

UUCOMMUNICATOR

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford

October 2008

Visit us at: <http://www.uuoxford.com>

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-----HOW TO FIND US-----

1. Travel on College Hill Road towards Clear Creek.
2. At the intersection with Old Sardis Road, go past the stop sign and continue straight on CR 314 for 3.5 miles.
3. Turn right onto CR 198 (you should see a white sign saying "Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford").
4. Go .2 miles. UU Hall, a light-colored building with a trailer next to it, is on your left immediately past CR 145.

TUPELO GROUP: The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Tupelo welcomes visitors. They meet the first, second, third and fourth Sundays of each month at 11 a.m. in Temple B'Nai Israel, 1301 Marshall Street. Website: www.UUTupelo.org.

-----SUNDAY SERVICES FOR OCTOBER-----

Our services start at 11:00 a.m. and childcare is provided.

October 5 - Our values in words and deeds
How we can talk and walk what we believe

October 12 - Blessing of the animals

Oct 19 - This I Believe

One of our favorite series, this talk will be given by member Patrick Maloy with Terri Wright as service leader

October 26 - Day of the Dead

A celebration and ceremony of remembrance from the Spanish-speaking world

And don't forget our thriving Sunday school program! Classes for lower and upper elementary as well as middle school will meet this month on October 5 and October 19. For more information, please contact religious education trustees Susan Pedigo (spedigo@olemiss.edu) or Hans Sinha (hansps@mac.com).

-----MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY IS NOVEMBER 9: ARE YOU READY?-----

Do you want to become a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford?

Fall is a time for a lot of things at UUCO, including a time for lots of newcomers and a time when people think about joining the congregation. In November we set aside one Sunday to welcome and celebrate new UUCO members.

November 9 is Membership Sunday!

What does it mean to join the congregation? We ask that you:

*Make a commitment to be part of this dynamic, intergenerational community. That can mean a variety of things, but generally includes joining the congregation on Sunday mornings and for other special gatherings as you are able.

*Find one or more ways you can help the congregation function as a faith community. Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find a list of committee and openings on those committees. It takes us all!

*Continue on your own path of spiritual growth and find ways to share that with others.

*Contribute financially to the congregation. We recognize that the amount people can contribute varies a lot (and can vary from year to year). For our financial planning, it is helpful if people can make a financial pledge to the congregation.

*Last but not least, sign the membership book

If you are interested in becoming a member of UUCO, please contact Gail Stratton (byges@olemiss.edu). There will be a membership class in October to discuss what it means to be a member. It is also a chance to learn more about the Unitarian Universalist Association, the larger fellowship to which we belong. Come join us!!

-----EVERYBODY CAN HAVE A MINISTRY: SERVING ON A UUCO COMMITTEE OR PROJECT-----
How can you contribute this year?

The Coffee Committee is not officially in our by-laws but it's of great importance, and you can tell because the newsletter editor put it first! This committee needs a coordinator and a team of people who can come early on Sundays to make coffee and bring goodies. Volunteers to serve abound, but they need a leader, too. Contact us at uuoxford@uuoxford.com.

Does anyone want to start a choir? We don't have a Choir Committee yet but we'll be happy to start a choir without one! If you're interested, let us know at uuoxford@uuoxford.com.

Help plan our yearly retreat, to be held this year on November 1 and 2. Contact our fearless retreat leaders Elaine Gelbard (egelbard@bellsouth.net) and Gail Stratton (byges@olemiss.edu).

People on our Membership Committee greet attendees on Sunday mornings, help with the compassion ministry, write letters to visitors, and help with the new members class and Membership Sunday. If a piece of this sounds like something you'd like to do, contact Gail Stratton (byges@olemiss.edu, 281-0868).

The Communications Committee needs reporters for the newsletter, help with monthly newspaper ads, and writers for press releases for the local paper when we have special events. This committee also posts materials on our web site and keeps an e-mail list for announcements of interest to our members and friends. Contact Luanne Buchanan (lbuchana@olemiss.edu, 234-3833) if you're interested in improving our communications.

The Programming Committee is fundamental to our mission. They plan and present Sunday morning services, help coordinate and arrange live music, and work as service leaders. Contact Anne Quinney (aquinney@olemiss.edu, 234-0771) or Sharon Walls (skwalls921@bellsouth.net, 234-8453).

The Building and Grounds Committee oversees the care and maintenance of UUCO's buildings (church, trailer and storage sheds) and grounds so that they provide a safe, welcoming and planet-friendly context for our congregational life.

Specific tasks:

1. Develop and keep up-to-date a log of regularly required maintenance, such as cleaning, grass-cutting, air-filter replacement, pest management (e.g., wasps, ants), etc.
2. Organize weekly post-service clean-up by a group of reliable, regular volunteers
3. Organize and coordinate periodic work days to make sure maintenance tasks that are not included in monthly cleaning/lawn mowing are taken care of. For example, outdoor work days might be called for

pruning trees and shrubs in parking and play areas, painting the exterior of the church, etc.

4. Plan, plant, and care for a community vegetable/herb garden on the grounds. This would include coordinating harvesting of produce and fruit (from existing trees) and planning for use of the food.

5. Plan and implement fundraising events to pay for large building & grounds related projects. Contact Beth Boerger (boerger@olemiss.edu, 232-8980) if you can help in this area.

The Green Sanctuary Committee helps complete congregation assessment and action plans, and sets up outreach, education and community service projects. Our contact person is Susie Pedigo (spedigo@olemiss.edu, 513-6219).

The Stewardship Committee helps organize the yearly pledge drive and keeps us on track with our finances so we can carry out our goals as a congregation. Contact Paula Shanks (paulashanks@bellsouth.net, 234-8817) if you're able to help

The Religious Education Committee organizes adult RE topics and meetings, and they're also a key link in our ongoing youth programming for pre-school, elementary, middle and high school participants. Contacts are Susie Pedigo (spedigo@olemiss.edu, 513-6219) and Hans Sinha (hansps@mac.com, 513-4855).

-----2008 CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT-----

Planning will begin soon for the annual UUCO retreat at Wall Doxey State Park! Last year, after a break of a few years, we resumed our annual off-site gathering in a natural setting, and a great time was had by all. Please mark your calendars to save November 1 and 2 for this year's event. If you are interested in helping organize the retreat, please contact Gail Stratton (281-0868) or Elaine Gelbard (236-2545).

-----RECEIVING, AND GIVING, SUPPORT FOR UU CONGREGATIONS-----

Our congregation recently received a \$300 grant for public relations. One of its uses is visible outside the building, in the banner that now hangs over our entrance. The remaining funds will be used for print advertising.

We also have applied for a Chalice Lighters grant to make important improvements to our building. We are in line with other worthy congregations and appreciate being considered.

Chalice Lighters also provides us with an opportunity to support those other congregations in need. For more information on this program, please visit the Mid-South District web site at http://www.msduua.org/home/Resources_Chalice/Chalice%20Lighters/chalichelighter2.html.

-----UUCO MEMBERS SHARE NEWS-----

Congratulations are in order to Pat Miller! A new species of daddy longlegs, also known as harvestman, will be named after Pat in honor of her discovery of this creature nearly 30 years ago in southern Missouri. The official name will be *Hadrobunus milleri*. The name will be official in the near future, after another expert publishes an article about the Pat Miller discovery in a peer-reviewed journal. In the meantime, you can catch up on the daddy longlegs in general by looking for *hadrobunus* on Wikipedia. Way to go, Pat!

Charlene Dye, recently relocated to New Paltz, New York, has given her friends a few ways to stay in touch. Charlene's new phone number is 845-255-0212. She also can be reached via e-mail at cdye3@verizon.net.

NEWS FROM THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT-

From June Bryant, MSD TEACH Trustee:

It's GINI! -- at the Healthy Congregation Conference. The big news for the 2008 Healthy

Congregation Conference on October 11th is that Gini Courter will be with us! It's her first visit to a Mid-South event, so southern hospitality demands a big turnout to welcome her!

Get folks in your congregation organized to be in Birmingham on October 11th for the day-long conference! In addition to Gini's morning presentations, there will be afternoon workshops on Minister Transition Times, Preparedness for Congregations, Social Justice, Sustainable Growth for Small Congregations (UP!), and a YAC gathering for youth!

The annual Healthy Congregation Conference is always structured so that lots of folks in a congregation can attend and get different kinds of information and wisdom – in addition to meeting UUs from other congregations. It begins at 9 a.m. and finishes in time for attendees to get home the same day.

Registration and a flyer are available on the Mid-South site at www.msduua.org.

So – come meet and welcome Gini Courter and glean resources and inspiration for your congregation! Gini is an energetic and inspiring leader in our UU family, and she is the highest-ranking volunteer leader in our UUA. She is the UUA Moderator and, in that position, presides over the General Assembly, all UUA Board meetings, and is an important voice for Unitarian Universalism.

See you in Birmingham on the 11th!

-----**CLOSING THOUGHTS**-----

Money

A little piece of paper seems to turn the world
Not love nor peace nor ethic of work
It's all been tried to overturn the leaf
The only thing that works is the passing of the
buck

The cause of all fights at home and over sea
Rules don't apply to the one with the most
It is discovered that power requires deception
So, lies and death are hailed as noble

Is it indeed the root of the evil?
Or is the evil with those who worship?
Bowing of the heads with one eye opened
And the recipient of that prayer is known
Terri J. Wright, UUCO member

Is there an image for the church community which includes the sense of family but also helps us make sense of conflict and diversity—an image that will allow community to educate us (that is, lead us out) into the public realm? I have been helped by thinking of the church as “a school of the Spirit,” a place where God is continually drawing me out of myself into larger life.

Parker Palmer, Quaker activist

Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

Mary Oliver, “The Summer Day

-----**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR**-----

Please let Luanne know of corrections and additions. You can reach her by phone at 234-3833, and at lbuchana@olemiss.edu.

We hope to send out our November newsletter on October 28. Please consider submitting an article!

Many thanks to Gail Stratton and Terri Wright for contributing to this month's newsletter.