

THE REPORTER

Newsletter of St. John's Unitarian Universalist Church

September 14, 2008

Community Worship Services

Sunday Community Services begin at 11:00am. Childcare is provided for infants and toddlers. Religious Exploration classes are offered for older children. Please park in the Fairview School lot (located directly behind the church, entrance is from Clifton Avenue). The church's small parking lot is reserved for visitors, families with children, older members, and those with handicapped permits.

Sunday September 21 at 11:00am

"International Day of Peace"

Rev. Frank Carpenter

In 1982 UN resolution established Sept. 21 as Peace day. Our Peace Cranes will be hung again, our choir will be singing and the meanings of peace will be at the center of our worship. Members of our Peace Team will participate. See www.internationaldayofpeace.org/

Sunday September 28 at 11:00am

"Days of Awe"

Rabbi Moshe Thomas Heyn

Rabbi Heyn's sermon will focus on the meaning of the Jewish High Holy Days, beginning with Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) and ending with Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement.) This period is a time for reflection, repentance, and renewal. Rabbi Heyn will also share some of the music and ancient traditions of these Holy Days, bringing to light their relevance in our lives today. "Rabbi Tom" serves as a rabbi and chaplain and as Director of Pastoral Care at Cedar Village, a Jewish long-term care facility in Mason. He is also the music director at Congregation B'nai Tzedek and performs frequently as one of Cincinnati's "Three Jewish Tenors."

Contemporary Worship Services

Contemporary Worship Services are held on the 3rd Sunday of each month in Krolfifer Hall beginning at 9:00am. Childcare is provided.

Sunday September 21 at 9:00am

"Seeking Peace"

Our speaker will be our own Dr. Howard Tolley, UC professor of political science. Live music provided by Will Merton. Do come!

Minister

The Rev. Dr. Frank Carpenter

Affiliated Minister

The Rev. Bonnie Meyer

Minister Emerita

The Rev. Annie Foerster

Minister of Music

Dr. Catherine Roma

Assoc. Director of Music

Rachel Kramer

Director of Religious

Exploration

Omope Daboku

Worship Coordinator

Omope Daboiku

Office Administrator

Mary Jo (Josie) Arens

Caretaker

J. Michael Skaggs

Church Office

513-961-1938

stjohnuu@fuse.net

Church Office Hours

Monday thru Friday

7:30am to 2pm

Church Website

www.stjohnsuu.org

Newsletter Editor

Bruce Beisner

Next Newsletter Deadline

Thursday Sept. 25 at 5pm

Frankly Speaking....

by Rev. Dr. Frank Carpenter

Twice a year I journey to New England to join with about 25 colleagues in the Unitarian Universalist ministry in Greenfield Group. This study group is the first of a number around the country today, and we take pride that our founder, James Luther Adams, was one of the leading social justice thinkers of UU in the last century and a leading social ethicist who taught at Harvard Divinity School. Jim gets most press today as one of the teachers of the writer Chris Hedges.

I quoted Jim in my sermon last Sunday on building the Beloved Community: "Human beings, individually and collectively, become human by making commitments, by making promises. The human being as such... is the promise-making, promise-keeping, promise-breaking, promise-renewing creature. The human being is the promise-maker, the commitment-maker"

Each of our 'convocations' has a different theme. This December we are looking at **Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Nations, Communities and Congregations**. The readings include, Rupert Ross, *Returning to the Teachings :Exploring Aboriginal Justice*, Penguin Books, Canada,1996; Desmond Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*. Doubleday, 1999. and Robert Schreier, *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies*. Orbis Books 2006. I've read Tutu, and the Aboriginal Justice looks really good.

The organizer of this program, Susan Suchocki Brown, (who serves on the UU Trauma Response Team), also sends out a number of short readings for us. One includes, "Church failure" by David P Gushee in *CHRISTIAN CENTURY* for 2004. It is about how Rwanda was the most Christianized area of Africa and yet Christianity failed to stop the genocide. A comment from it, "... a study of the Holocaust and now of the Rwanda genocide, has led me to realize that the presence of churches in a country guarantees nothing." Whoa!! And double whoa!

It might be easy for some of us to say, 'And that's why I'm not a Christian.' But, is that really his point? His point is, most Christians **don't get** Christianity." His question to us would not be, 'do we get Christianity?' Rather, do we **get** Unitarian Universalism?

There is no pride in watching others failing to rise to their highest values. It is a great sadness. We gather in community so that when those, in their failure, realize how they have fallen, we can be there to help them find their way back to the human community. We grasp their hands, for we want someone's hand to be there for us in our times when we have lost our way.

-Peace,

Frank



Our Mission: St. John's is committed to creating a safe and caring community, working for peace and social justice, and celebrating beliefs that respect freedom of thought. We are pleased to be designated a Welcoming Congregation by the Unitarian Universalist Association, and as such we honor and value the racial, cultural, economic, religious, physical ability, sexual orientation and gender diversity of our members and visitors, young and old.

Opportunities & Invitations

Women of St. John's Cookout

Mark the date! Saturday September 27 at 5:00pm. All women (members and friends) of St. John's are invited to this annual cookout at the Creasman-Jones residence in Crestview Hills, KY. If you have never attended (or have), you will be treated to outstanding, grilled delights prepared by Chef Ginny. Also, expect good company and conversation and maybe even some card games. Bring lawn chairs and a side dish to share. Meat, veggie burgers, and drinks will be provided. Children very welcome. Find us in the People Book or call Ginny or Jonena for directions.

-Jonena Jones

Chalice Groups at St. John's

It's that time of year again. Time to sign up for a Chalice Group and enjoy thought provoking conversations while reconnecting with long time friends and making new ones. We will be holding our Chalice Group sign up from September 14th through September 28th. You can sign up during Sunday services. The purpose of Chalice Groups is to provide an opportunity for friends and members of St Johns Unitarian Universalist Church to develop deeper connections, foster individual growth, and encourage service within the church and beyond through small groups. The cornerstone of the monthly Chalice Group meetings are broad ranging discussions about a diverse collection of thought provoking, spiritual, and timely topics selected in advance of each meeting. Thanks again for your past participation for those of you who have been previously involved. Chalice has been a very enjoyable way for me to discuss various subjects and get to know members and friends of the church that I may not have otherwise gotten to know. I think you would find it equally rewarding.

-Jim Nunn

Tuesday Community Nights

This fall St. John's is starting Tuesday Community Nights. Each week there will be an opportunity for you to get together for food, fun and fellowship. We'll share a meal together, talk and get to know each other better. Afterwards we'll have Chalice groups, adult discussion classes, and even a com-mittee meeting or two. The church will be buzzing with people gathered together, building community, learning, and having fun. You can come to eat together, or just to take a class, or participate in some other activity. Some things to know:

- * **When does this start?** We'll begin the 1st Tuesday of October, the 7th and continue on a trial basis thru December 16.
- * **Do I have to go to a class, or can I just come for the potluck?** The social time is a completely separate event. It's fine to drop in just for that and go on your way, or else help clean up and enjoy sitting around talking to new friends.
- * **Is there any cost for the meals?** Potlucks – no bring food to share with the group. Drinks are provided. Pizza - \$5 per person, maximum \$15 per family. Soup and Bread – donation basket
- * **Do I need to make a reservation for the meals?** Please do - it will really help us with the planning. Contact Jennifer Richards by the Sunday before.
- * **Can I bring my child?** People of all ages are welcome for the social time from 6-7. There is no childcare provided during that time, so the children are the responsibility of the parents then. Childcare from 7:15-8:45 will be provided IF parents have preregistered at Adult RE sign-up time in September and we have enough children to make it work.

Our first Tuesday Night Community Potluck will be on October 7 from 6pm to 7pm.

Please come and bring food to share. Soft drinks and milk will be provided. It would be greatly appreciated if some of you would come early (5:40pm) and help set up tables.

News About Adult Classes

Registration for Adult Classes Still Open

Sign-ups for the Adult Religious Education Classes are going on through Sunday Sept. 21. Registration may be done at the table in the lobby, by downloading a form from the Internet www.stjohnsuu.org and bringing or mailing it to church, or by e-mailing AdultRE@stjohnsuu.org. Please contact Carol Fencl if you have questions about any of the classes.

Spiritual Practice

Several of our adult programs this fall can be thought of as spiritual paths. Our Chalice Groups are year-long, and meet monthly, focusing on a specific topic each month. We also have Adult Religious Education classes that give a more focused short-term experience, meeting weekly. The two listed below use formats very similar to the Chalice Groups. *A Course in Miracles* is an ongoing group that meets off site on Sunday nights. Richard Hadden is the leader of this group which draws on the Judeo-Christian and other traditions. There is a text that goes with this program.

Evensong provides a time for spiritual renewal on Tuesday nights. This program was developed by a UU minister as an 8 week small group spiritual practice and has been offered all over the country. This year we are teaming up with First Unitarian Church to offer it here at St. John's. Particular emphasis is placed on listening, sharing and being heard. Leaders are Carol Fencl and Joy Haupt. The group will meet from October 7 - November 25.

Bookstore

Our St. John's Bookstore has one more Sunday - Sept. 21- when we'll have books from the UUA Bookstore available here at a reduced church bookstore rate. If you like to read and maybe don't have time to take a class this fall, consider reading a UU-related book to challenge your mind or fill your spirit. Forrest Church's final book, *Love and Death*, is available.

Talking to Strangers

In August the course Spiritual Hospitality: Talking to Strangers which was developed here at St. John's became a program offered through the UU Council. The workshop is being offered to UU congregations and other faith communities at a cost of \$2 per person. Due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the course will be offered free of charge here at our church for St. John's who wish to attend either the Oct. 21 or the Nov. 18 session. To register, pick up a form at the Adult RE table or contact AdultRE@stjohnsuu.org.

As of the date of printing, two classes are close to capacity - *Dharma Reader* and the *NonViolent Communication Practice Group*. All other classes still have a number of openings and their status will be evaluated after the last sign-up on the 21st. If you are interested in taking a class, please register ASAP. Last year we had people contact us several days before the first class day, having intended to register, but not getting around to it, and the class had been dropped due to low registration. Don't let that happen to you.

Register today.

-Adult Religious Education Committee

Sunday Adult Forums

Forums are held before the Sunday Community Service from 10am to 10:45am, downstairs in the Darwin Room. Topics for the next several weeks are:



September 21 - *Non-violence and Church Safety* led by Rev. Frank Carpenter

September 28: *The Great Story Part 1*. The marriage of science and religion for personal and planetary well-being, a DVD by Rev. Michael Dowd, led by Debbie Combs.

October 5 & 12: Parts 2 & 3 of *The Great Story* will be shown and discussed

-Adult Religious Education Committee

Dr. William Schultz to Speak in Dayton on Sept. 20

All St. Johners are invited to attend an evening with Dr. William Schultz on Saturday September 20 at Sinclair Conference Center in Dayton.

Dr. Schulz, past executive director of Amnesty International USA and former president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, will speak on "Building a Culture of Peace: Human Rights in a Post-9/11 World." Amnesty International has been a worldwide force for preserving and promoting human rights for over forty years. Schulz spent 12 years on Amnesty's front lines combating injustice and inhumane treatment of prisoners, the use of torture and providing support for other people denied their human rights around the world. He is a dynamic, informed and committed speaker. The evening with William Schulz on September 20 will begin at 6:30pm with display tables and the sale of Schulz's books in the theater lobby. He will speak at 7:30pm. Tickets (\$20 adults, student scholarships offered) are available by calling the Miami Valley UU Church office at 937-436-3628. The Sinclair Community College Conference Center is located at 444 West 3rd Street. Parking is available under the Conference Center for \$2.

-Howard Tolley

Exploring UU Class

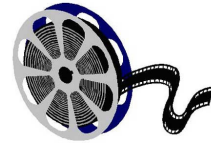
Several times each year we invite visitors and frequent attendees to an orientation session about St. John's. The date this fall is Saturday October 18. This is an opportunity to share your spiritual journey, and to learn about our UU history and activities. The session starts at 9am with coffee and conversation and ends about 12 or 12:30 following lunch. Child care is provided if request-ed several days prior to October 18. Call the church office at 513-961-1938 or contact Kathryn McDonough to reserve a place and to let us know your dietary and childcare needs. Deadline for reservations will be Wednesday October 15.

-The Membership Committee

First Friday Flicks

Join us on Friday October 3 in Krolfifer Hall for the Adult RE offering called First Friday Flicks. Starting promptly at 7pm, we'll watch *Gone Baby Gone* (rated R) followed by a discussion concluding at 9:30. The content of the film is about making moral and ethical choices involving a kidnapped girl in Boston. For comfort, please bring your own chair such as a folding lawn chair. For information For more information, contact Debbie Combs or Karen Miller

-Debbie Combs



Voices of Variety Youth Choir

It's that time of year! Voices of Variety kicked off its 12th year on September 14 and we need each and every voice age Kindergarten through 8th grade! This is a fantastic year to be involved! Here's why: this is the first ever, city-wide UU Holiday Youth Choral Fest! That's right, all four UU churches will add voice to this year's special holiday fest! Don't be left out! We need all of you to make it happen! The Voices of Variety program brings so much joy to all who have ever participated and all who have ever listened - - it's a wonderful celebration of our UU principles, our rich St. John's music program and it's just a great time! There are only 9 rehearsals! They go quick - only 30 minutes each 12:15 to 12:45pm on September 21, 28, October 5th and 12, November 2, 16, 23, 30 and Friday, December 5, Saturday, December 6 (performance) and Sunday, December 7 (performance). Even if you can't make all of the rehearsals - that's ok! Everyone is welcome! I need you! The other singers need you! I look forward to seeing you downstairs in the **Rosa Parks room on Sundays at 12:15 pm** - grab your friends and come on down! Questions? Contact Rachel Kramer.

-Rachel Kramer

Among ursevles

Association Sunday

Association Sunday here at St. John's is October 5. We will be joining with UU congregations all over to support growth programming of the UUA. Bill Sinkford writes, "As I begin the last year of my presidency, I am hopeful for the future of our faith, and proud of the role Association Sunday will continue to play in strengthening our vibrant tradition. I very much hope that Association Sunday will become a regular part of your congregation's church year. I believe that it is imperative to strengthen not only our individual congregations but our entire Association in order to more effectively share the saving message of Unitarian Universalism with the world." St. John's Board has voted that the offering on October 5 will be for the UUA. Special envelopes will be in the Order of Service that day. You may also donate thru the UUA web site at www.uua.org/giving/associationsunday. You may find there more information on successful past Association Sundays and what the funds this year are for.

-Rev. Frank Carpenter

Voter Registration

ANYONE who either is not yet registered to vote, or who knows someone who has not registered to vote, can obtain a voter registration form after the 11am service on Sundays. A table will be set up in Krolfifer Hall during coffee hour for this purpose.

-Jim Decker

Sunday Coffee Hosts

Coffee hour hosts for Sunday September 21 are: Sandy Allen and Vivian Kline.

Coffee hour hosts for Sunday September 28 are: Frank Meyer, Pam White and Monica Pellman

-Tracy Flanagan

The Finance Corner

Sooooo....How did we actually do with our budget last year? Well, I've got good news! We ended the fiscal year on June 30 with a budget surplus of \$4,750. \$1,390 of the surplus was allocated to a major repairs contingency account, per policy. Also, \$2,500 was carried forward to this year's budget for the contemporary service grants. Many thanks to the finance advisory council, stewardship team, and budget team for helping to make the year a success!!

As a reminder, however, our equity (reserves), were significantly depleted by the \$24,000 budget deficit of the prior year. Please continue to be mindful of spending and proactive with pledging and fundraising. If you would like to know more about the inner workings of the finance council, please contact Finance Council Director, Jonena Jones.

-Jonena Jones

Can We Be Greener?

Ten year old Emily Stein knows about those "curlicue" light bulbs; they have some of them at their house. She also knows that turning off the lights when you are not using them saves energy. Her father, Kim, says he has a compost pile that supplies organic matter for his wife's garden every year. They freeze much of their garden produce, including freezing tomatoes whole, from which Kim says he makes great soups in winter. As for recycling, they recycle mostly plastic. How about you? Do you have CFL (compact fluorescent) light bulbs in at least half of your light fixtures? Replacing one incandescent 100 watt light bulb with an equivalent CFL can reduce energy usage by three-fourths and the energy saved over the lifetime of that one bulb is sufficient to drive a Toyota Prius hybrid car from New York to San Francisco. Amazing, isn't it? Take a few minutes to do your own energy audit. Resolve to switch even more light bulbs this year. Attend the Home Energy Workshop on September 20 to learn other ways to save energy.

-Green Sanctuary Partners

Music Vivace



by Dr. Catherine Roma
St. John's Minister of Music

Regular choir rehearsals are under way, and we would love you to join us. Here is what we are singing for the next two weeks.

On Peace Sunday (which begins peace week) the choir will perform "When There Is Light in the Soul," by UU composer John Shea, a rousing gospel setting of a Chinese proverb many will recognize. MUSE Cincinnati's Women's Choir will join in this service with a Ben Harper tune called "With My Own Two Hands."

On Sunday September 28, Rabbi Tom Hein will perform "Shalom Rav" with the choir, and we will back him up on several beautiful Hebrew melodies that will weave through the service. Sunday is the day before Rosh Hashanah, one of the most high holy days in the Jewish faith, and the beginning of the Jewish new year.

On Saturday October 4th at 8:00pm, we begin our Music Series with a terrific line-up of musicians from across the city. The concert Rock the Vote: A Musical Rally for Justice and Responsibility draws together Roxanne Qualls as MC, Tracy Walker, Kathy Y. Wilson, Voices of Freedom, MUSE, Ma'at (Slam poets from OTR), Drums for Peace, and Poco Loco, and a six-piece Latin/Jazz band. Each group will perform one or two pieces, and the League of Women Voters will be present to register people to vote, or fill out change of address forms. Join us. \$15.00 tickets available on line, in the office, or get them on a Sunday morning. The concert was created by the Contemporary Worship Team and the Music Committee in collaboration. A concert for all ages!

Why not support the whole series for \$60.00 which features Elberon, MUSE, Groove Crew (a 70s/80s dance band) and the May Festival Youth Chorus.

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Taste of St. John's: Rockin' Luau on November 15

Imagine this: pig, pineapple and vegetarian fare, grass skirts, tiki lamps, fruity drinks, fun music, a limbo contest—and first chance to sign up for social gatherings in members' homes. Mark your calendar for this family-friendly event!

St. John's relies on fundraisers for a significant portion of the operating budget. This year's Taste of St. John's will be solely about "taste"—no live auction or silent auction, only dinner sign-ups. Start thinking about what you would like to offer in your home, at church, or with a friend. Donation forms will be available September 21. To get in on the fun of planning the luau, contact one of the Fun(d)raisers: Debbie Anderson, Wanda Crawford, Rosina Janus, Jonena Jones, Karen Miller, Kari Olson.

—Wanda Crawford

"Be Our Guest" Breakfast

Bring a friend to church on Sunday October 26 and also enjoy a tasty pancake breakfast. Newcomers eat free while members and friends pay a nominal charge. The breakfast will be from 9:30 to 10:30 am. Mark your calendar. We hope to see you there.

—Jan Hay

RE-Joys



by Omope Daboiku
St. John's Director of Religious Exploration

Thanks to all who have volunteered to be with our children as they explore their religious beliefs. On Sunday, several more folks came forth; so, we are looking pretty solid as a program. We are engaged modeling a Deep Covenanting with our children and youth as our church approaches approving our Peace Initiative, and our YRUU program is excited about transforming the Welles Rooms into their new sacred space.

St. John's Church Calendar

Tuesday September 16

10:00am: Yoga
5:30pm: Leadership Development Committee
7:00pm: YADA Young Adults Discussion

Wednesday September 17

6:30pm: Board of Trustees Meeting
7:00pm: Program Planning Team (PPT)

Thursday September 18

10:00am: Meditation
7:15pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal

Saturday September 20

9:00am: Dream Group
9:00am: Contemporary Service Rehearsal
1:30pm: Home Energy Workshop

Sunday September 21

9:00am: Contemporary Service
10:00am: Adult RE Forum
11:00am: Community Worship Service
12:15pm: Voices of Variety Rehearsal
12:30pm: Green Sanctuary Partners

Tuesday September 23

10:00am: Yoga

Wednesday September 24

8:30am: Staff Meeting
7:00pm: Caring Circle
7:00pm: Program Planning Team (PPT)

Thursday September 25

10:00am: Meditation
5:00pm: Deadline for the Reporter
7:15pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal

Friday September 26

7:00pm: Game Night

Saturday September 27

10:00am: CGCC
5:00pm: Women's of St. John's Cookout

Sunday September 28

10:00am: Adult Forum
11:00am: Community Worship Service
12:15pm: Voices of Variety Rehearsal
12:45pm: Adult RE Non Violent Communication

Monday September 29

Office Closed - Josie Vacation Day
7:00pm: Fundraising Committee

Tuesday September 30

10:00am : Yoga



St. John's New Website at

www.stjohnsuu.org

St. John's has a new website. It's the same address www.stjohnsuu.org but has a different look and new features, including a church calendar, information on our social action projects, and a Member's Corners. We hope it'll help our visitors learn about us and help us stay better connected with what's happening at St. John's. It's live now so log-on and check it out.

-Linda Heath

Thought of the Week

“Ultimately, we are all theologians. We all ponder
The great life issues. As Unitarian Universalists we
Celebrate common operational values that unite us
Even as we enjoy a diversity of perspectives
That enables us to learn and grow religiously.”

-the Rev. Richard Gilbert