



here, Rev. Becker has nurtured and fostered the growth of several groups supporting gay, lesbian, bi, and transgender rights in the state (including Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays [PFLAG], and Prime Timers of Jackson). He has marched in gay pride parades in Jackson, Ocean Springs, and Memphis, Tennessee. He is presently active with other state leaders to promote and support gay rights. Rev. Becker came to Unitarian Universalism very recently. His future ambitions lie in developing a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the Unitarian Universalist tradition. His participation in the UU Church of Jackson consists of facilitating the Adult Growth and Learning Team, teaching a Seekers class on Sundays, and working with the Membership Committee to facilitate NUUcomer's Gatherings for those wishing to explore membership.

#### **Thursday Feb. 13**

Pot Luck Dinner at Kara, Riki, Laura and David's house, 3342 Whippoorwill Lane, 234-9243.

Barbara Jamestone will be giving a Blessing Service April. In preparation for this service, an informal - the way we do it best - discussion will be entertained where thoughts and ideas should be shared of your experience helping to create our new home.

#### **Sunday Feb. 16 11:00 a.m. UU Hall**

Lay Led Service with Ken Sleeper & David Roederer "Present at the Creation: The Urge to Create" Childcare will be available

This sermon is by Unitarian Universalist Minister Dick Gilbert, Parish Minister of The First Unitarian Church of Rochester. In this sermon he explores the meaning of creation, from the cosmos to art to our daily lives. This will be our first lay led service using material from The Church of The Larger Fellowship, a service for small congregations from The Unitarian Universalist Association. We may be

using this resource consistently next year. We encourage you to attend this "try-out" so you can let us know what you think about this new plan.

#### **Sunday, Feb. 23 11:00 a.m. UU Hall**

Discussion Sunday. Facilitator Mary Beasley

Discussion of A Chosen Faith, Section 5, Chapters 9, "Beyond Idolatry" and Chapter 10, "Mind and Spirit". The discussion will delve into of our living tradition's fourth source, "Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit."

Additional copies of A Chosen Faith available. Ask David Roederer at the discussion session, or at 234-9243.

#### **PUT THESE TWO DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!!!**

#### **Saturday, March 29, 7:00 (?) p.m. at UU Hall:**

Annual UUCO Talent Show and Silent Auction!!! This event will be sponsored by the Middle School group will also offer a silent auction. Do not be shy!!!! We all have a talent to share!!! Expect to hear from Denise about donating an item and promoting our silent auction. If you feel like asking, "What can I do to help?" please call Denise or Ann.

#### **Friday, May 2 - Sunday, May 4, at Wall Doxey State Park: UUCO 7th Annual Retreat**

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#### **TUPELO CALENDAR**

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Tupelo -- We welcome visitors! We meet every first and third Sunday at 11:00 A.M. at Temple B'Nai Israel 1301 Marshall St. Tupelo.

February 2 Dick Johnson will hold our Service. His topic is Why We Search for God.

February 15 10:00 A.M. Adult RE led by Denise Backstrom



Wednesday!!!

The Youth continue to represent us well to the larger Oxford community. For example, in addition to the various academic achievements listed elsewhere in this newsletter, I regularly receive compliments from EVERYONE that interacts with them. At last week's kayak lesson, both instructors commented on how well they behaved and how much they concentrated on the task as they were instructed. We should all take pride in this fine group and I encourage you to support them in any way that you can. -- Ann Phillippi

February Schedule: (All UUCO Middle School meetings are 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.) Feb 5\* (fun at the Turner Center)

Feb 12 (craft-making at UUHall)

Feb 19 ("hang-out" at UUHall)

Feb 26 (fun at the Mall Arcade)

Feb 28 - March 1 (a family rock climbing adventure at Tishomingo State Park) \*Call Ann Phillippi or any of the youth for further details.

#### >>>>>COMMUNITY SERVICE <<<<<<

The Breadbreakers are an interfaith group meeting the last Wednesday each month for fellowship and getting to know folks of other faiths in Lafayette County at a different restaurant each time They will meet February 26th at noon at Tequilla's next to Krogers. Everyone is welcome and we are working towards community unity with our neighbors . You will be hearing more about this in the future . -- Mary

The Lafayette County Literacy Council is seeking volunteers and contributions. Pamphlets will be available at Sunday services or you can call the Council at 234-4234. LCLC provides one-on-one tutoring to adults and children, and hosts Family Literacy Nights once a month in order to promote literacy activities between parents and children.

#### >>>>> COMMUNITY CORNER <<<<<<

We share in the loss of Elaine Gelbard's father who died recently in Houston of Alzheimer's Disease.

More dates for your calendar:

Friday and Saturday, February 8 - 9, 8:00 p. m. at OHS: Sierra Gelbard is one of the stars in the Oxford High School (OHS) Musical, "Joseph and the Many-colored Coat."

Saturday night and Sunday afternoon,

February 22 - 23 in Oxford: Mac Warren acts in the Fable Factory production of "Captain Hook".

Saturday, April 12, 2:00 p. m. at Wall Doxey State Park: Mac Warren's Coming of Age Ceremony.

**SPELLING BEE CHAMPS!** Joseph Hoffheimer and Daniel Warren have each won major spelling bees! Joseph Hoffheimer won the Oxford Middle School National Geographic Geography Bee and will proceed to state competition. Daniel Warren won the Lafayette County Spelling Bee and will proceed to regional competition. We are so proud of these two guys! Keep on going - you can go all the way!!

Longtime UUCO friend, Susan Glisson has been named Director of the University of Mississippi's Institute for Racial Reconciliation. We don't know why anyone else would have even been considered because Susan has been the director of racial reconciliation on campus since even before she orchestrated the President's Initiative on Race back in 1998. Congratulations, Susan, and it's about time!

A number of Unitarian Universalists from Tupelo and Oxford rallied for the cause of peace on the Courthouse steps in Tupelo on Saturday, January 18. There was a good turnout and we received press coverage in several local papers and on MS Public Radio.

Many UU's also participated in the Martin Luther King vigil on January 20th. We carried candles around the square with over 100 others, singing to honor the life of a modern day martyr.

**Piano anyone?** Priscilla Handy wonders if there is someone amongst us who might be willing to give her piano lessons. She has the idea of using the piano in UU Hall and donating the cost of lessons to UUCO. Anybody interested? Call Priscilla at 236-3592 or email: phandyusa@netscape.net

A Letter from Don Hanson...

Hi... Just a note to update you on what is going on with me. I have a girlfriend from Australia named Paula. We've been together a year and three months. I met her right after I moved to Minneapolis. Paula is going to Australia in March and I'm going to go along from March 7 to March 24. Paula and I went to Miami, FL for Christmas. There is a Unitarian Universalist Camp there at Christmas time called SWIM (Southeast Unitarian Universalist Institute at Miami). We slept out in a tent and it was a lot colder than it had been the last time I had gone to the same camp in 1993. One night it was 40 degrees and a bunch of motors in the surrounding farm fields came on to protect the crops from freezing. All night long I kept thinking that a car was coming to run over me. We were set up at the end of a road. I was sleeping on the ground, so it was nerve-wracking and as soon as I fell asleep, I would wake up again thinking a car was coming down the road.

I have started a consulting business. My first client is the Department of Electrical Engineering at the University of Minnesota. I am an Adjunct Professor there. I am teaching senior design class for them. I am hoping to get a contract with the Army for consulting on radar. It's almost a sure thing. So I am making some money. I really am having a good time not working. I love Minneapolis. There's a lot

to do here. -- Don

**Here is a model of forthrightness for us all:**

Exercising with others in the Wellness Center pool in Tupelo, I announced the Saturday Jan. 18 '02 public peace presence planned for the Lee Co Courthouse. One pool friend immediately began expressing her agreement that the war we are threatening against Iraq is a very bad thing. Another woman raised an eyebrow and asked, "Who is behind this? I said simply and confidently, "I am."

Quiet hung there above the waterline for an auspicious moment. I 'pulled up' certain professors, classes, groups at Earlham College and Iowa U (my education, Quaker experiences, the brain winds caused by diversity on campuses), and life's adventures, and hugged them -- I knew within myself that I have the final responsibility. I am 'behind' what I believe and in what I participate. -- Ruth Jaeckel

Subject: "Keepers" - from Barbara Fournie

I grew up in the fifties with practical parents -- a Mother, God love her, who washed aluminum foil after she cooked in it, then reused it. She was the original recycle queen, before they had a name for it... A Father who was happier getting old shoes fixed than buying new ones. Their marriage was good, their dreams focused. Their best friends lived barely a wave away. I can see them now, Dad in trousers, tee shirt and a hat and Mom in a house dress, lawn mower in one hand, dishtowel in the other. It was the time for fixing things -- a curtain rod, the kitchen radio, screen door, the oven door, the hem in a dress.

Things we keep. It was a way of life, and sometimes it made me crazy. All that re-fixing, reheating, renewing, I wanted just once to be wasteful. Waste meant affluence. Throwing things away meant there'd always be more. But then my Mother died, and on that clear summer's night, in the warmth of the hospital room, I was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn't any 'more.'

Sometimes, what we care about most gets all used up and goes away...never to return. So...while we have it...it's best we love it.....and care for it.....and fix it when it's broken.....and heal it when it's sick. This is true.....for marriage.....and old cars.....and children with bad report cards.....and dogs with bad hips.....and aging parents.....and grandparents. We keep them because they are worth it, because we are worth it. Some things we keep. Like a best friend that moved away -- or -- a classmate we grew up with. There are just some things that make life important, like people we know who are special.....and so, we keep them close! Reach out and keep someone today.

>>>>> **MIDSOUTH DISTRICT** <<<<<<<

Many folks are looking forward to gathering in Ellisville for a MISSISSIPPI CLUSTER on February 8th (Saturday) at Our Home Universalist Unitarian Church. We hope all UU congregations in the state will be represented --- from the Gulf Coast through Hattiesburg and Jackson up to Oxford and Tupelo, of course, Ellisville. Anytime Unitarian Universalists in Mississippi get together it is great -- and this should be no exception! Here are pertinent details:

\* **REGISTRAR** for the event is LINDA FOSHEE, and she will be listening for the number of folks coming! Please let her hear via email to: foshees@netdoor.com (Linda Foshee)

\* **COST** is \$7/each, for lunch and snacks. You can pay on site. \* **SCHEDULE:** Convene at 10:30AM (coffee and snacks available before) and finish by about 3:30PM.

\* **CONTENT:** Some presentations from Mid-South District, but mainly time for sharing amongst congregations, facilitated by Rev. Roy Reynolds. Rev. Margaret Ennis, from the Mid-South RE Committee will also be present. **BRING NEWS AND IDEAS TO SHARE!**

\* **GOAL:** To build MISSISSIPPI UU COMMUNITY so that UUs in our state connect and network to support each other and the values of Unitarian Universalism in our state.

\* **DIRECTIONS:** These can be found at the web site for Our Home Universalist Unitarian, Ellisville, at:  
[http://www.megagate.com/~our\\_home/](http://www.megagate.com/~our_home/)

Now, the hospitality at Our Home is legendary -- so, for that reason alone everyone should come! But, in addition, this will be a day to talk with other Unitarian Universalists in the state and in Mid-South District about what our congregations and the district are doing -- to swap ideas and share successes and learn things from each other that make congregation life easier and richer.

Please be sure some folks from your congregation plan to be at Our Home in Ellisville two weeks from now! More questions? Email: Linda Foshee (foshees@netdoor.com) or Rev. Roy Reynolds (RoyReyn@aol.com)  
Blessings to all,  
Eunice Benton

>>>>> **UU BED & BREAKFAST** <<<<<<

Homecomings International, Inc. is the Bed and Breakfast Travel Network for Unitarian Universalists and all religious liberals. There will be information about this travel directory on our literature table at UU Hall and there is also the following website:  
[www.uuhomecomings.com](http://www.uuhomecomings.com)

[dmarion@watervalley.net](mailto:dmarion@watervalley.net)