



## Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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August 2005  
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# The Forum

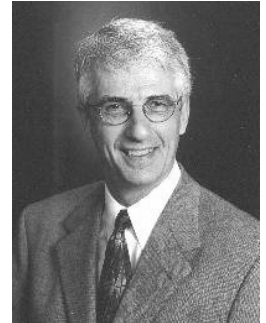
### *Richard's Reflections*

This is my last Forum column. It seems hard to believe that 14 years ago, almost to the day, I began my ministry with MVUF. The time has flown by and together we have ministered to one another in many ways.

It is true that endings are beginnings, and you as a congregation will be beginning new steps on your Unitarian Universalist journey, as will I. Our religion is a gift to this community as well as to our individual lives and we are called to continue to make it a place of learning and healing and celebration.

The rulebook for UU ministers is not explicit, but suggests that the outgoing minister not communicate with MVUUF members about the Fellowship. He can continue friendships, but only if they do not include discussions about the church. I hope to continue to see many of you on special occasions and to remain in touch about matters other than the Fellowship.

No words can express my deep appreciation to all of you for making my 14 years so rich in laughter and tears, joy and sorrow, wit and wisdom. Thank you so very much. I wish you continued good work as you begin the next steps on your journey.



*Rev. Richard Venus*

*Richard*

**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.*

*This summer, bring fresh produce and baked goods to donate to our Fresh Food Basket project every Sunday!*

**SUNDAY SERVICES**

**Sunday, August 7—11:00 AM**

**“God—The Experience”** The Alternative Worship Experience invites you to experience God as you know it. We will create the environment, *you* bring your beliefs, and together we will experience God as only UUs can do.

**Sunday, August 14—11:00 AM**

**“Reflections on Ministry”** Jim Faulconer has been an MVUUF member since 1993. He is former minister of the Disciples of Christ Church and has served as a pastoral counselor. Today, he will share his reflections on the ministry.

**Sunday, August 21—11:00 AM**

**“Endings Are Beginnings”** This will be Richard Venus’ last Sunday at the Fellowship. He will take several stories from early sermons and weave them around the promise that as stages in life end, they also mark the beginning of something new, as it is with MVUUF these days. Helen Geyer, Rick Wagner and Hillary Wagner will bring special music. There will be a farewell reception immediately following the service.

**Sunday, August 28—11:00 AM**

**“The Photographic Image as Incarnation”** Guest speaker Gregg Brekke says the incarnation of God is present in each one of us, in nature and in human-made objects. How can we participate in Divine acts of creation through the arts? The art of seeing and the ability of the artist to represent that vision without darkroom or digital manipulation is achievable using the photographic process. This presentation will encourage us all to look for the Creator in the created and to actively participate in creation via photography. Gregg Brekke is a pastoral candidate in the United Church of Christ and fine-art photographer living in Springboro.

**Sunday, September 4—11:00 AM**

First Sunday Series: **“The Changing American Workforce: Reality and Response”** Guest speaker David Fierst, Attorney. The First Sunday Series, created by the Growth Committee, will begin September 4. The First Sunday series will feature speakers of special interest to members and the wider Miami Valley community. After the service, a brunch will be available for a minimal charge and the speaker will be available for discussion. Please see the full description on page 4 and be sure to mark the dates on your calendar.

**Our Staff**

**The Rev. Richard Venus, Minister**

Office Hours: By appointment (except Monday)

**Barb Weber, Transition Coordinator**

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

**Persephone Agricola, LRE Coordinator**

Office Hours: Sunday AM and by appointment

**Barbara Kelley, Office Manager**

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

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**MVUUF Board of Trustees**

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**Rich Robinson**  
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**Joe Zimmerman**  
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## President's Message

Although summer is often more laid back for UU congregations, it has been anything but for MVUUF. Planning for Richard's retirement, searching for an interim minister, hiring an LRE coordinator and working on a number of new initiatives to grow the congregation have presented competing priorities. I will attempt to briefly summarize some our challenges and successes to date.

Sunday, August 21 will be Richard's last sermon as minister of MVUUF. He will be around and available through September 5. **Iris Carter** and **Kathleen Turner** have agreed to co-chair a committee that will plan a special celebration of his ministry. This will occur on the Sunday of his last service on August 21.

Our effort to identify an interim minister has gone slower than I had hoped. Our request was presented to the Settlement Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) at the same time that they were overwhelmed with the annual General Assembly (national meeting of all congregations) and summer vacations, etc.

As we have waited for the UUA, an interim task force was created. This task force includes myself (chair), **Barb Weber, Scott Leonard, Jim Faulconer, Iris Carter** and **Judy Pickett**. This committee will oversee the process of working with the UUA in identifying and recommending an interim minister candidate.

Our first task is to put together an information packet that is in a sense our resume to a prospective candidate. We anticipate that by the end of the month we will have several candidates to review. Until we have details on potential interim minister candidates, it is impossible to identify a clear timeline as to when we will have an interim in place.

The worship committee, now being chaired by **Mike O'Brien**, and music committee, chaired by **Kathy Brown**, have truly stepped up to the plate. I can confidently say that we will soon have all Sunday-service programs planned through the month of October. Kudos to these two committee chairs and all the dedicated volunteers they have working to insure we move forward with the kind of Sunday worship experience we have come to expect.

The other accomplishment of the past month has been the hiring of an LRE coordinator—**Persephone Agricola**. She is eager to get started and will bring her youthful energies to bear to provide a dynamic LRE program at MVUUF. Be sure to stop by the RE wing to meet and welcome Persephone.

Finally, the newly formed growth committee chaired by **Barbara Czestochowa**, has been busy behind the scenes working on key areas of Fellowship development. One of the most exciting new programs to come out of this committee is the First Sunday Sermon series. Through this event, every first Sunday of the month will feature a locally (and hopefully nationally) known speaker. The idea is to not only enrich our own Sunday service experience but to reach out to the community and draw new people into our community.

As I said at the beginning of this column, it has been anything but a quiet summer. We have a lot of work ahead of us and there are so many caring, loving and dedicated members of this Fellowship giving so selflessly to ensure that we thrive and grow. Hats off to everyone who is working to make MVUUF a truly life-giving spiritual community.

—**Kriss Gang**  
**President, MVUUF Board of Trustees**

### Summary of the Board Meeting of July 14, 2005

A motion to hire Persephone Agricola (contingent on a background check) as the LRE Coordinator was made by Scott Leonard, seconded by Bill Wendel, and passed.

Joe Zimmerman made a motion that the Board authorize special collections (July 31 & August 7) for the purpose of funding a retirement party for Richard Venus, and that \$200 be authorized from the minister's compensation line in the budget to initiate funding for the party. Rich Robinson seconded and it passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Bill J. Wendel**

introducing

# FIRST SUNDAY SERIES of the



On the first Sunday of each month the Fellowship will present speakers of local/regional and national interest to address members and guests about current social issues

## 2005 schedule

September 4 11a.m. David Fierst, Attorney

### *The Changing American Workforce: Reality and Response*

Mr. Fierst received a BS in Public Administration from Indiana University. Upon graduation he spent 8 years in the US Army, voluntarily resigning at the rank of Captain in pursuit of a legal career. David earned an MS in Criminal Justice at the University of Louisville and then moved to Ohio to attend the University of Dayton School of Law. He has lived in Dayton with his wife and two sons for the past 18 years. For the past 10 years he has served on the Board of Directors for the Mission of Mercy in Miamisburg. The Mission of Mercy collects food, clothing and money donations for those in need in the Dayton metro area. David is particularly concerned with economic problems suffered by the Miami Valley and the larger picture of job losses occurring in Ohio

October 2 11a.m. Rev. Dr. Ed Zeiders, President/CEO of United Theological Seminary

### *Bent Over People: Searching for the Marginalized*

Rev Zeiders is an ordained clergy member of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church. Ed has also served as a member of the General Commission on Communications of the United Methodist Church for eight years and as a member of the denominations General Council on Ministries until June 2004. On January 1, 2000 Dr. Zeiders was appointed President and CEO of United Theological Seminary. Ed and his wife Joan, have worked in support of mission projects related to families in Appalachia in the US and the Ukraine in Europe, established a Habitat for Humanity in North Central Pennsylvania, directed ministries for migrant workers, and worked with children in the inner city in Harrisburg, PA. In Ohio Dr. Zeiders has directed the development of a new urban initiative for the seminary in peace studies, and participates in various church and community activities. Ed is currently a leader in the Dayton Rotary Club and serves on the Executive Committee of the Dayton Area Chapter of the American Red Cross and directs the planning process for the chapter.

November 6 11a.m. To Be Arranged

December 4 11a.m. Dr. Judith Martin,SSJ of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Buffalo NY

### *Unholy Alliance? Religion and Politics in the Middle East*

Dr. Martin teaches courses on world religions and religious fundamentalism at the University of Dayton and has travelled widely in the Middle East and met with religious, political and educational leaders in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Syria. She has also published a number of articles on religion and politics in the Middle East. Dr. Martin has spoken to our congregation several times in the past few years and we have always enjoyed and learned much from her presentations.

after the Service there will be  
a Lovely Brunch with Lively Discussion  
and a chance to meet our Guest Speaker

## Announcements

### August ChaliceLight Gallery

The MVUUF ChaliceLight Gallery is proud to feature the works of renowned artist Thomas A. Tripplett, Jr. through the month of August. Our artist was born in Cleveland in 1960, and his mother claims that Tom started drawing Volkswagens at the age of 18 months, and one could actually tell that they were VWs!

Tom started painting in oils when he was in junior high school and is now working in acrylics. Tom has recently become involved in illustration work and completed a course in illustrating children's literature this summer at Miami University. In fact, it's the only art course he's ever taken!

Tom recently participated in an invitational art show at Quest Church in Mason, Ohio. He is currently illustrating a collection of stories, doing murals, and working on a cartoon series. He has always enjoyed doing realistic artwork such as cars, planes, and motorcycles, but he is now involved in painting portraits and landscapes as well.

Contact ChaliceLight Gallery chair **Joan Albrecht** for more information or to purchase artwork.

### Free Legal Consultation

Attorney **Mark Kalafatas** is available at the Fellowship on Mondays from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Please call the Fellowship office, 436-3628, to make an appointment.

### Right to Privacy

A new directory of Fellowship members and friends is printed annually and updated regularly throughout the year for distribution to members. If you do *not* wish to have your information appear in the Fellowship directory, please call Barbara Kelley at the Fellowship (937) 436-3628 or email her at admin@mvuuf.org.

Please be assured that the directory is for internal use only. That being said, there is the ever-so-slight chance that on the Sundays it is being distributed, it could fall into the hands of someone who might not use it appropriately.

Names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and names of children are normally included in the directory. Feel free to request that some or all of your information be excluded from the directory.

### Capital Campaign Celebrates

The three-year capital campaign to pay for our new building came to a successful conclusion at the end of June. Thanks to the leadership of **Iris Carter** and **Ruth Rowley**, along with the generous contributions of many, our mortgage has been paid down to about \$515,000...very close to the goal we set for ourselves when we started years ago. Donations of almost \$50,000 in the last few months allowed us to reduce our monthly mortgage payments to about \$4,000. The reduction will save us roughly \$5,000 a year in interest payments for many years to come. A big thank you goes out to everyone who helped!

—**Scott Leonard, Treasurer**

### Caring and Sharing Committee

We are in need of volunteers to visit members who are ill, recovering from an accident or shut in. 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 contact **Julie Bragg** if you would like to be on this committee.

—**Rich Robinson, Membership Trustee**

### Forum Deadline

The deadlines for upcoming issues of *The FORUM* are August 16 and September 15. Please submit your articles to Barbara Kelley (admin@mvuuf.org). If additional time is needed, please let us know. The deadline for the Sunday bulletin is 12:30 PM on the preceding Monday.

*You are cordially invited to a  
reception honoring  
the Reverend Richard Venus  
for his fourteen year ministry at  
the Miami Valley Unitarian  
Universalist Fellowship.*

*Sunday, August 21, 2005*

*Service 11:00 AM  
Festivities 12:15 to 2:30 PM*

**Fall Foliage Weekend in Vermont  
October 14-16, 2005**



**Eleventh Annual Event sponsored by  
The UU Church of Rutland, VT**  
**Enjoy the spectacular beauty of a Vermont  
Fall, select from a wide range of tours  
and activities guided by UU hosts, stay in  
the home of a church member, all meals  
provided. For more information please call  
802-293-2510 or email  
uufoliagevermont@yahoo.com**

**Squeeze in One More Vacation**

Do you dream of inexpensive vacation travel to interesting destinations where you can stay in the homes of friendly people who share your ideals and are happy to provide directions and advice for their area?

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) can fulfill your dream. For 25 years, we've provided a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and who are happy to open their home to like-minded people.

You can also become a host and be listed in the directory. Contact us at 828-281-3253 or at [info@uurehome.com](mailto:info@uurehome.com), and we will gladly send you information about listing your accommodations.

*UU're Home* has recently launched a new website at [www.UureHome.com](http://www.UureHome.com), where entries are updated whenever changes are made or new hosts are added. The paper edition, which is published every year in April, is still available (and has many more listings than the website). For a copy of the 2005 directory, please send a check for \$18 to *UU're Home*, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806.

**Ceremonial Water**

Remember to collect a little water from the place of your vacations to bring to our communal bowl this fall during the annual Water Ceremony September 11. This meaningful tradition from the UU heritage is a fun way to share and remember your vacations with the Fellowship.

***Activities***

**Ice Cream Social**

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Ice Cream Social such a good time! Congratulations to *Murphy Davidson* as the winner of the 2005 Bent Spoon Award. Special thanks to *Gail Cyan* for making this such a successful event!

**Chairpersons Needed**

We still need chairpersons for some of our new activities. Contact *Yolanda Crooms* with any questions or if you are interested in chairing either of these groups:

- Dining Out Group—the chairperson will make reservations, create sign-ups and advertisements, and give location directions. The group will dine out together monthly.
- ExcUUrsions Group—the chairperson will identify area activities, send out announcements to the Fellowship at large and facilitate outings.

**Activities Committee**

Looking for a fun, easy way to get more involved with the Fellowship? Join the Activities Committee on the second Sunday of the month from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Help make the Fellowship a stronger community and a more fun place to be.

**Game Night**

Plan to come to Game Night on Friday, August 26 at 7:00 PM. Bring a game to share!

## Group Meetings and Events

### **Building Your Own Theology**

Many Unitarian Universalists have used the Building Your Own Theology (BYOT) curriculum to find religious focus and define themselves theologically. **Jamie McQuinn** will lead a group through this process. The BYOT group will meet at the Fellowship on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month for approximately ten sessions. The first meeting will be Tuesday, September 13, 7:00—9:00 PM. RSVP is appreciated, but not required. Contact Jamie with any questions at 298-0836 or jamiemcquinn@hotmail.com.

This is from the preface to, *Building Your Own Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., by Richard S. Gilbert:

“It has been said that liberal religion is a ‘do it yourself kit.’ But there is a danger that we would make it a kit not only without blueprint but without tools and material. The purpose of this program [is] to provide some tools for building a theology based on the materials of individual life experiences.

We seem to be predominantly a movement of ‘come-outers,’ people who have left some other faith and are now ‘come-inners,’ people who have chosen to cast their lot with Unitarian Universalism. Too often visitors enter our front doors only to move down the aisle and out our back door. It continues to be my belief that one of the reasons for this is that our churches and fellowships provide little in the way of help for people who wish to build a new theology. This program is designed to provide a systematic, disciplined, and communal approach to the process of building a new theology on the residue of the old. We must do more than tell our people they have to think for themselves. We must provide some handles, a kit of tools if you will, to help them build.”

### **CineManiacs—Sunday Evening, August 14**

If you're wild about art films, join us the second Sunday of each month at the Neon Movies for the 5—5:30ish showing. Since the Neon Movies 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** or **Lindy McDonough**.

### **MVUUF Daytime Book Club**

The 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 not a closed group. Come join us!

Our August 31 selection will be *A Skeleton in God's Closet* by Paul Maier and our book on September 21 will be *Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. The book for our October discussion is *The Time Traveler's Wife*, by Audrey Neffenegger. For further information, call **Carol Vincent** or **Sylvia Wince**.

### **Evening Book Discussion Group**

The Evening Book Discussion Group will not meet in August. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 13 at 7:00 PM at Ann Snively's house for a discussion of *The Plot Against America* by Philip Roth. New participants are welcome. Contact **Ann Snively** if you would like more information.

### **INTERWEAVE**

INTERWEAVE, a support/discussion group for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) people and their allies, will not meet through the summer, but will begin meeting again September 21.

### **First Thursday Theological Society**

The First Thursday Theological Society is taking the summer off. Look for an announcement in the September *Forum* about the first fall meeting, which will be held in October or November.

### **Smart Choices**

The purpose of this drop-in group is to enhance our lives a bit with an interesting or fun activity. **You** are invited! We meet on the first and third Monday of each month.

**Monday, August 1, at 7:30 PM**, we will meet at the Fellowship. **Sylvia Wince** will guide us in reading our own palms. There will be handouts to make it easy. It's fun, even if you are a skeptic.

**Monday, August 15, at 6:00 PM**, we will meet at the **Thirsty Dog Grille**, 45 West Alex-Bell Road in Washington Township, to enjoy dinner together. Ann Heller, *Dayton Daily News* food editor highly recommends this restaurant. No reservations required. See you there!

## Concerning Social Concerns

### Urban Hunger Project—Gifts from Our Gardens

So far this summer, our Urban Hunger Project has delivered a plump harvest of fresh produce and baked goods to the hungry in our community. Here's how it works:

- Bring in surplus fruits and vegetables from your garden on Sunday mornings.
- Not a gardener? Never fear—we'll also accept fresh baked goods.
- Place your produce and baked goods in the big "Gifts from Our Gardens" basket in the Gathering Space.
- Fellowship volunteers will deliver the food to a local food bank or homeless shelter for you.

Simple, huh? Remember, our local food banks and shelters are frequently without sufficient food for their clients, especially in summer. Instead of foisting that extra produce on your relatives or co-workers, or worse, letting it go to waste, we have an opportunity to make a little change in the world for the better. It's a great deal!!! Your help is so appreciated!

For more information, contact *Ann Rismiller*.

### Justice Weekend

Mark your calendar for Justice Weekend to be held in Washington D.C. on September 24-26, 2005. Join the UUSC STOP (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee -- Stop Torture Permanently) Campaign and speak with one voice on this key issue.

Together with our interfaith and human rights partners, all UUSC members and supporters are invited. The event will feature educational workshops, a panel discussion and advocacy work with national leaders and representatives.

To eradicate torture, we must insist upon the full application of our laws and a full accounting of the truth. Visit the UUSC website at [www.uusc.org/stop](http://www.uusc.org/stop) torture or call 617-868-6600.

### Full Spectrum Discussion

Social Concerns will be hosting an informal Full Spectrum discussion on August 7, after the service. The topic will be abortion. Plan on staying to discuss your views in a non-threatening atmosphere! *All* are welcome. Pack a lunch, or join in on ordering pizza. See you then.

—*Kate Santucci*

### The Other Place

MVUUF serves lunch to 200 needy people on the second Saturday of each month at 11:30 AM at The Other Place (840 South Patterson Boulevard). We still need food donations every month. *Don & Lucy Kazyak* will be filling in for *Diane Dover* on the project all summer. **Please plan to help next on August 13.**

Remember to contribute to the Emergency Services Pantry to help people who need food and other necessities. Place contributions in the purple bin marked ESP in the kitchen. Thank you for your continuing support to this important community project.

### Darfur Update

The Unitarian Universalist UN Office would like to thank you all for your continued support and hard work in bringing peace and justice to Darfur, Sudan. At the 2005 UUA General Assembly, UU delegates from around the continent overwhelming passed an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) put forth by our office entitled "End Crimes Against Humanity in Darfur, Sudan," making Darfur an urgent priority for the UUA and its members and congregations.

We urge you to stay as informed as possible about the crisis in Darfur. Please take the time to read up a bit on its history. The violence drags on in Darfur and the crisis is slipping from the headlines. As wretched as this situation is, our involvement is really making a difference.

For more information, contact your Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office or visit the website [uu-uno.org](http://uu-uno.org).

### Urban Hunger Meeting

Please plan to attend a meeting on the Urban Hunger projects on Monday, August 8 at 7:30 PM at the Fellowship. Your input will be appreciated!



## *Lifespan Religious Education*

### **Thoughts From Barb...**

Please join me in welcoming *Persephone Agricola* as our new Lifespan Religious Education Coordinator. She comes with a background of deep involvement in the UU Young Adult Network. Persephone is a musician who is working on a song about our Unitarian Universalist principles, and also works in a Dayton Public School library. I have been impressed with her energy and enthusiasm, her dedication to ministry and her friendliness. I think her fresh perspective and new ideas will invigorate Religious Education here at the Fellowship.

As excited as I am to have Persephone joining us, I know I will have difficulty letting go of what has been "my" program for the past eight years. Several of you have already heard me begin a sentence about RE with "In the Fall, we'll do...", only to have to remind myself that I am no longer "doing RE." It will be especially hard since I will be hanging around as Transition Coordinator and will play a mentoring role with Persephone as she learns about us.

I suspect this letting go may be a challenge for all of us in these next couple of years. We have been drawn to this community because so much of what we do here is wonderful. It is very easy to insist "but we have always done it this way" when faced with the unknown. I hope the comfort of the familiar will not prevent us from trying the new. There will be new things that we try and later decide we want to continue them in the old way. But I am sure there will be much that we will try and find delightful.

We sing of roots and wings. This is a time when we, as a congregation, will be experiencing both. Our community, our faith, our caring for each other and our world give us deep roots. Moving into our future together, welcoming new people, and trying new things will give us wings.

May it be so,  
*Barb*



*Barb Weber  
Director Of RE*

### **Children's Charity**

Our young people in Religious Education are collecting money each week in their classes to help homeless children in the Dayton area. Parents, please find ways to talk with your children about this issue. Using news reports as conversation starters or talking about their reactions when you see indigent people may be ways to approach the subject. Some youngsters may need reassurance that they are safe and sheltered as they begin to think about those who are not so blessed.

Please also help your children remember to bring their donations on Sunday morning. Coins are very welcome and add up surprisingly quickly. We will be collecting for this until the January Congregational Meeting, when the children will vote on a new charity to support.

We are also continuing to collect beverage pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House, which provides support to families of hospitalized children in the Miami Valley. We have donated approximately seven gallons of tabs so far. Thank you!

### **Fall Teachers Needed!!**

With all the uncertainty of staffing this summer, we are somewhat behind in recruiting our Fall teachers for Youth Religious Education. In this time of transition, we are asking that you please step forward if you have an interest in helping out.

Our YRE program continues to be very strong, with good support for teachers. There are well-planned curricula, more supplies than you could ever want, friendly faces, interesting orientation, frequent consultation, and coffee is ready early each Sunday.

You will be part of a team of three teachers for each class who arrange their schedules so that you will only teach about 13 weeks out of the next nine months.

Many of our teachers say they have learned more about UUism from helping in YRE than from anything else they have done at the Fellowship. Our young people are inspiring, caring and fun. Teaching touches the future of Unitarian Universalism and of our world.

Please stop in the RE Prep Room with questions or to volunteer. You are needed!

## YRUU

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, our senior high youth group, is on break for the summer. Contact *Don Kazyak* for information about future activities.

### Women's Group

Just after Labor Day, the Women's Group will move to a more structured approach. Beginning on September 11 at 9:30 AM, *Kathryn Dornhuber* and *Joan Albrecht* will present a class called *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*, based on Shirley Ann Ranck's book of the same name. The course is a study of how history has been rewritten and how the religious patriarchies began and have flourished. A course overview will be presented the first Sunday. On September 18, we will focus on "Reclaiming Our Female Bodies" and the topic for September 25 is "Reclaiming Our Sexuality." The class will be a supportive, experiential, and, we hope, an enlightening opportunity and experience. This group will meet on this topic through December 11. You may come as often as you can.

Shirley Ranck, the author of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*, was an UU minister and served a couple of years at the Northern Hills Fellowship in Cincinnati. She was an educator and a licensed psychologist, and retired to live in Williamsburg, Virginia. The book is currently out of print and we could find no copies of it online at the time of this writing. It certainly is not necessary for you to have a book, but if you can find one it will make the course even better. Please call Joan or Kathryn if you'd like to be a part of this study group.

The Women's Group will work toward finalizing plans for the coming year during our regular Sunday morning (9:30 AM) gathering on August 7 and August 14. *Linda Yoder* has offered to facilitate a "Voluntary Simplicity" group. This course is based on a book by the same name. When the dates are finalized, we will take orders for the book. Please plan to attend, we need your input.

### Poetic Insights

Poetic Insights will take the summer off and resume meeting in September. Save your summery ideas on a pad to be ready for a creative fall!

## Community Class

The Community Class is an adult group that meets every Sunday morning at 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, without criticism. Let your hair down! Please join us—you will be very welcome!

### Sunday, August 7

**"First Impressions."** How often have you been right and wrong when sizing up a new acquaintance? What impresses you most - physical features, body language, personal grooming, mode of dress, or speech patterns? And how good are these outward signs at indicating a person's character, abilities, interests and temperament? We'll talk about it. Moderator: *Tom Brown*

### Sunday, August 14

**"My Adventures with Religious Organizations."** Where have our various journeys of personal self-discovery taken us in the realm of religious institutions? What churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, or covens have we explored in our efforts to find a spiritual home? What attracted us and what repelled us in the course of these philosophical forays? Moderator: *Elfie Purkey*

### Sunday, August 21

**"Freedom of the Press."** In light of recent issues like "Deep Throat" and outing CIA agents, we'll consider the role and responsibilities of journalists in today's world. Can the press go too far in revealing military game plans and lack of security in mass transportation, exposing the sex lives of the celebrities and political leaders, and reporting outbreaks of deadly diseases? Moderator: *Tom Cruse*

### Sunday, August 28

**"The Genomics Age: How DNA Technology is Transforming the Way We Live and Who We Are."** Based on the book of the same name by one of America's best known science and technology journalists, Gina Smith, this discussion will look at how modern science is forcing us to make decisions with profound biological, moral, economic and societal implications. Moderator: *Lindy McDonough*

## Men's Group

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

### **RE Volunteers Needed**

As you have heard, Sunday, August 21 will be Richard's last MVUUF sermon. Many of our teachers want to attend. If you are able to help out in the RE hallway that Sunday, please let **Barbara Moreda** know. Persephone, our new LRE Coordinator, is planning a Youth Worship Experience as well as recruiting a few teens to help her plan and execute it. Thank you for your consideration.

### **Attention Incoming Seventh and Eighth Graders and Their Parents/Guardians**

This September, we will again offer the UUA sexuality curriculum, Our Whole Lives (usually known as OWL) for our middle-school youth. This nine-month curriculum was jointly created by the UUA and the United Church of Christ and addresses sexuality as an integral part of our being. This class, based on UU principles, involves not only the biological facts of sex, but also addresses developmental issues, relationships, and emotional growth as well as values clarification within a UU context.

OWL classes will be held on Sunday evenings at 6:30 PM beginning in September and will run through most of the school year. Regular attendance is vital in order to build a sense of trust within the group and so that later sessions can build on knowledge from earlier sessions. Because of the nature of the course, we ask that participants commit to attend the whole program.

The class will again be led by **Leslie and Chris Woodward**, UUA-certified OWL facilitators, who will be teaching OWL at MVUUF for the third time. The Woodwards bring both wisdom and warmth to this role.

Parents of OWL participants are required to attend two comprehensive orientation sessions in the Fall. At that time, parents will review program materials. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact the Woodwards or the LRE Coordinator. The class is also open to teens from outside the Fellowship, so if you know of others who might benefit from this class, please have their parent or guardian contact us.

P.S. The OWL curriculum series also includes shorter courses for adults, kindergarten/first graders, fourth/fifth graders and senior high youth. We hope to offer these other classes next year as well, depending on having facilitators trained for these levels. Watch the Forum for more information.

### **The Our Whole Lives Values:**

- Self Worth
- Sexual Health
- Responsibility
- Justice and Inclusivity

### **Each level of Our Whole Lives offers:**

- Up-to-date information and honest, age-appropriate answers to all participants' questions
- Activities to help participants clarify values and improve decision-making skills
- Effective group building to create a safe and supportive peer group
- Education about sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment
- Opportunities to critique media messages about gender and sexuality
- Acceptance of diversity
- Encouragement to act for justice
- A well designed, teacher-friendly leaders' guide and parent orientation programs that affirm parents as the primary sexuality educators of their children.

### **Youth Worship**

An exciting new change is taking place in Youth Religious Education (YRE) (in addition to the awesome new LRE Coordinator, whom you will hear much more about in the September Forum)! Children's Chapel is now a thing of the past. No Children's Chapel?! Whatever will be done with those Sundays? I'll tell you. We are beginning something new and exciting called Youth Worship. Youth Worship will be creative, experiential, interactive, experimental, exciting, and fun! It may involve anything from music to art to guest performers...the sky's the limit!

Our first Youth Worship will take place on Sunday, August 21 in conjunction with Richard's last MVUUF service. We are looking for teens and young adults who may be interested in being a part of coordinating this first Youth Worship. If you are interested, please contact Persephone or call the office. Look for more info and updates on this exciting new endeavor in the coming months!

# MVUUF August 2005

*Bring fresh produce and baked goods to donate to our Fresh Food Basket project every Sunday!*

Mon	1	Governance By-Laws 7:00 PM Smart Choices 7:30 PM
Tues	2	
Wed	3	
Thurs	4	
Fri	5	
Sat	6	
Sun	7	Men's Group 9:15 AM Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>God—The Experience</i> 11 AM Full Spectrum Discussion 12:15 PM <i>Remember Fresh Food Basket Donation</i>
Mon	8	Urban Hunger Meeting 7:30 PM
Tues	9	
Wed	10	Activities Meeting 7:00 PM
Thurs	11	
Fri	12	
Sat	13	The Other Place Meal 11:30 AM
Sun	14	Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>Reflections on Ministry</i> 11 AM CineManiacs 5:00 PM (Neon Movies) Activities Committee 7:00 PM <i>Remember Fresh Food Basket Donation</i>
Mon	15	Governance Committee 7:00 PM Smart Choices <i>Thirsty Dog</i> 6:00 PM

Tues	16	September Forum Deadline
Wed	17	
Thurs	18	Board of Trustees Meeting 7:00 PM
Fri	19	
Sat	20	
Sun	21	Men's Group 9:15 AM Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <b><i>Endings Are Beginnings</i></b> 11 AM <b>Richard's Farewell Reception 12:15</b> Orientation 12:15 <i>Remember Fresh Food Basket Donation</i>
Mon	22	
Tues	23	
Wed	24	
Thurs	25	
Fri	26	Game Night 7:00 PM
Sat	27	
Sun	28	Women's Group 9:30 AM Community Class 9:30 AM <i>Photographic Image as Incarnation</i> 11 AM <i>Remember Fresh Food Basket Donation</i>
Mon	29	Social Concerns 7:00 PM
Tues	30	
Wed	31	Daytime Book Club 10:30 AM

## Mark Your Calendar!

*Sept 4* First Sunday Series Begins

*Sept 11* Water Ceremony

*Sept 13* Building Your Own Theology 7:00 PM

*Oct 1* MVUUF Fall Retreat—John Bryan State Park