

Jan—Feb 2009

An Uncommon Denomination Coming of Age in the Deep South

Upcoming Services

Service at 11:00, childcare available

January 4, 2009	
Sheri Glowinski	A Contemplative Service
January 11, 2009	
Enku Ide	A Brief UU History
January 18, 2009	
Dr. Susan Hrostowski	TBA
January 25, 2009	
Dr. Curtis Austin	Inside the Black Panther Party
February 1, 2009	
Stephanie DeArmey	Yoga
February 8, 2009	
TBA	TBA
February 15, 2009	
Chris Werle	Darwin's 200th Birthday Party
February 22, 2009	
Doak Mansfield	TBA

President's Message by Sheri Glowinski

Dear Friends,

I hope this newsletter finds each of you doing well as we move into this New Year. I suspect that 2009 will prove to be a busy one for us at HUUF.

As many of you know by now, we are taking advantage of our circumstances at the Garden Center to give thought to who we are as a fellowship, and as well, who we want to be and what we want to do going forward. At our recent Town Hall meeting, we explored the option of purchasing our own building. Although we did not make any firm decisions at this time, we did discuss a need for updating our mission statement, creating a congregational covenant and using these as guides to make decisions and move forward. If you weren't able to attend the meeting, no worries – these topics are very important to us and we will have another meeting in the coming months. Until then, I encourage you to contribute your thoughts. Feel free to communicate with me or anyone on the Board in person or via email.

As always, we invite you to be involved in any/all aspects of our Fellowship, whether it be planning our services, setting up or cleaning up our worship space, social action activities or religious education. Another such opportunity is to become a Worship Leader. We have scheduled **Worship Leader training for January 18th** after our regularly scheduled service. At this training, we will give you resources you need to lead our services. Because we are a lay-led Fellowship, it truly takes contributions from each of us to continue to be successful. We hope to see you there!

May the spirit of the holidays be in your heart throughout the New Year!

Yours in faith,
 Sheri

Worship Services

Greetings, and happy holidays from your friendly worship committee! When you get back from wherever your travels may take you, don't forget to check out HUUF on Sundays, as we've got some great programs scheduled for you. We will be continuing to hire a professional minister once a month, usually on 3rd Sundays, and we hope to increase the diversity of our rotating ministerial staff. Rev./Dr. Susan Hrostowski will be joining us at the pulpit for the first time on January 18th, and we are hoping she will be available to join us several more times in 2009. Susan is an ordained Episcopalian minister and is an active member of her church, but you may also have seen her speak for our friends at the UU church in Ellisville. Susan also received her PhD in Social Work from Tulane University and is an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at USM. We are very pleased to have her start our year off, and we hope you can come see her in action.

We will feature several other interesting topics next quarter, including a presentation by a member of USM's Black Studies Department, Dr. Curtis Austin. Dr. Austin will be speaking on the Black Panthers Movement, a service that is sure to be thought-provoking and educational. And 2009 will also mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, that hero of humanists, and we will be planning a special service for that occasion.

As always, should you have any ideas for a speaker or a topic that you would like to see at HUUF, please contact me, as we are always looking for creative and interesting ways to fill in our schedule of services. It may take a small degree of courage to get in front of the group, but if there is a topic you are passionate about please let me know. We are a lay-led community and thus rely heavily upon the contributions of our members to make our Fellowship run. Another way to contribute to your Sunday service is to sign up for a turn as facilitator, the service leader. We have a good core group of 4-5 people that sign up on a regular basis, but it would be extremely helpful if we could get 1-2 more wonderful, magnificent people to help out with this!

Worship News

Adult Religious Education

In November and December, two programs were brought to a close that provided an opportunity for us as a fellowship to deepen our understanding and commitment to living more fully the Principles of our UU tradition:

Peace Vigils - From June through November "Peace Vigils" were held the first Sunday of each month. During these vigils members joined together to express solidarity with the sacrifice and suffering of our soldiers, their families and the people of Iraqi and Afghanistan in the two tragic wars.

Love and Forgiveness Conversations - During eight evenings this fall, members gathered to explore issues of love and forgiveness. Through these conversations, it was hoped that we would more consciously recognize and use the power of love and forgiveness to address issues in our lives as well as deepen our relationships in community.

Building on these two programs and our worship experiences each Sunday, this spring we will hold discussions to formulate a **vision statement** for our fellowship. This vision statement, "a clear statement of what we wish to be," will be both a source of inspiration for our community and an indispensable guide for future decision-making.

Children's Religious Education

Our Children's RE program will resume in January and will take place on the following dates: Jan. 11th, Jan. 25th, Feb. 8th, Feb. 22nd, Mar. 8th, and Mar. 22nd. In our activities, we explore the meaning of spirituality in our youngest members' lives. On the days that Children's RE does not take place, children are welcome to join their families in the regular service or to stay with our child care provider who is at HUUF every week during the regular service. Feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Sheri Glowinski



Social Action Committee: HUUF in the Community

Fair Trade Coffee and Tea available For Sale

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee has partnered with Equal Exchange to buy coffee, tea and chocolate directly from farmers following the standards and principles of fair trade, insuring that low-income farmers earn a fair, living wage. These items may be purchased through HUUF's Social Action Committee on Sundays or by emailing Stacie Chandler at stacie_chandler@comcast.net For more information go to www.uusc.org. "Trade justice for the developing world and for this generation is a truly significant way for developed countries to show commitment to bringing about an end to global poverty." Nelson Mandela .

Wear a White Ribbon to Support Marriage Rights

The Social Action Committee has white knots available. The white knot is the new symbol for marriage equality. It takes two traditional symbols of marriage—white and tying the knot—and combines them to show support for marriage rights for everyone. For more information, see www.whiteknot.org. See excerpts from Bill Sinkford's November 6, 2008 letter on page 3.



Town Hall Meeting

After the December potluck lunch, Susan Nordurft, Vice-President of HUUF, led a Town Hall meeting to discuss our future. Jim Moore presented slides of a church facility that is available for purchase. This precipitated a lively discussion of what visions we have for our community, what kinds of service we might provide to the community, how that will change if we had a building of our own, and what kind of financial commitments we could manage. No definite conclusions were reached but we plan to return to this discussion in the new year, with an emphasis on vision and values. Our goal will be to create a church covenant to guide our future. Please plan to join us—we want to hear all voices.

Worship Leader Training January 18

Scheduled after our service, this training will give you resources you need to lead our services. Please plan to join us.

HUUF supports local World AIDS Day Events

As we commemorated the 20th World AIDS Day on December 1, we remembered those lost to the illness, but we also celebrate the lives of those still living. Every nine minutes a person is infected with HIV. Please take time to stop HIV and its effects on our community. *The AIDS Services Coalition sponsored three displays of the National AIDS Quilt in the Pine Belt in commemoration of this 20th World AIDS Day.*



Terrorizing the Vulnerable: La Migra in Mississippi

A continued story written by Enku Ide that first appeared in the Oct-Dec, 2008 newsletter. The realities of racism and persistent racial segregation have impeded inter-community understanding. Immigrant Latinos, coming to the US generally out of dire need to find work, have little understanding of the racial oppression encountered by Black workers for hundreds of years, and the same racist lines which have historically been used to divide working class White and Black people are now being utilized to undermine community and workplace unity among Black and Latino workers. Anti-immigrant and racist anti-Latino rhetoric also seems to resonate within many sectors of the working class as reactionary responses to competition for manufacturing and construction jobs and generally unfounded fears of competition for public services. As Mississippi is an impoverished state, and the rise in the immigrant population is a relatively new phenomenon, social services (public or private) which could help in the aftermath of the August 25 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid at Howard Industries in Laurel, MS, are severely lacking. While the August police action has directly attacked the immigrant community, the ideological work of criminalizing immigrant workers has laid the foundation of mistrust and isolation for years. This has ultimately been linked to larger Nativist movements and rhetoric which have gripped the nation in response to current economic fears and has resounded throughout the region. The humanitarian crisis which is now a reality seems to be unfolding with little resistance among the US-born population.



HUUF Joins Our Home UU for Seder Service

HUUF members joined Our Home Universalist Unitarian Church for their annual Thanksgiving Seder service. At this service, we recognize both our Native American and Puritan heritages as well as the struggles for freedom that so many in our



American history have dealt with. We give thanks for the paths that those who have gone before us have carved for us today. After the service, we shared a delicious potluck with our friends from Our Home.

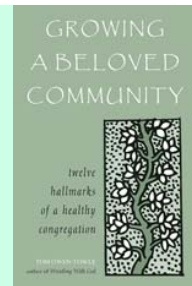
Open Letter Regarding 2008 Marriage/Family Ballot Initiatives

Our faith community will continue to fight for marriage equality for all people, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. We will continue to offer steadfast and passionate support for all bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender people. And we will continue to defend the rights of all committed couples to marry and to extend loving family environments to children in need. Marriage equality will one day be a reality throughout the country. As we mourn our recent losses, we also renew our commitment to education, advocacy, and love. In spite of the setbacks, we are making progress, one state at a time. Justice is knocking, and our work is helping to open a very heavy door. Our patience, passion, and determination will carry us through the disappointments. We will continue to stand on the side of love. And we will win, because love will win.

~Bill Sinkford, President, Unitarian Universalist Association

Growing Beloved Community

Mid-South District's theme for the year, "Growing Beloved Community," takes its inspiration from the book of this name by Tom Owen-Towle, a much-respected UU minister, now retired. In the season of the winter solstice, of Christmas and Hanukah and Kwanza, we humans affirm what is beloved in our lives. We pause to celebrate what we value most, we give gifts to those we love and to those to whom we would extend love, we sing of what brings us joy. It is a beloved time. It is a holy time. In the first chapter of *Growing Beloved Community*, Rev. Owen-Towle writes about what "holy" means, and he suggests that "being holy invites us to be still and know that our lives have come into being through and are sustained by a loving Spirit beyond our control, beyond even our comprehension, [and] to gather in song and enjoy music as a spiritual expression rather than solely as performance..." In this season, especially, we come to our UU congregations hoping to find again that which we call holy – to touch and be touched by it. "Holiness," Owen-Towle asserts, "is most nearly approximated through experiencing the fullness of the Beloved Community in all its multifarious forms – from local parish to global whole."



Electronic Communications Guidelines from Mid-South District

"Speak when you are angry - and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret."

Dr. Laurence J. Parker

Electronic means of communications are fabulous tools when used appropriately. However, as we use these tools we need to remember that 96% of communication is nonverbal and follow a few guidelines. Deborah Weiner, the Unitarian Universalist Association's director of electronic communication, has advice for using email. "Email is great for arranging meetings," she says, "but not for dealing with complex issues or mediating disputes. Email can easily be misinterpreted because it's impossible to show nuance. I've seen some truly cruel and mean things done with email."

Her recommendations: If you're responding to an emotional situation, let your email sit overnight before sending it. Adopt a measured tone. Don't forward emails of others without their permission. Remember that once you send an email you lose all control of it; it can be copied, sent to others, and quoted out of context even years later.

Every congregation should have rules about email, she says. "We can't live without email these days, so we need to live with it. Using an email list is a privilege, not a right. There is no first amendment right to destroy a congregation with ill-considered emails. Don't assume that everyone knows how to act appropriately on email. People don't all come from the same place. You need to spell it out." Other recommendations: include: Never say anything about someone in an email that you wouldn't want that person to see. If someone wants to have an email conversation about someone else or a complicated issue, invite them to meet with you in person. To read this entire article in the UUA publication *Interconnections* please see <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/leaderslibrary/interconnections/18389.shtml>

Web Searching That Donates to Charity

You can use Goodsearch as your search engine, and designate a favorite charity. Every time you conduct a search, Goodsearch will make a donation. For example, you could name Southern Pines Animal Shelter as the designated charity, and direct money to be donated there every time you search online. It's a convenient way to give other people's money to a charity you support.



ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTORS IN THE SPREAD OF HIV/AIDS IS OUR FAILURE TO SPEAK HONESTLY ABOUT HOW THE RISK OF TRANSMISSION CAN BE REDUCED. THE ABSTINENCE-ONLY PROGRAMS SPONSORED FOR YEARS BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WITHHOLD FROM OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IN THIS COUNTRY AND AROUND THE WORLD, THE MOST CRUCIAL FACTS ABOUT PROTECTING THEMSELVES. IT IS A TERRIBLE SIN OF OMISSION.

BILL SINKFORD, UUA PRESIDENT

Back Page Commentary by Malcolm Byrd

Does attending regular religious services extend one’s life? On November 22, 2008, Yahoo News featured a report that originally appeared in the journal of *Psychology of Health*. The study’s authors concluded that attending a weekly religious service, regardless of your faith, may lower your risk of death by 20%. No one wants to stick their necks out and say, “Yes definitely, most definitely, the amount of time you have living here on planet earth will be extended if you attend regular, weekly, religious services.” Nevertheless, the results are interesting.

Eliezer Schnall, clinical assistant professor of psychology at Yeshiva University in New York, speculates that the positive results may be due to social support and that it could be that harder people are more likely to attend regular services. However, when researchers “adjusted the data to account for physical health, age, ethnicity, income, education, social support, important life events and life satisfaction, they found that weekly religious service attendance was responsible for a 20% reduction in the risk of death. Attending less than once a week was responsible for a 15% drop in the risk of death.” Don’t take a risk—see you next Sunday! See the full story at http://news.yahoo.com/s/hsn/20081126/hl_hsn/religionmayhelpextendyourlife.

Meditation for Beginning — by Judith L. Quarles

Spirit of life and love:

In this season of beginning

Some of us are hurried and harried.

Some of us feel sorrowful and afraid.

Some of us are not yet ready to step forward into the future.

May we minister to one another with wisdom,

Meeting our friends with open ears, open eyes, and open hearts.

In this season of beginning

Some of us are celebrating triumphs and joys.

Some of us feel whole and happy.

Some of us are eager and excited, curious to see what happens next.

Let us each, as we are able, take part in one another’s happiness and enthusiasm.

Quiet spirit of life and love,

Bring us the grace to share wholly and faithfully in the lives of our friends and loved ones.

—Amen

HUUF Board		HUUF Mission
President	Sheri Glowinski	HUUF is a welcoming community that responsibly searches for truth and meaning and respects the inherent worth and dignity of each person. We welcome diversity of age, sexual orientation, race, gender identity, abilities and theology.
Past-President	Nell Cobb	
Vice-President	Susan Nodurft	
Worship Committee	Chris Werle	
Membership Committee	Nichole Werle	
Finance Committee	Stephanie Millet	
Social Action	Janet Webb	
Newsletter	Lilian H. Hill	

Hattiesburg Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

A member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

A safe, welcoming atmosphere for spiritual exploration.

Services are held each Sunday at 11:00 am in the Hattiesburg Area Garden Center located at 209 N. Hutchinson Avenue, just south of Hattiesburg High School.

www.huuf.us