



The UUCO News

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford

August 2009

October Issue

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SUNDAYS IN OCTOBER

October 4--The Covenanting Process as a Spiritual

Discipline. Rev. Dr. Barry Whittemore, from Birmingham will be our visiting minister. The covenanting process requires values clarification, prioritization, and focus, but it is what moves us from being a conglomeration to a congregation. It is not so much wordsmithing as developing a disciplined group spiritual practice. Remember--nothing worthwhile ever comes easy.



Rev. Whittemore was ordained in 1999 in the Holston Valley UU Church in Gray, Tennessee. He holds an M.Div. from Duke Divinity School and a doctorate in History from Carnegie Mellon. He has served churches in Tennessee, North Carolina and Alabama and in addition, served as the Heritage and Values Lecturer at the Mountain School for Congregational Leadership from 2003-2008. Rev. Whittemore is now based in Birmingham and is helping churches that do not have a regular Minister. The service leader will be Mary Queyja.



October 11--You're not in Kansas anymore, Dorothy (or if I only had a brain, a heart, courage, and a home), a journey in the land of Oz. Come and take a magical, mystery trip with Paula Shanks.

October 18--Blessing of the Animals. Please join us for this intergenerational and interspecies service. Here we honor our animal companions and their importance in our lives. It is customary for members and friends of the congregation to bring their



animal companions with them to the service. If that is not possible, people are welcome to bring photos of their animal friends. RE will be combined with the service this morning. Susie Pedigo will be the service leader.

October 25--Living From the Heart.



Alice Dilbeck will be visiting from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Huntsville.

What is it that causes people to seek out Unitarian Universalist communities? What holds them close? What lets them float away? Does our cult of individualism keep us from getting what we yearn for? How can we keep our integrity as individuals while putting the community first?

Alice Dilbeck has been a member of the Huntsville, Alabama Unitarian Universalist Church for over 18 years, serving in many roles including President, Worship Service Leader, Treasurer, Hospitality Chair, RE Co-Chair, and general cook and bottle washer. She has also served on the Mid-South District volunteer staff helping to organize conferences and always enjoys visiting with other UUs and hearing their perspectives. Service leader is Gail Stratton.

 Sunday services begin at 11:00 a.m. Childcare is provided. We would love to have you stay for coffee and snacks after the service.

Come join us!! It won't be the same withoUt yoU.

CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT--November 7th--SAVE THE DATE

Please make plans now to attend our twelfth annual retreat on November 7th at Wall Doxey State Park. This will be a time to deepen relationships and plan for the future. We will eat together, play together, and put our heads together to clarify our visions for our congregation and how to bring those visions to fruition.



Some highlights of the retreat:

- Three meals provided
- Time to walk around the lake, sing around a fire, pull up a chair and chat with one another
- Opportunities to hear and give input on board initiatives (congregational covenant, Sunday second hour)
- Time to explore what is important to you and share your ideas/passions about our future
- Opportunity to stay overnight in group cabin or campsite



- Childcare and children's activities provided by our fabulous Vicki Reithel



Be on the lookout for a registration form; we will need your commitment by mid-October.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Our high school youth group is off to a strong start! It has grown from 4 members last year, to TEN members this year. No surprise, really. If you had the opportunity to spend an evening every week with Ross and Skadi and our thoughtful teens, wouldn't you jump at the chance? Their first topic for the year was health care. They watched the film "Sicko," followed by a discussion of health care and UU principles. They invite you to join them briefly after this Sunday's service to write our congressional representatives urging them to pass reform that grants everyone quality health care. The youth will supply all necessary materials, from stamps and envelopes to statistics and sample letters. Take action and make your voice heard!

Speaking of getting involved, the youth group would be grateful for volunteers to provide a dinner for them one Wednesday evening this semester. Sharing a meal is a central part of their time together, so any contribution you can make would be most appreciated. Contact RE chair Susie Pedigo to volunteer: 513-6219. Thanks - the high school youth posse



FROM THE UU CHILDCARE ROOM

Lots of painting going on in the kids room on Sundays!! Feel free to stop by after the service and check out our 'Masterpieces"! Playdough is a big hit, but too messy. Anyone have any higher grade modeling clay? Also we are on a puzzle kick and would love more puzzles (100 pieces or less)! We

go through our snacks rather quickly so any box crackers, cookies, or juices are greatly appreciated. Also I think when the weather gets cool again we could use some sort of coat rack for scarves and jackets.

Thank you to Susie Pedigo for bringing a variety of snacks a few weeks ago and also organizing our crafts and storage space. Peace to all--Vickie Reithel

NEWS FROM THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

Experience "*Building The World We Dream About*"--and more!--at the OCTOBER 17th HEALTHY CONGREGATION CONFERENCE. The 2009 Healthy Congregation Conference in Huntsville on October 17th will feature "Building the World We Dream About," the new curriculum for congregations, and its author, Dr. Mark Hicks.

But, as usual, the Healthy Congregation Conference will offer even more than the featured presentation. There's "Ensuring Leadership Development" and Adult Youth Advisor Training and "A Primer for UU Worship" and "Stewardship Planning With A Program Budget"--and lots more!

The annual Healthy Congregation Conference is always structured so that a number 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 folks to get home that day.

Registration, information and a flyer are available at www.msduua.org, Mid-South's website.

In Mid-South District our theme for this year is "...So Our Children Can Fly"--challenging us to live richly and responsibly in a multicultural world. Dr. Mark Hicks and the new "*Building The World We Dream About*"--and the other workshops for congregation leaders as well promise to be inspiring and enriching paths toward that goal! See you in Huntsville on the 17th!

June Bryant--junebryant@cox.net
Mid-South District - UUA

MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY--Coming in November

We at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford would like to invite you to become a member of our family and would be pleased to have you join us for a Membership Sunday in November. We welcome all guests and recent attendees.

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 committees and openings on those committees. It takes all of our cooperation to make things work as a beloved community. If you are able, we would be pleased to have your assistance and ideas.
- Continue on your own path of spiritual growth and find ways to share that with others. We would like you to share your thoughts and ideas as we grow together in our beloved community. It gives us all a chance to learn something new or share with others.
- Contribute financially to the congregation. We recognize that the amount people can contribute varies (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.

We plan to hold 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. If you are interested in becoming a member of UUCO or would like more information, please contact Linda Iorio, Membership Trustee, at 662-414-5433 or kneestwo@yahoo.com. Come join us!

\$\$\$\$\$ FINANCIAL REPORT \$\$\$\$\$

--for the fiscal year ending 6/30/09

Total income for the 2008-2009 fiscal year was \$30,659 and total expenses were \$31,158. This leaves a deficit of \$499 for the year, which is

not too bad since our 2008-2009 budget had projected a \$2,000 shortfall! The \$499 shortfall for the year may yet be offset by a number of pledges which have not been completed. Some of these were oversights and will be completed soon. Of note regarding our income, our cash contributions received increased this year by 60%, our UU hall rental income increased by 64%, and our donations-in-kind totaled \$460.49. As to expenses, building, membership, and religious education all came in under budget.

Additionally, I am happy to report that our congregation contributed \$4,385.18 for the year in our give-away-the-plate program. This exceeds last year's community and special contributions of \$3,333.05 by \$1,052.13. We are a generous people. --Paula Shanks, Financial Trustee



A BIG THANK YOU!

"True art is imbued with the spirit of the artist - love for the subject and an intense desire to convey that love."

Sunday, Sept. 20, 2009, the UU congregation celebrated the gift of the chalice quilt and the art of artist, Marty Vinograd. Even with torrential rain, a large group gathered, including special guests, Marty's sister, Mary Ann Reed Bowen, Mary Ann's daughter; granddaughter and her husband. Exploring the power of imagination, Gail Stratton described how the UU Congregation was imagined into existence. Paula read from her book, *An American Original*, how Marty became an artist at age 50 and told stories of their creative adventures together. A highlight of the service was cello and piano music provided by Dan and Jillian Mattern. The program ended in our closing circle, singing John Lennon's classic, *Imagine*. A reception followed featuring tables of luscious goodies, coordinated by Susie Pedigo. The hall was decorated with a beautiful floral arrangements provided by Mary Queyja.



Where's Enku?

Our friend, and recent new member, Enku Ide has moved to Detroit. He had the opportunity to take a 6 month internship with *Labor Notes*, a media and organizing project that has been the voice of union activists who want to put the **movement** back in the labor movement since 1979. This is surely a great opportunity for Enku. We wish him well in this new endeavor and hope he will come back to visit us.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be a meeting of the **Social Justice and Action Committee** immediately following the October 4 service.

A **Book Discussion Group** led by Briggs Massey is being held on an ongoing basis every Monday. Currently under discussion is ***The Four Agreements***, a book written by Don Miguel Ruiz, based on ancient Toltec wisdom, reveals the source of self-limiting beliefs and offers a four-step road map to freedom and empowerment. The group meets at Barbara Hardin's home, 982 Hwy. 7 South, Water Valley. For more information, call Briggs at 234-7217.

Directions to UU Hall

1. Travel on College Hill Road toward 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 mobile home next to it, is on your left immediately past CR145.

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.

Contact Information

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 Please reply to: uuoxford@uuoxford.com

Newsletter submissions are due by the 25th of the month and may be emailed to Linda Cox at the above address or to lindakcox@ms.metrocast.net.

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