



Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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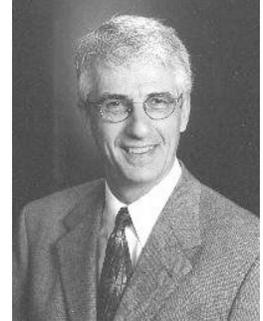
Email: admin@mvuuf.org <http://mvuuf.org>

January, 2004
Vol. LI No. 5

The Forum

Richard's Reflections

In this space at this time last year I wrote that news reports were saying U.S. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott did not have the votes to continue in his leadership post because he was in trouble for his remarks in support of another Senator, Strom Thurmond, who ran on a racist, segregationist ticket some 50 years ago. Well, Mr. Lott continues as a leader in the Senate, but he must be wondering about his support of Senator Thurmond whose black-skinned daughter has just announced that he is her father. Such are the ways of this bigot and deceiver who was reelected many times and whose views on African-Americans were well known and used in his many election campaigns. In addition, history shows how Mr. Lott campaigned for archsegregationist candidates, as well as anti-busing and discriminatory legislation throughout his tenure in office. I believe Senator Lott owes the U.S. citizenry an apology for his behavior and for his support of the now deceased Senator Thurmond.



Rev. Richard Venus

As the anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther King, Jr. approaches we can be heartened by the progress we have made because of Dr. King's life. Let us also be attentive to what we can still do to make greater Dayton a caring welcoming place.

Richard

IT WAS A WONDERFUL EVENT— MVUUF'S ANNUAL WASSAIL CELEBRATION

Thanks to *Jeanette Filbrun*, choir director, who got out of her sick-bed to attend; *Linda Daniel*, pianist; the choir for music that charmed the ears; all those who decorated the gathering space and brought wonderful treats to share; and to *Lindy McDonough* and *Mike Nelson* who stayed late to clean up afterwards.

OUR MISSION:

The Miami Valley Unitarian Fellowship, a Unitarian Universalist congregation, is a community of individuals who honor human diversity and respect religious differences, and is a supportive, accepting fellowship where people of all ages may grow spiritually, intellectually and emotionally, and create ethical solutions to social problems by sharing time, talents, and personal resources.

Saturday and Sunday Programs

Saturday, January 3—5:00 P.M.

During this service we will create a mural that depicts what is spiritual to us. (Due to the busy holiday season we will have only the service followed by a coffee field trip to Borders. The coffeehouse concerts will resume on February 7 with the renaissance revel.)

Sunday, January 4—11:00 A.M.

“To Be Born Again.” In some religious circles being born again is to find one self in a new relationship with God. On this Sunday, *Richard Venus* will speak to being born again as we shed old habits, old pain, and find a renewed sense of life.

Sunday, January 11—11:00 A.M.

“A Faith for the 21st Century.” *Richard Venus* will speak to a way of believing and understanding that takes science, religion and technology into account.

Sunday, January 18—10:00 A.M.

One shortened service: 10 A.M. followed by our CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.

Sunday, January 25—11:00 A.M.

“The Work of Our Hands.” This Sunday we will reflect on our “mission,” and *Richard Venus* will speak on the work we must do in the world, in part through UU Social Concerns.

This year our Sunday services will reflect the theme *Roots and Wings*.

Our Staff

The Rev. Richard Venus, Minister

Office Hours: By appointment (except Monday)

Office Manager

Office Hours: Mon.—Thurs., 9:00—3:00 p.m.

Barb Weber, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Office Hours: Tue. 11—1:30 p.m., Sunday Morning

Hillary Gregg Wagner, Music Director

Office Hours: By appointment



MVUUF Board of Trustees

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Vice-president

Judy Pickett
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Mary Anne Frey
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Jamie McQuinn
Public Relations Trustee

Carol Vincent
Activities Trustee

Maureen O’Meara
Social Concerns Trustee

Laurie Shows
LRE Trustee

Barbara Czestochowa
Membership Trustee

Bill Wilson
Operations Trustee

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Board Reports

The MVUUF Board conducted the following business when it met **December 18, 2003** at the Fellowship.

Kathy called to order the meeting of the Board of Trustees in the Founders' Room of our building at 6:35 P.M. Present: **Kathy Mays**, President, **Mary Anne Frey**, Secretary; **Richard Venus**, Minister; **Jamie McQuinn**, PR Trustee; **Carol Vincent**, Activities Trustee; **Maureen O'Meara**, Social Concerns Trustee; **Bill Wilson**, Operations Trustee; **Barbara Czestochowa**, Membership Trustee; and **Laurie Shows**, LRE Trustee. **Kathleen Turner**, Vice President; **Judy Pickett**, Treasurer; and **Chuck Thomas**, Associate Minister, were not present. Also attending were **Rich Robinson**, **Gail Davidson**, and **Lee White**.

- Approved hiring **Sandra L. Christie** as our office administrator.
- Agreed that the counter top to the side of the rear door of the gathering space could be used for displaying political information, if it is kept neat. (**Ann Snively** will be responsible.)
- Agreed to allow the 4th and 5th graders to sell cookies at the Sunday service with proceeds to go to UNICEF.
- Charged the Executive Committee to gather information from other churches and fellowships and from the UUA about their policies for endowment funds and reserve savings and come back with a report.
- Were informed that the check **Teresa Neeley** had given to the probation office was not covered by sufficient funds. This matter is unresolved.
- Decided to ask the Finance Committee to develop a process for advising persons interested in making gifts (outside of operating fund and building fund pledges) about items that are still needed for the new building.

Mary Anne Frey, Secretary

Membership News

New-Member Brunch

Individuals who have attended an orientation or who have been members of another UU congregation are invited to attend a membership signing brunch on January 11 after the 11:00 A.M. service. Signing the membership book signals a commitment of talent and financial resources to support the continuation of our liberal religious community. Please RSVP to the office at 436-3628 by Sunday, January 4.

Caring and Sharing Committee

We are in need of volunteers to visit members who are ill or recovering from an accident. Volunteers will take food and/or flowers and follow up with the individual, as well as keep the congregation informed of the member's progress. Please call Lynn Haven if you would like to be on this committee. If enough folks volunteer, we hope members will only have to visit once a year.

Orientation

Those exploring Unitarian Universalism and the Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship are invited to attend a monthly orientation session after the service on the third Sunday of each month. Due to our congregational meeting, our **next orientation will be January 25**.

Barbara Czestochowa, Membership Trustee

**MIAMI VALLEY UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP
AGENDA
Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 18, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER

Kathy Mays, President

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Business Meeting, June 1, 2003

Mary Anne Frey, Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

Judy Pickett, Treasurer

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Nominating Committee's Slate of Candidates

Jamie McQuinn, President (one year)

Jim Faulconer, Vice President (one year)

Calen Rayne, Finance Trustee (one year)

Carol Narigon, Secretary (one year)

Lee White, Public Relations Trustee (two years)

Joe Zimmerman, Operations Trustee (two years)

Gail Davidson, Activities Trustee (two years)

Rich Robinson, Membership Trustee (two years)

Alysoun Reichard, Chair Nominating Committee

Dan Narigon, Endowment Fund Trustee (three years)

Wyatt Parkinson (two years, replacing Calen Rayne)

OLD BUSINESS

Report from the MVUFuture Committee

Dan Narigon, Chair MVUFuture Committee

NEW BUSINESS

No items under New Business

REPORTS FROM STAFF

Hillary Wagner, Director of Music

Jeannette Filbrun, Choir Director

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Kathy Mays, President

Kathleen Turner, Vice President

Mary Anne Frey, Secretary

Barbara Czestochowa, Membership Trustee

Laurie Shows, Lifespan Religious Education Trustee

Carol Vincent, Activities Trustee

Maureen O'Meara, Social Concerns Trustee

Jamie McQuinn, Public Relations Trustee

Bill Wilson, Operations Trustee

Calen Rayne, Endowment Fund Trustee

MINISTER'S REPORT

Richard Venus

CLOSING WORDS

Richard Venus

Announcements

Update on the Teresa Neeley Case

On December 16, 2003, Teresa was arrested and booked for a probation violation and is currently in jail. Her hearing is set for December 23rd. Evidently the check she gave to the court covering the balance of restitution owed to MVUUF bounced. At this time it is uncertain if we are required to return the \$4,500.00. Assistant Prosecutor *Chris Delnicki* will keep us updated.

Kathy Mays

New Chair Order

We will be ordering another 75 new chairs for the sanctuary on or before February 2004. **This is your last chance to place an order!** If you would like to order one or more chairs with a plaque, please e-mail or phone *Iris Carter* to place your order. The cost is \$110.00 per chair.

Volunteers Needed to Work at the Dayton Dragons Baseball Games

Last year we earned nearly \$5,000 for the Fellowship working at the Dayton Dragons baseball games. This year we are hoping to raise even more, **BUT** we can't do that unless we have some more people help us out.

Here's what we do:

- We work upstairs, inside, in air-conditioned comfort carrying food and other refreshments to corporate suites and two party decks.
- We work about six hours before, during and after the games.
- We start around 5 P.M. and are almost always done by 10:30 (rain delays and extra innings do sometimes extend that).
- Normally there are 10 people working in the group, all from the Fellowship.
- We get liberal breaks and a free "dinner," so there is plenty of time to get to know the other Fellowship workers.
- The work is not strenuous, but there is a lot of walking involved.

We are going to limit the number of games we work based on the total number of volunteers we have. We are asking that you work a maximum of five games (one a month) and a minimum of three. The season runs from April through August, with playoffs in September. We cannot schedule any dates in September until the third week of August (or when the Dragons qualify for the playoffs).

If you are interested, contact *Lee White* or *Jamie McQuinn*.

♪ Notes from Hillary



Hillary Wagner
Music Director

Happy New Year!! I'm so excited by the ever-increasing number of players involved in our music programs at MVUUF. It was a joy to introduce our string orchestra on Christmas Eve. Look for an even larger orchestra in the near future!

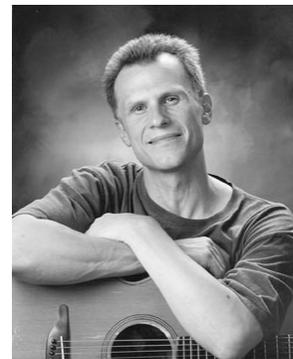
Plan ahead to enjoy a romantic trip to the Renaissance on Saturday February 7 at 7:00! The Renaissance Band will present a Valentines revel this year instead of the Twelfth Night revel we traditionally hold in January so that everyone can attend the *Peter Mayer* Concert. Watch the MVUUF news list for more information or contact Hillary Wagner at musicdirector@mvuuf.org.

While we are speaking of the Renaissance, mark your calendars for Sunday April 18 when we will host **Wind in the Woods**. This fully costumed Renaissance band will perform for our Sunday concert series.

Best Wishes,
Hillary Wagner

Peter Mayer Concert **January 17, 2004, 7:00 P.M.**

This concert will touch your heart and lift your spirit. Peter Mayer is a Unitarian Universalist folk singer, musical storyteller, guitar master, and song-writer who explores the depths of our human experience and our interconnected web. He has performed at SUUSI and at this year's General Assembly in Boston. We have waited a year and a half to be able to get him to come to Dayton, and you won't want to miss his show. You can learn more about him at <http://www.petermayer.net/blueboat/>, but it is much better to hear and see him live! Tickets are \$10.00. **If you would like to reserve your ticket, call or email Genevieve Harvey.**



He is unafraid of complicated topics and always strives to look beyond the easy sentiment... Peter does nothing less than address the very nature of our existence... Trust me, most songwriters can't pull this off. Peter does.

--*Dale Connelly*

Morning show Host, Minnesota Public Radio

Concerning Social Concerns

Social Concerns Committee

The Social Concerns Committee will meet on **Tuesday, Jan. 13** at the Fellowship at 7:30. **It regularly meets the second Tuesday of every month.**

At the January meeting, the committee will select the new congregation-wide social action project based on the recommendations of the workshop held on Saturday, January 10. **The committee welcomes new members.** Please plan to attend.

Sponsor a Guest at Your Table this Winter!

The Guest at Your Table program begins on Jan 25 with the “In Our Hands” service. It will continue until March 7. Boxes will be officially collected March 7, but donations are welcome at any time. See how to donate below.

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. Today, the UUSC helps people struggling for basic human rights both in the U.S. and in places such as Burma, Central Africa, Guatemala, Afghanistan, and Southern Mexico.

Different ways to give—pay per meal, or purchase a meal card.

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. Families will receive brightly colored boxes for their donations.

Guest at Your Table, however, is not just for families or just 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, \$1.50, \$2.00?

If you prefer to give a check, why not figure out in advance your guest's food budget for the month the program lasts. See **Maureen O'Meara** to purchase a month's “meal card” for \$25, \$50, or \$75 for your guest. With a \$25.00 donation (\$10 for youth/student or seniors) you become a member of UUSC, our own faith-based voice for human rights. Donations of \$60.00 or more are matched by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock.

Helping Hands

The next lunch at The Other Place will be January 10. Please check the clipboards to see what food items are needed. You may also contact **Diane Dover** for more information.

Save Women's Lives: March for Freedom of Choice

A few Fellowship members have already announced to me their intention to attend the March for Freedom of Choice on April 25, 2004. A local Dayton “Meetup” group gets together every 3rd Tuesday to organize Dayton's efforts. For information, go to <http://marchforchoice.meetup.com>.

I am looking for someone to attend “Meetups” and to coordinate our Fellowship participation. Please contact me if you would be willing to take on this important social action task.

Maureen O'Meara
Social Concerns Trustee

Social Action Workshop—January 10, 2004

There will be an important fellowship Social Concerns workshop on January 10 from 1:00 - 4:00 PM. We will meet to discuss and make a recommendation for a year-long Fellowship-wide social concerns project, which will fulfill a goal set at the goals workshop last spring. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm. There will be snacks and drink provided and we will end promptly at 4 P.M. If you have any questions or recommendations please contact **Gail Davidson, Maureen O'Meara, or Kate Santucci.**

Ending Modern Slavery

In September of this year, I read an article in *National Geographic* magazine which affected me profoundly. The article took me on a journey into modern-day slavery, a cruelty that terrorizes 27 million people throughout the world, and exists in nearly every country including our own. A slave is someone who is controlled by violence, earns no wages, and has no option to leave. There is an “official” group of UUs committed to ending slavery, known as the UUAS (UUs Against Slavery), based out of Boston. I am joining this organization and planning to work with them to see how our own congregation can join this effort. I have written a more extensive article about the problem that includes references for additional information. The article is posted on the online hyperboard, and I encourage anyone interested in social justice to take a few moments to read it. I cannot imagine a worse way to live – if you can call it living. Please email me or call if you would like to join me to help eradicate this problem. I will also be discussing it further at the next Social Concerns Meeting/Workshop scheduled for Jan. 10 from 1 – 4.

Bonnie Davis

The Earth Circle

The Earth Circle continues to meet monthly on the second Wednesday from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. For our November meeting, we had a delicious pot luck followed by a presentation from our guest speaker, Pat Murphy from Community Service Inc. in Yellow Springs. Pat, who has been to Cuba several times, gave an interesting talk on the many positive ways Cuba has adjusted after their energy crisis of the early 90's.

In January, we will start a new voluntary simplicity discussion course. The course is eight weeks long, covering one chapter each week with topics such as the concept of simplicity, money time, material possession, and the American dream. The book costs \$20.00 and the course is free. Call **Linda Yoder** if you are interested. This discussion course is limited to ten people but the Earth Circle is open to all.

ESP Contributions

MVUUF members contribute to the Emergency Services Pantry to help persons who run out of food stamps or are unable to purchase necessities that food stamps won't buy. Canned goods and other non-perishable food items and disposable diapers (size 3 or larger) are always needed. Paper grocery bags with handles as well as other sacks are also always welcome. Place contributions in the purple bin, marked ESP, in the kitchen. Thanks!

Ellen Beck

UUSC Coffee Project

MVUUF is participating in the UUSC Coffee Project program with the coffee we serve during coffee hour, and through the sale of coffee for home use. Packaged coffee is on sale after Sunday service.

Right before Thanksgiving weekend, we had what I have come to call a "crazy family day." It is a common predicament for families with school-aged children -- a day when you are expected to be in two places at once, then magically appear across town in five minutes flat for your next important engagement. I think this particular day involved a violin performance, aikido practice, a birthday party and some sort of school event too.

During one of our attempts to overcome the space-time continuum, Chris took a side trip to drop off a pan-full of potatoes for lunch at The Other Place. It wasn't really a hassle -- downtown Dayton is only a few minutes from our north Kettering home -- and it is important for us to take a few moments to remember those who are hungry as we hurtle through our middle-class-America weekend.

I'm a little worried that having our beautiful new church building in relatively affluent Centerville might affect MVUUF's commitment to social justice. Will our greater distance from the disadvantaged areas of Dayton allow us to more easily forget that there are many in our community that don't have food to eat, clothes to wear, and safe places to sleep?

The old adage "out of sight; out of mind" holds particularly true when what we would see if we did look is painful and disheartening. As I point my car southward to drive to church along lovely boulevards and clean neighborhoods, I can pretend that everyone lives as I do. Or at least they could, if only they tried. "Pulled themselves up by their bootstraps" as another old saying goes. Still, it is hard to pull oneself up when one has no boots. A seminary colleague adds -- or if one has no feet.

Educating ourselves on the extent and causes of poverty, hunger and homelessness in our community is one of the key ways that we can live up to our responsibilities as Unitarian Universalists. How many homeless people live in greater Dayton? Why do more children come to The Other Place for lunch at the end of the month than at the beginning? Since the police tore down the shanty town in Veteran's Park, where do those people go to sleep? Who uses the Emergency Services Pantry and why can't they feed their families?

I must confess that it makes me uncomfortable to ask these questions, because I do not know the answers. And even as I've spent many years personally exploring the ways that people work for positive change in the Miami Valley, I have preferred to keep my personal blinders on when it comes to hunger and homelessness.

Providing food at The Other Place and ESP are very important components of MVUUF's social justice work. Educating ourselves about who is hungry, and why, is the next step.

In faith,
Leslie Woodward
Peace and Justice Intern

Upcoming Group and Club Meetings

MVUUF Book Club

The MVUUF Book Club meets one Wednesday each month at the Fellowship from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Those who wish to may come at 10:15 for some social time. All are welcome. For further information, call **Carol Vincent** or **Sylvia Wince**.

Jan. 14

The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom

Feb. 25

Beach Music by Pat Conroy

Mar, 24

Harvest by Tess Gerritsen

Apr. 14

Nickel and Dime

May 19

Hornet Flight by Ken Follett

June 23

Jewell by Brett Lott

Evening Book Discussion Group

The Evening Book Discussion Group will meet at 7:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, January 13** at **Catherine Queener's** house to discuss *The Book of Sarahs: a Family in Parts* by Catherine E. McKinley. (Contact Ann Snively if you have not been able to get a copy of this book.)

In February, we will meet on the tenth at **Kathleen Pennington's** to discuss *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi. March's meeting will be on the ninth at **Diane Dover's** and we will discuss *Ten Little Indians* by Sherman Alexie.

New participants are welcome. Contact **Ann Snively** if you would like more information.

Due to the New Year's holiday, the next meeting of the Theological Society will be on Thursday, January 8th rather than on the first. We will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Founders' Room to discuss the readings originally scheduled for December, selections from "The Last Supper" and "The Divinity School Address." See **Ann Snively** or **Richard Venus** if you need copies of the readings. New participants are welcome. Child care can be arranged if requested in advance.

Young Adult Network (YAN)

Party with Young Adult Network January 24 at 7 p.m. It is game night at Yolanda's new condo! Contact **Yolanda** or **Alisha** for directions through our Yahoo group YAN email list.

Smart Choices is a group which meets the second and fourth Mondays each month in the Founders' Room at **7:30 p.m.** At each session we explore something which enhances our lives and/or promotes healthful living. Everyone is welcome. Contact person is **Lynn Haven**.

January 12: A workshop will be presented by **Pat Davis** on how to use laughter to relieve stress. She is certified in this field.

January 26: We will learn how to do yoga exercises while seated in a chair. **Nancy Stamper** will lead this session. She will also teach us some breathing techniques which are beneficial to over-all physical fitness.

February 9: **Sal Adkins** will teach us how to make fancy egg shells. It is easy and all materials will be provided.

February 23: We will learn how to get our house clean and organized, and how to maintain it. This session will be led by **Sylvia Wince**.

Poetic Insights

This group meets the **last Sunday of each month at 1:30 p.m.** in the MVUUF Library. We write impromptu poetry or prose, after being given a general topic or stimulus. On **January 25** we will be responding to some art work which will be displayed at the session. After writing for about a half hour or so, those wish to read their rough drafts are invited to do so. Anyone who is interested is invited to participate. Contact person is **Bev Wince**.

INTERWEAVE

INTERWEAVE, a support/discussion group for GLBT people and their allies, is now meeting on a new night. The group meets on the **third Wednesday** of each month at 7 p.m. in the Founders' Room at the Fellowship. For information, contact **Joyce Gibbs**.

Meditation Group

Join us Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:30 at the Fellowship for Meditation Group. We open with a reading from *Everyday Mind* and then sit quietly for 25-30 minutes. We then have a brief teaching and discussion referencing a myriad of world religious/spiritual paths, followed by a closing silent meditation— sort of a pre-service centering if you will. All are welcome. Please contact **Calen Rayne** if you have any questions.

Aikido Group

Aikido is a defensive, Japanese martial art with deeply spiritual aspects. Classes are open to all at the Fellowship and are led by **Greg** and **Katie Reese**. They take place on **Mondays** (6:45-8:00 p.m.) and **Saturdays** (9:45-11:00 a.m.). **Beginners are welcome and there is no charge to MVUUF members who want to participate in the sport but not get a ranking in aikido.**

Lifespan Religious Education

Thoughts From Barb....

I don't drive by the old church all that often these days. The first few times I did after our move, I felt pangs of missing the place. Increasingly, though, I am aware that the new church is beginning to feel like home.



*Barb Weber
Director Of
RE*

It may be happening more quickly for me than for some of you. We all make changes in our own time. I suspect that being on staff and frequently in the building may make the transition easier for me. But what I mostly see now when I think of church is our soft green building with a golden glow of lights in the windows. I see all of us gathering in our new space and the welcome of the community we are creating here. I see energy and passion for what we can be together.

As we begin our first new year in our new building, I hope you too are finding yourself at home here. I hope that your holidays have reminded you of love and warmth and the wonder that surrounds us every day.

I also hope you are ready to reach out to continue to build together. For our task now is to build not just a new building and not just our Fellowship community, but a better world. And as we build that world together, our new space and our community will feel more and more like home.

May it be so.

Barb Weber

Welcome new RE staff!

We are delighted to report that we have filled the nursery caregiver position. Lauren Beach is now caring for our littlest ones on Sunday mornings. Lauren is an early childhood education major at Sinclair with a six-month-old daughter. We are looking forward to her consistent involvement with our babies and toddlers.

We are also pleased that one of our own, Barbara Moreda, is joining Beth Farnham as an LRE Assistant. Barbara has three children of her own in our RE program and has consistently made herself available to help out in RE during her time at the Fellowship.

UNICEF collections reach \$104.83

RE children raised \$104.83 this year for UNICEF. This included \$56.77 raised by the 4/5/6th Grades at their bake sale as well as donations from trick-or-treating. Many thanks to all who supported their efforts!

Holiday Sharing a Success

A generous thank you goes to everyone who made contributions to our Holiday Sharing this year. A generous amount was raised to provide gifts to girls who had participated in Planned Parenthood's Dream Shop as well as to the Rwandan refugees at The House of the People. Our sharing made the holidays brighter for about 25 people this year. Thanks!!

Juline Renfro Award Nominations

The YRE Committee is seeking nominations for the Juline Renfro Award for Service to Youth Religious Education. This annual award is presented in honor of our former RE Assistant. The recipient should be someone who has devoted significant service to the religious education of our Fellowship young people, anywhere from nursery through senior high. Please submit your nomination, along with a paragraph explaining why you recommend that person, to **Barb Weber** in the RE Office. **These must be received by 12:30 P.M. on Sunday January 11.** The award will be presented at the January Congregational Meeting.

YRUU, (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) is open to all from ninth grade through 20 year old. They usually meet at 6:30 on Sunday evenings. They will gather on **January 4** for a post-holiday check-in and on **January 11** to plan future activities. Contact **Don Kazyak** with questions.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration

Join us to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 19. We will gather at 9:15 a.m. at the Fellowship for a birthday celebration (complete with cupcakes!), followed by a caravan to the fairgrounds for the MLK Day march to downtown Dayton. We will leave for the fairgrounds at 10:00 and the march will leave from the fairgrounds at 10:45. For more information, contact **Alysoun Reichard**.

RE Social Justice Project Dinner

January 23 at 6 p.m.

Religious education not only means learning about our UU history, our religious heritage, and other religious faiths, but it also means deciding what to do with what we've learned. How do we live our lives as Unitarian Universalists?

Passing along our Unitarian Universalist identity to our children would be incomplete without also passing along our passion for social justice. In 2004, the Youth Religious Education Committee is launching an important new peace and justice program for our children and teens.

Current (and future) RE teachers are encouraged to attend a dinner and information-sharing session on Friday, January 23 at 6 P.M. After dinner and socializing, Peace and Justice Intern **Leslie Woodward** will present a model for a monthly social action project involving the entire RE community, including parents. (Interested parents are also invited to attend the information dinner.)

Please RSVP by Jan. 20. Contact Leslie for more information.

COOT (Continuing Our Own Theology) meets monthly on the first and third Mondays at 7:00 p.m. The group gathers to discuss theological issues and share ideas and fellowship (and occasionally have a good dinner). Newcomers are welcome.

Men's Group

Men's Group meets the first Sunday of each month at 9:00 A.M. for fellowship and discussion. All men age 16 and older are welcome to attend. Childcare can be provided if requested in advance. Contact **Richard Venus** for more information.

Women's Group News

Women's Group meets Sundays from 9:30—10:50 in the Founders' Room to discuss our current topic, relationships. Feng Shui expert **Jenafor Rayne** will lead our exploration of our relationship with stuff in January. On February 1, we will examine our relationship with sisters. All women are welcome.

Community Class

The Community Class is a group that meets every Sunday morning at 9:30 - 10:45 A.M. in the library for fellowship and thought-provoking discussion. A chance to let your hair down, speak your mind or say nothing at all, without criticism, up close and personal. Please join us!

Sunday, January 4

"Free Will or Fate ... Do We Chose Our Own Actions?" We'll talk about an issue philosophers and theologians have been debating for centuries. Do we really choose our direction in life? Is our life condition predetermined by physical, psychological or environmental antecedents? Or is some of it the result of random chance or the will of God?

Moderator: **Dennis Webb**

Sunday January 11

"Family Secrets - Part II" A continuation of our discussion in December which generated much interest but not enough time for everyone to share. We'll examine the widespread phenomenon that often leads to shame and isolation—why it happens, who it effects, the harm it can cause, and how to overcome it's negative influence on our lives.

Moderator: **Linda Kimmel**

Sunday, January 18

"Favorite Books of 2003" We'll share our thoughts on outstanding books we read last year. It can be a brand-new publication or date back to the Roman Empire. Be prepared to give us the title, author, publisher and publication date, so we can share the list on the Community Class Update and the UU News Group.

Moderator: **Elfi Purkey**

Sunday, January 25

"Life's Lessons: Experiences That Taught Me Something I Needed to Know" There are those who think we learned everything we needed to know in kindergarten, but perhaps some of us have had a few flashes of understanding since then. Let's hear about them!

Moderator: **Trudy Krisher**

Mystery Friends 2004

What is Mystery Friends?

Mystery Friends is a fun and easy way for adult MVUF members and children to get to know one another and have the opportunity to form new friendships.

How does Mystery Friends work?

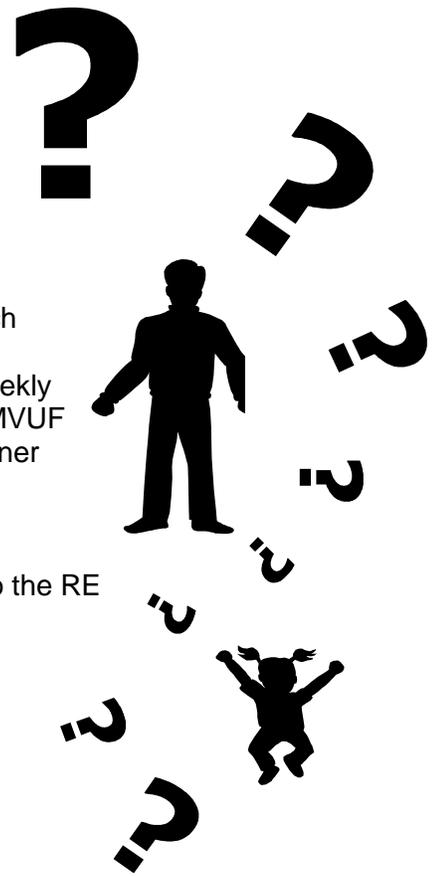
The Mystery Friends Committee pairs adult mystery friends with young friends. Each adult receives the name and address of their young friend with instructions and suggestions for small, inexpensive gifts. The adult friend sends correspondence weekly for three weeks, including clues to their identity. Mystery Friends then meet at the MVUF Mystery Friends Dinner. The young friend brings a small, inexpensive gift to the dinner for their adult friend.

How do I sign up?

You may sign up by filling out the form at the bottom of this paper and returning it to the RE office or to the Mystery Friends box in the Gathering Space.

Important Dates

January 18	Final date for Mystery Friends sign up
January 25—31	Week 1
February 1—7	Week 2
February 8—14	Week 3
February 21	Mystery Friends Dinner at 6:15 p.m.



Mystery Friends **Adult** Sign-Up

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Special request (boy/girl/age): _____

Responsibilities: I promise to contact my friend at least once a week during the Mystery Friends program and to attend the Mystery Friends Dinner on February 21.

Mystery Friends **Child** Sign-Up

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____ Interests & Hobbies: _____

Responsibilities: I promise to try and guess who my friend is and to bring my friend a small gift at the Mystery Friends Dinner on February 21.

The Debut of the MVUUF Strings Orchestra



Brianna McGhee



Sylvia Wince



Sara Castilano and Ethan Lavarney



Luke Shows



Hannah Shows



Hillary Wagner and Susanne MacKenzie

Learnings from Leadership School

Being a leader can be wearing, especially in times of change and stress. Many who have been guiding the Fellowship in the past few years can attest to this.

Ronald A. Heifetz, author of *Leadership without Easy Answers* and co-author of *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading*, has written extensively on ways to survive and even thrive in leadership positions. He urges leaders to “Get on the balcony.” By this, he does not mean putting oneself above other people. Rather, he means being able to step a little apart from the crisis and take a "big-picture" view of what is happening.

This stepping apart is easier if one is able to distinguish one self from one’s role. When stresses run high, it is easy to begin to experience conflict that accompanies anxiety as a personal attack.

Heifetz puts it thus: “When conflicting criticisms seem to damn whatever one does, the distinction between role and self can be life saving. Making the distinction enables one to externalize the conflict, thereby focusing attention on the issues...”

It is vital that we remember we are all people who are doing the best we can for the Fellowship, even when we may take opposing views on specific issues. Honoring a person, even when we argue against that person’s position on a subject, is part of who we are as UUs. Remembering this will help both those who lead and those who may be following at any particular time.

A Note of Appreciation

A special thank you to *Diona Fowler* and *Sal Atkins* for working on the MVUUF Historical Photograph Albums. The pages they did are especially creative. It was so nice to have help because there were an unusual amount of photos to mount. There was an extra album, “Futures,” which documents our move to Yankee Street, and I was behind with the RE Album. These two industrious workers put many hours into bringing them all up to date. Look for them in the gathering space, where they are currently being displayed.

Thanks as well to *Sal* and *Diona* for putting up and decorating the Christmas trees in the sanctuary and in the gathering space. They worked all afternoon until 10:00 P.M. Saturday, Dec. 13, to be ready for the Wassail celebration.

Deadlines Approach

The deadlines for the upcoming issues of *The FORUM* are January 15 and February 19. Please submit your articles to *Laurie Shows*.

The deadline for the Sunday bulletin is 12:30 p.m. on the preceding Monday. If you plan to use the building for any reason, please schedule with the office. Not all building use is listed in the calendar published in our newsletter. Private use, building maintenance or other unannounced events may already be scheduled. Also, please be sure you have scheduled your event on the official calendar before you begin promoting your activity.

Thanks!
The Office Manager

<u>MVUUF GROCERY CERTIFICATE ORDER FORM</u>				
<i>Dorothy Ln:</i>	\$5	\$10	\$20	Total _____
<i>Kroger:</i>	\$10	\$20	\$50	Total _____
Your Name _____			TOTAL _____	
Please make check or money order payable to: MVUUF or Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Send this order form along with a <u>self-addressed, stamped envelope</u> to: MVUUF, 8690 Yankee Street Dayton, OH 45458				

MIAMI VALLEY UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship Calendar for January 2004

*** Schedule of Regular Sunday Offerings***

9:30 a.m. Adult RE: Community Class Room 10

9:30 a.m. Women's Group

9:30 a.m. Meditation Group

11:00 a.m. Service & Youth RE

6:30 p.m. YRUU

Additions? Corrections? Changes?

Please notify the office manager ASAP.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 *See above for regular offerings* 9:00 a.m. Men's Group	5 6:45 p.m. Aikido Group 7:00 p.m. Continuing Our Own Theologies	6	7 7:30 p.m. Choir	8 6:00 p.m. Executive Committee Meeting 7:30 p.m. First Thursday Theological Society	9	10 9:45 a.m. Aikido Group 11:30 a.m. Helping Hands lunch at the Other Place 1:00 p.m. Social Action Workshop
11 *See above for regular offerings* 12:15 p.m. New Member Brunch	12 6:45 p.m. Aikido Group 7:30 p.m. Smart Choices	13 7:00 p.m. Evening Book Discussion Group at Catherine Queener's 7:30 p.m. Social Concerns 7:15 p.m. Renaissance Band	14 10:30 a.m. MVUUF Morning Book Club 6:00 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting 7:30 p.m. Earth Circle 7:30 p.m. Choir	15 6:30 p.m. MVUUF Board Meeting	16	17 9:45 a.m. Aikido Group 7:00 p.m. Peter Mayer Concert
18 *See above for regular offerings* CONGREGATIONAL MEETING	19 9:15 a.m. MLK Day Celebration 6:45 p.m. Aikido Group 7:00 p.m. Drum and Poetry Circle 7:00 p.m. Continuing Our Own Theologies	20 7:30 p.m. Recorder Consort	21 7:00 p.m. INTERWEAVE	22 7:00 p.m. 31st Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade Celebration	23 6:00 p.m. RE Social Justice dinner	24 9:45 a.m. Aikido Group 7:00 p.m. Young Adult Network outing
25 *See above for regular offerings* 11:15 a.m. ORIENTATION 1:30 p.m. Poetic Insights	26 6:45 p.m. Aikido Group 7:30 p.m. Smart Choices	27 7:30 p.m. Recorder Ensemble	28	29	30	31 9:45 a.m. Aikido Group