motion that the MVUUF bylaws be amended to allow a six-month postponement of the election of officers and trustees. Kate Halpin seconded the motion and it was approved.

Mr. Wendel made a motion that the congregation postpone the election of officers and trustees until a special congregational meeting called for that purpose, and that the Board of Trustees set a special congregational meeting date within the bylaws parameter of six months. Dave Rengel seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried.

Maureen O'Meara made the motion to adjourn and Mr. Rengel seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bill J. Wendel

Worship Committee Meeting

The Worship Committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month. The next meeting will be held on February 7 at 7:30 PM in the Founders' Room. All are welcome.

Summary of the MVUUF Board Meeting of January 19, 2006

Bill Wendel made a motion to approve the draft fundraising policy with suggested edits discussed in this meeting. Dave Rengel seconded, and the motion passed.

Dave made a motion that the following names be removed from the official membership list: Steve Cox, Mark Heath, Teri Marconette, Walter Marconette, Krayne Porter, John Szelog, and Martie Szelog. Kate Santucci seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bill J. Wendel

Heartland Annual Meeting

The Heartland UU District Annual Meeting is scheduled for April 7-8 in Indianapolis. This is an excellent opportunity to talk with other UUs from our region, gather ideas, attend workshops and worship together.

The keynote speaker will be Angela Merkert, whom some of you may know from Mid West Leadership School. She is a wonderful speaker and very knowledgeable about churches and UUism.

The theme this year is "Sharing Ministry," and the district's "congregational meeting" is also planned. For more information about the meeting, contact **Barb Weber** or visit the district website at heartlanduu.org.

Tall Stacks 2006

The First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati has announced "Tall Stacks 2006 Weekend in Cincinnati," to be held October 6-8. Mark your calendar now for this exciting and nearby UU trip.

Imagine yourself on the banks of the Ohio River during the heyday of steamboats. Enjoy a lunch cruise on the Natchez, champion true steam-powered paddlewheeler, classic riverboats, period costumes, music and UU camaraderie.

All meals, lodging, entertaining and airport transit included in the \$260 single, \$500 double cost. Visit www.firstuu.com for additional information and to register.

News from the Nominating Committee

Our New Ministerial Search Committee

We were thrilled to present our full list of candidates for your vote at the January 15 congregational meeting, and the privilege to announce those elected was bittersweet. We are grateful to *all* the nominees for their willingness to devote a chunk of their lives to the mission of finding the best minister for our congregation. In keeping with our bylaws, we were only able to elect seven of the nominees. However, it was difficult to not choose all of the willing!

The newly elected Ministerial Search Committee consists of: **John Bierman, Jim Faulconer, Sean Halpin, Alice Lizee, Jamie McQuinn, Ann Snively, and Phil Wise.** *Be nice to these people!* They are going to be working diligently on our behalf until we have the best possible minister for our congregation, to begin in August 2007.

We want to thank **Adrienne Clark, Rita Cyr, Alysoun Taylor** and **Bev Wince.** They may be somewhat relieved that they do not carry the responsibility for this task, but they were willing and capable and we are so grateful. We admire their generosity and know they will also devote energy to the Fellowship in many other ways.

New Governance Model = New Opportunities

In response to our affirmative vote to move forward toward the new governance model, the nominating committee is now working to assure that we have competent, talented and dedicated folks for the 16 seats on the governing board and the program councils to begin this summer, to be elected on April 23. Seven of the currently elected board members are eligible and interested in "rolling over" into roles with similar responsibilities as their current trustee roles, and their names are listed after the positions. Those positions for which a member has not been elected (directly or indirectly) are listed without a name next to them:

Governing/Policy Board

President Kriss: Gang
Vice President: Dave Rengel
Secretary: Bill Wendel
Treasurer: Scott Leonard
Program Council Chair
At Large 1
At Large 2

Program Council

Communications Chair
Worship
Lifespan Religious Education:
(Current nominee: Bonnie Bazill-Davis)
Membership: Amanda Matthias-Caton
Social Concerns: Kate Santucci
Operations: Joe Zimmerman
Public Relations
Activities
Music
Program Council Chair (also sits on Board)

If you would like to be involved in the Program Council or Governing Board of MVUUF, please express your interest and qualifications in writing to the nominating committee by February 28, 2006. If you would like to suggest *someone else* for a role, please do the same, but it is helpful if you verify their willingness to serve before recommending them. Job descriptions for these roles are still in process in the Governance Committee, but we will give you as much information as is available.

We will also be working on a back-up board slate, based on the current model, which will be voted upon if the new governance model is not approved on April 23, so if you are interested in one of the above listed positions, we will also be asking you if you would serve in the current model, if appropriate.

Two positions will be open on the Nominating Committee as of this June, and we will also be seeking people who have good listening and evaluative skills for these seats. Experience with the congregation and ability to assess leadership qualities are big assets in this role. Again, contact a NC member if interested.

Nominating Committee

Thanks! Finally, I want to thank the Awesome Nominating Committee, whose work is never done. The 2005-2006 NC is: *Mary Anne Frey, Iris Carter, Mike Nelson, Kate Halpin, and Vinnie Marshall.* These folks fill a three-year term. By the end of my three years this June, I estimate that I will have participated in the placement of 41 leaders of our Fellowship (an unusually high number, due to resignations, relocations, and natural turnover), which is an incredible honor and humbling responsibility. Thank you to every one of you members and friends for your confidence and trust in our integrity and ability to work for you.

—**Genevieve Harvey**, Chair

Continued from page 1

13. The money is ugly virus: Demonstrate in actions and words that giving is a privilege and a responsibility. (This virus may require help from a specialist.)
14. The poor communication virus: When people feel left out of the loop, re-examine how news and information is shared.
15. The power trip virus: If someone is ordering folks around without authority, speaking publicly on behalf of the congregation or spending money without permission, it is up to the board to stop him.
16. The apathy virus: If the committee or project you are working on is dying from lack of participation, find out why. Would participants be happier doing something else?

A “healthy” congregation is not a congregation without “viruses;” it’s a congregation in which members recognize these behaviors for what they are and respond appropriately to contain them. Stay well!

—*Martha Hodges, Interim Minister*

A Moment in Time

One of the best-known and most influential Unitarian preachers of the 19th century was Theodore Parker. Among his many claims to fame were Parker’s radical interpretation of Christianity and his support of abolitionism. He led Boston opposition to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Most Boston Unitarian ministers refused to oppose the legislation; many believed that slavery was sanctioned by Scripture and many more feared alienating wealthy members of their congregations—shippers, merchants and mill owners who owed their prosperity to the cotton produced by slave labor. Paradoxically, Parker confessed a belief in the superiority of whites, yet pronounced the Fugitive Slave Act a violation of Christian ideals. Parker sheltered fugitives in his home and, it is said, worked with a pistol on his desk, prepared to defend them from their pursuers. He even helped finance and arm John Brown's failed attempt, in October 1859, to start a slave insurrection in Virginia. When Brown was arrested, Parker wrote a public letter defending Brown's actions and the right of slaves to kill their masters. (Adapted from “Famous UUs” on www.uua.org.)

What Does a Minister Do All Week?

Martha writes: I sometimes wonder if members of a congregation know what a minister actually does between Sunday services. I know I never had a clear idea of this until I was thinking about becoming a minister myself. (I thought it would be a good idea to find out before I committed to anything!)

This information might be useful to you, too, as you prepare to begin your search for a settled minister. So, if you’re curious, here are some highlights of a recent week as your Interim Minister.

- Monday: Drove to Kettering to meet with Barb Weber, our transition coordinator, followed by a meeting with Barb and our membership trustees (transitional and new); prepared order of service for the next Sunday; wrote my report for the congregational meeting; attended a Governance Committee meeting in the evening.
- Tuesday: My day off!
- Wednesday: Met with a member for pastoral care; met with Kriss, our congregation’s president; met with my Minister’s Support Team; facilitated “Articulating Your UU Faith” class in the evening.
- Thursday: Panini ministry; met with a couple to plan their wedding; rescheduled a staff meeting; followed up by phone and e-mail with members on pastoral matters; worked on organizing volunteer lists.
- Friday: Attended a full-day workshop in Cincinnati.
- Saturday: Facilitated a conflict resolution session with members; wrote sermon.
- Sunday: Conducted service; attended meeting.

In between meetings, I spend a good deal of time answering e-mail (like everyone else), keeping up with professional e-mail lists, chatting with staff and members who drop by, reading professional literature, preparing for meetings by making notes and writing reports and, above all, planning. I have a number of projects relating to those “5 Interim Tasks” that I work on as time allows.

Just thought you’d like to know...

Keeping Up With Members

25+ Years in Dayton Area UU Groups

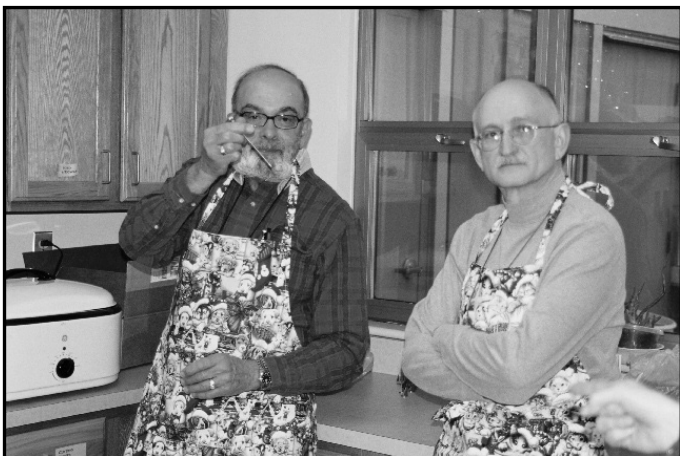
A number of our members were recognized at the Thanksgiving dinner service for their important contributions to the presence of Unitarian-Universalism in the Dayton area.

As I suspected, a few people got “lost in the shuffle.” **Chris Woodward** came forward to remind me that he is a life-long Unitarian Universalist. **Phil Wise** joined First Church in 1971 and Miami Valley Unitarian Fellowship in 1992. **Ellen Beck** first joined Miami Valley Unitarian Fellowship in 1964 and did not participate for a few years but became active again in 1984. **Jim Hudson, Sue Hudson, Maury Wyckoff, Dane Mutter, Priscilla Mutter** and **Janice Beers** have interesting stories of their own. (See the article about the Stillwater Fellowship.) We are grateful for their continued participation.

—**Ruth Rowley**

Activities Committee Meeting

Looking for a fun, easy way to get more involved with the Fellowship? Join the Activities Committee! We meet on the second Wednesday of each month at the Fellowship from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 8.



Phil and Joe, our favorites chefs, talk turkey

Welcome New Members!

Tom and Sheila Adams
Cyndi Reeves

Remembering Stillwater Unitarian Fellowship

In 1970, a group of Unitarians from MVUF and First Church, plus some other like-minded people, formed Stillwater Unitarian Fellowship. The year was the height of the first environmental movement and several of our charter members were active in environmental causes. Most of our early programs were earth-oriented. At first we met at Aullwood Farm in Butler Township. Later, we moved to Aullwood Nature Center, and we finally settled in a small building of our own in Trotwood, a former antique shop owned by member **Marty Butler**. **Chuck Thomas** and **Ken Reeves** were frequent Sunday speakers.

The Stillwater Fellowship existed from 1970 until 1990. We were small enough for the entire membership to go to Chicago for a weekend every year. We had canoe trips every spring and Kahlua-making parties. We read one-act plays and composed haiku. For RE, we milked cows and churned butter and observed lambs being born. A highlight was our natural foods dinner. We gathered day lily buds and wild asparagus, seined for crawfish and made cattail flour pancakes. **Dane Mutter** and **Ralph Scott** caught two snapping turtles and made turtle soup.

Four Stillwater charter members are now members of MVUUF: **Jim** and **Sue Hudson** and **Dane** and **Priscilla Mutter**. **Janice Beers** and **Maury Wyckoff** were also members. The women of Stillwater celebrated the birth of **Maury** and **Denise**'s firstborn **Chris**, by making him a quilt.

After struggling with declining membership, Stillwater disbanded in 1990.

—**Priscilla Mutter**



Our Christmas Dinner crowd

Thoughts From Barb...

I am so often in awe when I think about the gifts so many have given to this, our beloved community. I have been moved by the courage of ancient Unitarian martyrs who gave their lives for beliefs that we hold so freely today. I have been warmed by those who brought the Universalist good news of God's love for all to a world that believed in hell's damnation.

I have felt deep gratitude for the dedicated souls who had the vision to found our Fellowship and for those who mortgaged their own homes to buy our first building. I am thankful for those who have wrestled together to reach decisions that have guided our path through the years and for those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to create our programs.

I felt much of this during our congregational meeting this past month. I am touched by the willingness of so many to work for our good. Those who agreed to be nominated for the ministerial search committee offered us the immense gift of their time, energy, vision and discernment. We owe our gratitude to each one and our blessing and our help, when asked, to those who were elected. Their work will mold our future for years to come.

So too will the gifts of those who have worked so diligently on our new governance structure. This has been an immense undertaking, which will strengthen and renew our Fellowship as we move into the future. There is much still to be discussed and decided, and of course their recommendations may not be approved. But, whatever the final outcome, the research, discussion, vision and perseverance that got them to their clearly-presented recommendations will help us take our next steps. Those who come long after will share in the gifts they have offered us.

And what of the rest of us? Those of us whose role at the congregational meeting was to sit and listen also have gifts to bring. Whether we offer time and energy to a huge undertaking as these people have, or whether we help in more limited ways, we all contribute to shaping the future of MVUUF. Whatever our talents or our available time, it is the working together that builds this community of ours. And as we build and shape our beloved community, we shape the future. Let us work together so that those who come long after us will look back with thanks.

May it be so,

Barb



*Barb Weber
Transition Coordinator*

What Does Heartland Do for Me?

I have written before about some of the training opportunities available through the Heartland Unitarian Universalist District, of which we are a part. Today I want to focus on one specific training opportunity, Mid West Leadership School.

MWLS is a week-long intensive training program that focuses on organizational development, UU history and worship, and personal growth. While the goal of MWLS is to help participants develop skills to use in their churches, many people find these same skills helpful in their careers. Some have even received continuing education credits for attending.

MWLS has fostered effective lay leadership in our congregation by helping those who have attended:

- Develop tools to navigate change
- Learn methods for conflict resolution
- Apply elements of meaningful worship
- Network with people and resources from UU communities

Many people have found MWLS to be a wonderful learning experience offering both spiritual and intellectual enrichment. Some have said it is among the best training opportunities they have undertaken. The week offers a balance of lecture, experiential learning, small group discussion and worship. And although there is much work involved, there is also a great deal of laughter and fun. This year's school will be Saturday, July 15 to Saturday, July 22. It takes place at Beloit College in Wisconsin. The campus is beautiful and the food is excellent.

MWLS is sponsored jointly by Heartland and two other UU Districts. A number of people from MVUUF have attended Mid West Leadership School through the years. Laurie Shows, Gail Cyan and Barb Weber can all give you further information if you might be interested, or check out the website at <http://www.psduua.org/mwls/>.

Announcements

Couples Counseling Available Soon

Martha recently completed some special training in administering a couples relationship assessment program called “Prepare/Enrich.” This program comes highly recommended by several UU ministers who have used it with their congregants. It also boasts impressive statistical reliability.

The process includes an online questionnaire that identifies degrees of agreement or difference in a variety of areas such as financial matters and family goals, as well as strengths and areas of growth based on characteristics of the families of origin and styles of managing conflict. It is intended primarily for couples considering marriage, but can also be used with couples who are already married. Life Innovations, the company that designed and processes the questionnaires, charges \$40 for the service, but there is no charge for the counseling sessions with Martha—usually six—that accompany the questionnaire.

These sessions are opportunities to discuss issues raised in the evaluation and to help couples to communicate more clearly about their expectations, hopes and anxieties. Let Martha know if you think this program might benefit you and your partner.

Panini Ministry Going Strong

Martha is waiting for *you* to join her for **brunch every Thursday at 11:00 AM at Panera**, located on Route 725. Please drop by between 11:00 AM and 12:00 noon for coffee—they’ve got great coffee—a bite to eat and fellowship.

INTERWEAVE

INTERWEAVE, a support/discussion group for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) people and their allies meets at the Fellowship at 7:00 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, September through May. Contact **Joe Law** (joe_k_law@yahoo.com) for more information.

Volunteer Opening

WANTED: A volunteer to change the lettering on the bulletin board inside the main entrance each month. It takes about an hour to an hour and a half, once a month, around the first day of the month. Will train! Contact **Jim Farinet** at 293-3014 or jimfarinet@ameritech.net for more details. It is a great way for someone with limited time to provide a real service to our Fellowship.

UUA Conference in Phoenix

A UU conference for midsize congregations (like ours) is planned for March 2-5 in Phoenix, Arizona. *Congregational Change is Personal: Meeting People Where They Are and Moving On*, aims to help participants ask and answer questions that are central to midsize church organizations, including what we are and aren’t willing to do to encourage growth, what steps to take to insure financial stability now and in the years ahead, what methods of governing are the most effective, how to nurture our many generations, and how to find our place in the larger community.

The conference will offer dozens of workshops to help churches support their mission, cultivate growth, and attract and retain members. See the full description and register online at <http://www.uua.org/cde/midsize2006/>.

Fees, including accommodations at the Hyatt Regency Phoenix and most meals, range from \$435-600 per person, excluding travel.

Walker Groups Expand

Second Sunday Walkers

The walker groups have added another walking opportunity. Join **Jeni Cullen** at the front door after the second Sunday of each month (February 12 this month) to organize the drive to a local park for a Sunday afternoon hike. This month, the hike will take place at Cox Arboretum. Be sure to wear your walking shoes and dress weather-appropriate. Remember, the walks are as short or as long as the walkers decide and the group accommodates walkers of every capability.

Third Tuesday Walkers

With the darkness coming earlier this time of year, the Third Tuesday Walkers are walking in local neighborhoods. All are welcome to join the walk on February 21. The walks still start at 5:30 PM, from **Jeni Cullen’s** house in Miamisburg, and will go through the neighborhood and continue (weather permitting) up to the Miamisburg Mound for a beautiful view of the city at night.

If it is very snowy or icy, the walks will either be cancelled or modified to weather conditions. The groups will walk unless it is really treacherous. If you have questions or need directions, contact **Jeni Cullen** at floyd287@cs.com or 859-7972.

The 2006 Service Auction Needs You

**Saturday
March 11
6:30—9:30 PM
At the Fellowship**

Plan to attend the MVUUF Service Auction! This is not just one of our biggest social events of the year, it is also our biggest fundraiser of the year, and we need everyone's help to make it a success.

First, we need your donations! Newcomers might ask, "what kind of donations?" People donate both services and items. Example services include: hosting a dinner for eight people, hosting a party with board games for twelve people, hosting a picnic on a hiking trail for six people, computer tech support for four hours, handyman services for a day, pet-sitting or house-sitting, a one-hour yoga lesson. Be creative! Other folks prefer to donate items such as baked goods, arts/crafts or collectibles. (Please save "white elephant" items for the spring sale in May.)

Second, if you can help with the party or the auction, volunteers are needed. We especially need folks to watch the kids in 30-minute shifts, and two people to coordinate the kid-watching schedule. We also need some folks to keep the serving tables stocked with food from the kitchen.

Please complete this form and **return it to *Bill Wendel* or the MVUUF office no later than Sunday, February 12** so we can include your donation in the auction catalog. Questions? Call *Scott Leonard*.

Name

Phone

Email address

Description of the service(s) or items you will donate: _____

If donation is an event (meal, party, hike, etc.), specify the number of guests _____ and the date _____ or Date To Be Determined .

If your item is a baked good or something similar, indicate if it will be available the night of the auction or a future date .

Will you require a minimum bid? (optional, NOT recommended) \$ _____

I can help by: Preparing food for kids Watching kids in a 30-minute shift

Set-up Clean up Catalog production (folding, mailing) Publicity

February ChaliceLight Gallery

The works of award-winning Ohio artist **Joan E. Effertz** are proudly featured by the ChaliceLight Gallery through the month of February. Joan received her art degree from the University of Dayton and holds advanced degrees from the University of Cincinnati and the Pratt Institute in New York. Her works have been featured in exhibits around the country.

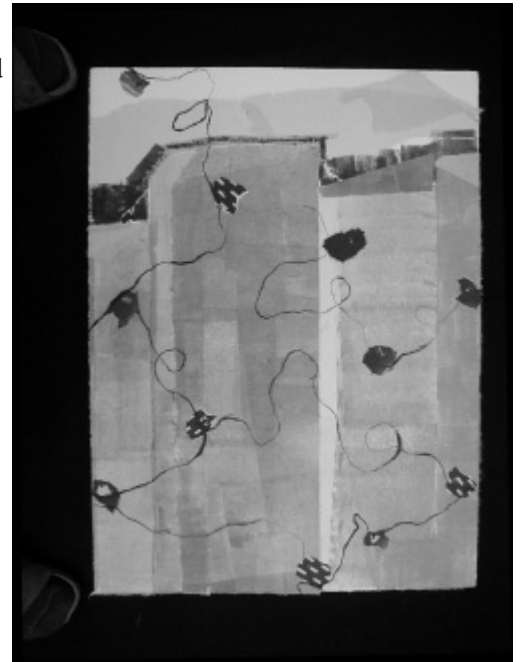
Joan says of her 2005 solo exhibit, *Tower of Babel*, “Current events and the similarity of the world today to a story from the Old Testament are the inspiration for this body of work. The exhibition title comes from the Old Testament story in Genesis: the people of the world decided that they wanted to know God better and become more divine. They worked together to build a high tower, but God became angered by this. He divided the people by making each one speak a different language. They were unable to communicate with each other, and abandoned their common project.

As I look at the world today, I perceive that people are still stuck in this same place. Religion, among other issues, divides us. Since the dawn of time, people have expressed a belief in supernatural and divine powers. Today, the issue of religion has given rise to fundamentalism and fanaticism. Each group insists on the singular correctness of its own position, sometimes using force to bring home its point. We are unable to speak a common language.

Is world peace a goal? What does it take to achieve this?

I have designed this work to be accessible from several levels. Color, texture, and the images of flowers and buildings have been used in a manner that most people find familiar and comfortable. At another level I want people to question the reasons for our divisions, and to design positive courses of action. What does it take to develop a common language?”

Be sure to take time to view selected works from Joan Effertz through the month of February.



Selection from Tower of Babel exhibit

Community Wind Symphony

The public is invited to the Community Wind Symphony with Kenneth Kohlenberg conducting, at the Sinclair Community College Blair Hall Theatre. Amy Porter will be the guest flute soloist. The master class will be held on Friday, February 3 at 4:00 PM. The concert is Saturday, February 4 at 8:00 PM and admission is free.

CineManiacs— 3rd Sunday Evening, February 19

If you're wild about art films, join CineManiacs on the third Sunday of each month at The Neon Movies for the 5—5:30ish showing. Since the Neon Movie schedule is sometimes rather last minute, the title and time will be electronically sent on the Thursday prior to the Sunday event. After the movie we'll meet in the Neon lobby cafe for fellowship and a discussion. Everyone is welcome to join us—friends, family, colleagues. If you have questions, call **Trudy Krisher** at 293-7131 or **Lindy McDonough** at 278-1493.

UU Coaching Network

The UU Coaching Network (UUCN) is growing and invites you to join! This nonprofit association is a community of professionally trained life coaches anchored in the UU principles of compassion, integrity and inclusion. To learn of its mission and how you can benefit from membership, visit their website at uucoachingnetwork.org. If you are considering hiring a coach, UUCN is also a resource to find the right coach for you.

A Spot of Beauty

Members wishing to provide flowers for the altar for one of the Sunday services are asked to contact Barbara Kelley in the office (436-3628 or admin@mvuuf.org) to schedule. If the flowers are in memory of someone or to celebrate an occasion, please tell Barbara. The flower donors and occasion will be listed in the Sunday bulletin. Donors should feel free to take the flowers home following the service.

Calling All Grocery Shoppers

Do you shop at Kroger, Dorothy Lane, or Meijer? Your purchases can earn money for the Fellowship without costing you a cent. We have just restocked on Kroger and Dorothy Lane cards. Meijer applications are always available.

Look for me or another grocery card salesperson at the table in the Gathering Space or give me a call to order a card.

Kroger has the easiest system, and returns 4% of our recharge amounts monthly to the Fellowship. Three steps and we earn money every month from your purchases.

- All you do is purchase a Kroger gift card for \$5.
- On your first trip to Kroger, you get \$5 of groceries free. Add to your \$5 card and then use it as a debit card.
- When it runs low, recharge your card at Kroger (with cash, credit card, debit card or check)—even in the checkout lane—before you check out your groceries.

Many of you already have Kroger gift cards—remember to recharge them and use them when you shop. Remember, they're not the same as your Kroger Plus key tag.

Dorothy Lane offers two programs that benefit the Fellowship, **Gift Cards** and the **Community Rewards Program**:

(1) The new Dorothy Lane **gift cards** have a declining balance; they can be used until you have spent all your money but cannot be recharged. We currently sell them in denominations of \$20 and \$50. The Fellowship receives 5% for all cards sold.

(2) In addition to these cards, Dorothy Lane offers to all shoppers a **Good Neighbors program** for donations to a favorite charity. You must re-register for 2006 for the Fellowship to get credit for your purchases.

Meijer no longer sells gift cards or certificates. For their program, you apply for a special card for their **Community Rewards Program** (applications available on the desk in the Gathering Space). They return from 1.5% for a family's purchase of \$200 a month to 5% for those who purchase more than \$800 a month.

—**Maureen O'Meara**, Grocery Cards Fundraiser Chair

Transition Team Up and Running

Soon after Martha arrived here, she asked our transition coordinator to suggest some people who might be effective members of our Transition Team—a group charged with helping her to see the “big picture” of how our interim ministry together is going. This group consists of **Barb Weber, Judy Rengel, Sean Halpin, Darren Parker, Judy Pickett, Trudy Krisher, Joyce Cameron** and **Mike Nelson**.

They have now met twice. They have reviewed priorities and discussed how they can better communicate our progress as a congregation.

Joyce Cameron has designed a lovely mandala, representing the five interrelated “interim tasks” and the collaboration of the congregation, lay leadership, staff and interim minister working together to accomplish them. *Mandala* is Sanskrit for circle, polygon, community or connection, so it is a nice visual demonstration of how we will work together on the interim tasks. Look for the mandala poster to be displayed at the Fellowship sometime soon.

Fellowship Gourmets

Travel around the world with the Fellowship Gourmets on the last weekend of every month. Please RSVP to **Ruth Rowley** at 296-0865 or rowleyruth@aol.com.

Saturday, February 25, 6:00 PM and

Sunday, February 26, after the service

Amar India (Indian cuisine, 2759 Miamisburg-Centerville Road, 439-9005) Entrees range from \$8—\$14.

Saturday, March 25, 6:00 PM and

Sunday, March 26, after the service

Peerless Mill Inn (319 S. 2nd Street, Miamisburg, 866-5968) Entrees range from \$16—\$24.

There's nothing wrong with good ol' American food once in a while.

—**Ruth Rowley**

If Pots and Pans Were Wishes

We have a collection of pots, pans, casserole dishes, plastic containers, and various other kitchen items left over from events, lunches and *The Other Place* donations. Please check out the open wooden shelves in the kitchen to the far left of the stove. We don't have room to store all of these items, so it would be very helpful if you would claim those that belong in your home. **Unclaimed items will be donated at the end of February.**

Concerning Social Concerns

Wanted: Your ideas for a Social Justice Focus

The Social Concerns Committee, along with support from the board, has decided to select a *social justice focus* that will be a long-term focus for the congregation. Choosing a focus will not restrict us from participating in social justice activities outside of the focus area. However, we hope that choosing a long-term focus will establish a mission that allows us to be more effective, engage the congregation as a whole, and make us known in the larger community for our commitment to social justice. The Social Concerns Committee would like your ideas for this long-term *social justice focus*. You can submit your ideas to **Heather Wendel**, social concerns chair (bill@billwendel.com or 667-8897), **Kate Santucci**, social concerns trustee (kate@donet.com or 256-5016), or you can drop a note in the box by the social concerns board in the Gathering Space. Please submit ideas by February 19. Thank you!

Souper Bowl Sunday

At Thanksgiving and Christmas time, people donate a lot to the needy, but sometimes they are forgotten the rest of the year. Many people get to eat tons of food while watching the Super Bowl, but we think that the homeless and hungry should have food to eat, too. So, please bring canned soup or stew to the Fellowship on Souper/Souper Bowl Sunday, February 5.

—6th and 7th grade Sunday School class

The Other Place

MVUUF has an ongoing commitment to serve lunch at *The Other Place* (840 South Patterson Boulevard) on the second Saturday of each month. *The Other Place* is a day shelter with the mission of actively countering all causes and conditions of homelessness through advocacy, education and service.

We are always in need of volunteers to help out by signing up to bring food on the second Saturday (11:30 AM at *The Other Place*). Look for the sign-up sheet in the Gathering Space. Our efforts feed approximately 200 people. February's meal will be beef stew, cornbread and cold vegetable salads, milk and juice. If you are willing to help on February 11, sign up on the clipboard after service or call **Diane Dover** (426-0166) to coordinate your donation. You'll be preparing a dish to serve 15-20 people. Food needs to be ready to serve (hot foods hot) when donated. Your help is needed and will be so appreciated!

Urban Hunger Project Update

The Urban Hunger Project is in full swing, and we're making a lot of progress. Since August, we have accomplished the following:

- Gifts from Our Gardens Project: Bushels of fresh fruit and vegetables given to local food pantries.
- Second Offering: Continuing our gifts of food by bringing canned goods and non-perishables to the Fellowship each week. Our regular contributions to the food pantries have increased enormously!
- Letter Writing Party: Over 15 participants sent over 40 letters to elected officials regarding issues related to hunger.
- Diaper Drive: Beginning New Year's Eve and continuing through January 15, we collected dozens of packages of diapers to assist families through the East Dayton Emergency Services Pantry.

Thanks to you, we have done well in our efforts to help alleviate hunger in the Dayton area. Upcoming projects include: the **Soup Supper, to be held April 1, 2006** (moved back from the original date of February 4), a neighborhood food-bag drive and the return of the Gifts from Our Gardens project in the summer. Look for the notice on this page from the sixth- and seventh-grade class about their **Souper Bowl Sunday** project! Thanks for all your involvement, and remember how appreciated your Second Offerings on Sundays are!

Hurricane Update

To support relief and recovery efforts, UUSC joined with the UUA to establish the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund to benefit victims of the gulf coast hurricanes. Join UUSC as we act from our hearts and share of our bounty. And join with us as we raise our voices to demand that the government response to the tragedy respect and protect the basic human rights of those who are enduring the nightmare. However you act, do so now! For more information, visit the UUSC website at www.uusc.org.

Get Involved

A great way to get involved is to join the Social Concerns Committee! We meet on the fourth Monday of the month at the Fellowship, at 7:00 PM. Our next meeting will be held on February 27. Contact **Kate Santucci** (Kate@donet.net) for more information.

Sponsor a Guest at Your Table this Winter!

February 12 to March 19, 2006

The *Guest at Your Table* program begins on February 12 with the AWE “Generosity” service. **The campaign will end on March 19, when our contributions will be sent to the UUSC.**

The UUSC, its history, and you

This program serves as the annual fundraiser for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, founded in 1939 to respond to the needs of refugees for the Nazi holocaust. In the fall of 2005, *Guest at Your Table* celebrated 30 years of UU faith in action, helping people who struggle for basic human rights both in the U.S. and around the world.

How does it work?

Guest at Your Table allows you and your family to sponsor an international visitor by donating once a day as you eat your main meal. Children and families will receive brightly-colored boxes for their donations.

Guest at Your Table, however, is not just for families or for loose coins. How many dollars worth of food would you be willing to offer for protecting the human rights of your guest —international or domestic--if he or she really could share a family meal with you? \$1.00, \$2.00, \$5.00?

If you prefer to give a check, why not figure out in advance your guest’s food budget for the month the program lasts? Adults may opt for an envelope provided by the UUSC rather than a box to turn in a contribution. Make your check out to UUSC, but return it to the Fellowship, so that I can total our contributions before sending them to the UUSC in Cambridge.

With a \$40.00 donation (\$20 Seniors and \$10 for Students and Youth), you become a member of UUSC, our own faith-based voice for Human Rights. Donations of \$75 or more, from a family or individual, are matched by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock.

Last year, our congregation earned a “Creating Justice” banner through donations that totaled \$2850. Let’s make this a banner year again, to address the social justice needs of our country and world.

—*Maureen O’Meara*

UUSC Programming

UUSC advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. They carry out this mission by combining partnerships, advocacy, and education and training the next generation of social justice advocates.

UUSC believes that there is a clear interconnection between human rights violations and gender, race, ethnicity and poverty. Oppressed and vulnerable groups, already suffering from human rights abuse and often from social and economic problems, have increasingly become the victims of oppressive governments, corrupt officials and irresponsible corporations. These same groups—including women and children—are at great risk in conflict and post-conflict situations and are in desperate need of international support.

UUSC partners with community-based organizations to provide people with the knowledge, training and strategies needed to attain their full rights and to meaningfully participate in decisions that affect them. Ordinary citizens have enormous reservoirs of will and talent for addressing their countries’ seemingly intractable problems. Women, in particular, have a fundamental role in the preservation of peace in any community. It is these groups that will be vital players in ensuring that people within their own communities will live in peace with dignity and justice.

UUSC focuses human rights efforts in four major program areas: environmental justice, economic justice, civil liberties and humanitarian crises. To learn more about the programs, visit www.uusc.org, call 800-388-3920, or e-mail programs@uusc.org.

UUSC JustWorks Camps

UUSC volunteers will spend February 6-10 in Louisiana working on three projects: Clean up Resurrection School, a multi-cultural elementary school; a multi-task project for a PICO-WIN group, supported by the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund; and a clean up and multi-task project for a UU congregation in New Orleans. The project moves to Mississippi on March 6-10 for similar efforts. Wouldn’t you like to help with this vital effort? See the UUSC website (www.uusc.org) for more details and application to participate.

Lifespan Religious Education

Join a Covenant Group

Are you looking for a way to connect to other members of MVUUF? Would you like to explore your religious issues and develop your spirituality in safe, supportive, small-group environment? If so, the MVUUF covenant group program may be for you.

Covenant groups consist of approximately six to ten members each. They meet regularly on a set night of the week, usually once every two weeks, but at least once a month. Each group has created a covenant based on their own preferences. Covenants include agreements about such questions as how often to meet, whether to have a meal and how to handle child care. As part of the covenant group program, all groups are asked to include certain features in their covenants. For example, each group is asked to perform at least one group service project.

Groups are facilitated by teams of two trained facilitators. The role of the facilitator is to help ensure that covenant groups remain a safe experience for all group members, including ensuring that the groups function well, that each person is heard and that the groups abide by their covenants with each other. The covenant group program provides session plans to help structure group discussions. Initially, the facilitators themselves will usually guide the discussion, but groups often decide to rotate that responsibility among all the members of the group.

If you are interested in joining a covenant group or would like additional information, please contact **Alysoun Taylor**. You can reach her at 432-0727 or email her at alysoun.taylor@sbcglobal.net.

MVUUF Daytime Book Club

The Daytime Book Club meets on a Wednesday each month at the Fellowship at 10:30 AM in the Founders' Room. We discuss the book of the month and then go to lunch together. This is an open group and newcomers are welcome. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to attend. Call **Carol Vincent** (433-1774) or **Sylvia Wince** (435-5079) for further information.

- February 22—*1776*, by David McCullough
- March 22—*Pope Joan*, by Donna Cross
- April 26—*The World is Flat*, by Thomas Friedman

Check Out Our Library

As the new MVUUF library coordinator, I would like to give you a little tour of the Richard Venus Library. Walk in the door and step to the right. There, you will see a large freestanding bookcase. This is the “Take a Book, Give a Book” area. Any donated books go here and anyone is free to either swap books or donate a small amount for the book. Paperbacks are 50¢ and hardback books are \$1.00 each. The books remain on the shelf for about a month before they are donated to Planned Parenthood.

Now turn to face the opposite wall to view our large selection of books, videos, cassette tapes, CDs and DVDs. We also have CDs and tapes of past sermons. There is a binder with instructions for checking out the CDs. (Thanks, **Pat Santucci!**) The check-out procedure is on the honor system.

Some of the titles currently in the library are, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich and *Redneck Nation: How the South Really Won the War* by Michael Graham. We also have many books on various religions and Unitarian Universalism in particular.

Please come in and take a look, you never know what you may find on the pages of a book.

—**Adrienne Clark**

The Women's Group

The Women's Group meets every Sunday at 9:30 AM. We come together to meet new women, to speak about how we are feeling and to listen to each other.

Through the end of this month, the Women's Group will be studying *Voluntary Simplicity*, a discussion course through the Northwest Earth Institute.

Some of the things included in the discussion will be money, possessions, time and material consumption. The varied readings will be from Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Wendell Berry, Thich Nhat Hanh, Paul Hawken and many more.

Contact **Linda Yoder** for more information, or just drop in.

“*Live simply so that others may simply live.*”

—**Gandhi**



The Path of Your Spiritual Journey

Sometimes I'll be driving down the road—listening to the radio, having a conversation, or maybe just be deep in my own thoughts—and I realize a second or so too late that the road I'm passing is the one I should have taken. The way I'm going will get me there, it'll just take a little longer. Maybe I'll have to turn around and backtrack to get back to where I need to be. Or sometimes I take a road or certain route knowing that it's not the best one, but not knowing how to go any other way. And then there are those times that I take the same route over and over, not being aware that there is another way at all. If I continue driving the same way, these things will never change.

How analogous this is of our spiritual journey! How often do we go through our lives, distracted by everything around us, not paying any attention to what we're doing or where we're going? We go to church, serve on committees, take care of our kids, pay the bills and before we know it we've gone through days or weeks or even years without attending to our souls. Sometimes we keep doing the same old things that really don't work for us, but we don't really know what else to do. I

would say this happens a lot for people who grow up in a religion like Christianity or Islam. I spent a few years in my early twenties trying to find what I needed in the Evangelical Christianity that I knew. Finally, I realized this didn't work for me.

As Unitarian Universalists, we are fortunate enough that our religious tradition teaches us there are many ways, roads, paths that we can take. If we pay attention, ask questions, engage in dialogue with others and try out new things, we will find our path. Now here's the downside. Because nobody tells us which way to go, we often find ourselves not going anywhere. Oh, we go to church, we vote at meetings, we volunteer for things, and of course these are great things to do. But they do not necessarily mean that we are doing things to find truth, to see what is real. They do not mean that we are trying to lead a genuine life. They do not mean we are living with mindfulness, compassion, gentleness and depth. And they do not mean we are living with a sense of connection to the world around us, to all of existence. Sometimes we find ourselves driving down the road, so preoccupied with everything else that we miss our path. Or we don't take time to listen to others' experiences or try a new way, so we keep doing the same old things that may be getting us by, but we have no idea if there's a better way for us to go.

My challenge to you (and myself!) is to pay more attention. Look for ways to encourage in yourself compassion and gentleness toward others and yourself. Seek out a practice that encourages mindfulness. Listen to someone else's experience, find out what other people do to nurture the spirit. Let us yearn to be people who live with awareness, compassion and love.

*Blessings,
Persephone*

New Adult RE Class!

What: *Exploring Spiritual Practice*

When: *7:00 PM February 9 through April 27* (six classes, second and fourth Thursdays)

Why: To discuss what spiritual practice is, discover why it is so important, and explore many of the myriad spiritual practices available to us, with the goal of each person finding a practice that is meaningful for her or him.

This class will be taught by *Persephone* and is a hands-on, experiential class. It will involve reading prior to class, occasional preparation before class, and outside communication with other members of the class on our off-weeks. The book we will be using is *Everyday Spiritual Practice*, edited by Scott Alexander. Contact Persephone at dre@mvuuf.org or call the office if you would like to take the class.

Community Class

The Community Class is an adult group that meets every Sunday morning from 9:30—10:45 AM in the Founders' Room for fellowship and thought-provoking discussion. This is a chance to speak your mind or say nothing at all. Please join us—you will be welcome!

Sunday, February 5

"This I Believe" Based on the National Public Radio series of the same name, for which Americans from all walks of life, including Bill Gates, Gloria Steinem and Studs Turkel, write short essays on what they believe. We will discuss three or four of the more interesting ones. Moderator: *Mike O'Brien*

Sunday, February 12

"How Valuable is Life?" How important is quality at the beginning, end and middle of life? Are civilian and military casualties of war merely collateral damage? How does the world value the thousands killed in earthquakes and tsunamis or the millions who die of starvation? This eternal question just won't go away and here's a chance to reconsider the answer.

Moderator: *Ben Olive*

Sunday, February 19

"Why Does He Do That?: inside the minds of angry and controlling men," by Lundy Bancroft, 2003. A discussion based on the book about abusive men and the women who take the abuse. Bancroft is the former co-director of Emerge, the nation's first program for abusive men, and has specialized in domestic violence for 15 years. Moderator: *Tom Brown*

Sunday, February 26

"The End of Faith" is a discussion based on the controversial book of the same name. This first book by Sam Harris, an expert in philosophy and neuroscience, warns against the encroachment of organized religion into world politics and calls for truly modern ethics and spirituality that are both secular and humanistic. Moderator: *Mike Nelson*

First Thursday Theological Society

The First Thursday Theological Society will meet at 7:30 PM in the Founders' Room on February 2 to continue the discussion of *Being Liberal in an Illiberal Age* by Jack Mendelsohn. Chapters 4 through 6 will be discussed. Chapter topics are "What Do You Say After You Say 'I'm a Unitarian Universalist?'," "How Did We Get This Way?," and "Christian or More than Christian?" New participants are welcome. Contact *Ann Snively* if you would like more information.

Meeting Nights Change for Smart Choices

The Smart Choices group now meets the second and fourth Monday nights. We begin at 7:30 PM and go till 9:00 PM. The purpose of the session is to have fun, to enhance our lives in some way and share the fellowship of each other's company. It is open to anyone.

We ended up reading *Under Milk Wood*, by Dylan Thomas in our January sessions, so we will do "show and tell" on **Monday, February 13**. Bring an item or items that you would like to share with the group in some way.

On **Monday, February 27**, we will meet at the Fellowship at 6:00 PM and car pool to the Hacienda Grande Restaurant on Alex Road, just off Miamisburg-Centerville Road, west of the Dayton Mall. If you cannot be there in time to car pool, meet us at the restaurant. We'll save you a seat. Call *Sylvia Wince* for more information at 435-5079.

Poetic Insights

Poetic Insights will meet at 1:00 PM on February 26 at the Wince's house. Bring a sack lunch; drinks will be provided. Can't rhyme? No problem. Most of us write free verse or just a stream of consciousness. Attendees take turns volunteering to come up with a "prompt" each month, then we write, using the suggested prompt as a jumping off place. We share our rough drafts afterwards and we stop at 3:00 PM.

Spelling doesn't count and it is okay to veer far from the topic, if one wishes to do so. Y'all come! All are invited.

Men's Group

The Men's Group meets the first and third Sundays of each month at 9:15 AM in the Richard Venus Library for fellowship and discussion. All men age 16 and older are welcome to attend.

Evening Book Discussion Group

The Evening Book Discussion Group will hold the February meeting on the 14th at 7:00 PM at *Diane Dover's* house. The book selection is *Gone to Soldiers* by Marge Piercy. In March, the meeting will be on the 14th at *Kathleen Pennington's* house for a discussion of *All Souls: a Family Story from Southie* by Michael Patrick McDonald. New participants are welcome. It's not necessary to come to every meeting. People are welcome to drop in and participate any time they are interested in the book being discussed. Contact *Ann Snively* if you would like more information.

Our Favorite Books of 2005

Recommended by Community Class members:

Alaska, by James Michener, 1988. Fascinating historical novel about the development of Alaska from prehistoric times to modern day. I learned so many things about Alaska that I didn't know—indigenous peoples, Russian settlement, American politics, exploitation, fur trading, gold rush, salmon industry, dog sledding, glaciers and more. Recommended by *Lindy McDonough*.

Contacts: Interpersonal Communication in Theory, Practice and Context, by Teri Gamble and Michael Gamble, 2005. College textbook on interpersonal communication that made me think about the way I express myself to others. Recommended by *Bill Ross*.

The DaVinci Code, by Dan Brown, 2005. Current best seller. A fast read. Can't put it down. Several underlying themes coming together to explode into an end that will never end the questioning.

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick, 1968. A science fiction novel about life after a world war where very few animals are left alive and its effect on humans. Inspiration for the movie *Blade Runner*. Recommended by *Becky Gormley*.

The End of Faith: religion, terror, and the future of reason, by Sam Harris, 2005. A case for why faith itself is the most dangerous element of modern life, why we shouldn't suspend reason for religious faith and alternate approaches to the mysteries of life. Recommended by *Bev Wince, John Bohley, Mike O'Brien* and *Bill Ross*.

The Fractal Murders, by Mark Cohen, 2004. First in a series of Pepper Keane mysteries. Engaging story with adventure, humor, and surprises. Cohen "teaches" the math encountered in an interesting way. Recommended by *Harvey Scott*.

Give Me a Break: how I exposed hucksters, cheats, and scam artists and became the scourge of the liberal media, by John Stossel, 2004. Recommended by *Jim Faulconer*.

The Historical Jesus, by Bart Ehrman. 24 taped lectures also available in book or transcript form, from The Teaching Company www.teach12.com. Fascinating historical/cultural study attempting to uncover what can be known about the historical Jesus. Recommended by *John Bohley*.

The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini, 2003. Story about a father and son and their two servants, a man and a boy, living in Afghanistan during the last half of the 20th century. Recommended by *Carol Vincent, Jim Faulconer, Becky Gormley*.

Mao: The Unknown Story, by Jung Chang, 2005. Excellent biography! Well researched! Surprising and alarming portrait of one of the 20th century's most destructive tyrants. Recommended by *Trudy Krisher*.

The Mermaid Chair, by Sue Monk Kidd, 2005. Very unusual religious novel about a married woman and her relationships with a Benedictine monk and her mother with a tormented past. Recommended by *Elfi Purkey*.

Mythmaker: Paul and the Invention of Christianity, by Hyam Maccoby, 1986. How the disciple Paul used his mystic experiences of Jesus to preach a form of Christianity in contrast to those of James, the brother of Jesus, and Peter and others of Jesus' acquaintances.

Peter Lovesey mysteries. English author's excellent mystery series about a gruff police detective named Peter Diamond. Recommended by *Jim Faulconer*.

Red Sky at Morning: America and the crisis of the global environment, by James Gustav Speth, 2004. Examines the worsening environmental and ecological situation in the world and the need for immediate action.

A Short History of Myth, by Karen Armstrong, 2005. The importance of myth to our ancestors and ourselves and how our understanding (of the subject) has changed. Recommended by *Mike O'Brien*.

The Stand, by Stephen King, 1978. The human race is wiped out by a government invented super flu. The remaining survivors take sides in a classic battle between good and evil. My all-time favorite book. Recommended by *Alex Moreda*.

When Religion Becomes Evil, by Charles Kimball, 2003. Powerful review of the dangers he sees as inherent in religion. It explores topics like absolute truth claims, blind obedience, the end justifies any means, and holy war. Recommended by *John Bohley*.

Why Does He Do That?: inside the minds of angry and controlling men, by Lundy Bancroft 2003. About abusive men and the women who take the abuse. Opened my eyes to a hidden world. Recommended by *Tom Brown*.

MVUUF February 2006

Bring fresh produce, baked goods, canned and packaged food and diapers to donate during Second Offering every Sunday!

Wed	1	Choir Practice 7:30 PM
Thurs	2	Panini Ministry (Panera) 11 AM First Thursday 7:30 PM
Fri	3	
Sat	4	
Sun	5	Men's Group 9:15 AM Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>Effective Mental Health</i> —Joe Szoke 11 AM YRUU 6:30 PM REMEMBER SOUPER BOWL <i>Canned Soup Collection Today</i>
Mon	6	Music Committee 6:45 PM
Tue	7	Worship Committee 7:30 PM
Wed	8	Activities Meeting 7:00 PM Articulating Your Faith 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM
Thurs	9	Panini Ministry (Panera) 11 AM Exploring Spiritual Practices 7:00 PM
Fri	10	
Sat	11	The Other Place Meal 11:30 AM
Sun	12	Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>Spiritual Generosity</i> —AWE 11 AM Guest At Your Table Kick-Off Second Sunday Walkers 12:15 Governance Feedback Meeting 12:30 PM YRUU 6:30 PM <i>Remember Second Offering Donation</i>
Mon	13	Smart Choices 7:30 PM
Tues	14	FORUM DEADLINE Evening Book Club 7:00 PM (offsite)
Wed	15	Articulating Your Faith 7:00 PM INTERWEAVE 7:00 PM Choir Practice 7:30 PM

Thurs	16	Panini Ministry (Panera) 11 AM Board of Trustees Meeting 7:00 PM
Fri	17	
Sat	18	
Sun	19	Men's Group 9:15 AM Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>UU Spirituality</i> —Persephone 11:00 AM Cinemaniacs—Neon Movies 5 PM Remember Second Offering Donation <i>Vacate church 2:30—6:30 PM wedding rental</i>
Mon	20	Governance Committee 7:00 PM
Tues	21	Third Tuesday Walkers 5:30 (offsite)
Wed	22	Daytime Book Club 10:30 Choir Practice 7:30 PM
Thurs	23	Panini Ministry (Panera) 11 AM Exploring Spiritual Practices 7:00 PM
Fri	24	Game Night 7:00 PM
Sat	25	Fellowship Gourmets— <i>Amar India</i> 6 PM
Sun	26	Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>UU Connections</i> —Martha Hodges 11 AM Governance Feedback Meeting 12:30 PM Fellowship Gourmets— <i>Amar India</i> 12:30 PM Poetic Insights 1:00 PM (Wince's) YRUU 6:30 PM Remember Second Offering Donation
Mon	27	Social Concerns 7:00 PM Smart Choices 7:30 PM
Tues	28	Last day to retrieve your pots & pans

Mark Your Calendar!

Welcoming Congregation Starts March 1
Service Auction—March 11
Soup Supper—April 1
HUUD District Annual Meeting—April 7-9

MIAMI VALLEY UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
8690 Yankee Street
Dayton, Ohio 45458



- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The 7 UU Principles

FEBRUARY 2006

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