



The Beacon MONTHLY

*Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery
2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402*

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

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JANUARY 2015

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Sunday Services for January 2015

Jan 4—Singular vision—Rev. Lynn

As the year begins, what do we see ahead? Seeing clearly begins by removing things that obstruct our view.

Jan 11—Faithful vision—Rev. Lynn

The work we do today was begun thousands of years ago, and will not be nearly completed when our great-grandchildren's great-grandchildren perish. Some would say, "Why bother?" We have our reasons.

Jan 18—Historic vision—Rev. Lynn

Looking into the ground of our tradition, what did our forebears and prophets hold as a vision for us? Are we living up to it? Would we want to?

Jan 25—TBA— Loretta Bacon

Letter from Lynn

Happy New Year! I hope that we have all made it through the holiday season with some energy and optimism intact. If not, have no fear. They will return, in their own time, if we welcome them.

In a conversation with a colleague in Colorado last week, I commented that the newness of my settlement here is falling away. I do not mean that I feel less joyful and enthusiastic – quite the opposite. What has worn off is the unfamiliarity, the uncertainty of my footing, the apprehension of some next dreadful surprise. In their place is a confidence that I am where I belong, with much to offer and much to learn. My joy and enthusiasm now have roots securely in the Montgomery soil, and grow stronger by the day.

I have been party to several conversations in recent months about *vision*. We have talked about the congregation's vision for itself, reviewed various vision statements, worked to discern and clarify vision in regard to different bodies in various activities. You will find that my sermon titles for the month reflect this refrain. I am using the word to mean several different things, as we explore meanings and implications. Vision is bound up in how we imagine the future, what we seek to achieve, and how we choose to invest our energies and resources.

Vision is also sight, in the simplest sense. It is what we see right in front of us. It is noticing things and people that we encounter every day but overlook: our neighbors, fellow members, strangers on the street. It entails our capacity to see through the illusion of our separateness, and to recognize that we are connected to one another in ways that we could not possibly imagine. In that sense, it is a paradox: Vision is a matter of seeing precisely that which is always beyond our sight.

In a recent email, I asked you to think about a slogan for our public participation in the upcoming activities commemorating a mo-

mentous occasion in the civil rights struggle. These activities look backward, as anniversaries necessarily do, but they are grounded in our present lives and they push ever forward. To lose sight of the far vision, to neglect the work that is yet before us, would be to dishonor rather than celebrate those who have gone before. I love history, but I am much more interested in what is here right now and in what is possible.

What is possible? Everything. This is something I have come to know, despite all my years of rigorous training, practical instruction and wise counsel. Yes, in the immediate sense, some things are beyond the realm of physical reality or human capability. But in the world into which I was born, those impossible things included having a black man as President, and gay people getting married. Space travel and nanotechnology are great, but what gives me strength and hope is watching fear and hatred transformed into mutual respect and human connection.

Human connection. That is my vision. What's yours?

Rev. Lynn Hopkins

Monthly BEACON in 2015

Now that UUFM has completed its transition to a new settled minister, and has hired a new office administrator, it is high time to get the Monthly BEACON back on schedule. I and Rev. Lynn will make every effort to E-mail each monthly issue to the congregation prior to the first Sunday of the month. This will necessitate adhering to a hard (but rather late) deadline for submitting material. For more specifics on how this will be done, see page 4 of this issue.

- Rhodes Peele -

2015 Kitchen Klatter

Each week a team of two or three volunteers provide Sunday morning set-up, service and/or clean-up in the happiest place in town...the Chalice Cafe. There remain a few openings in the 2015 schedule. Please go to, not away from, Joan Boltz, Kitchen Coordinator, to become part of the four-times-per-year schedule. You will find great "perks" that include training, support and appreciation galore. Joan at 334 318 1704

New 12-Step Meeting in Our Building

There is a group of SA (Sexaholics Anonymous) meeting on Sunday evenings at 7:00pm. They recently grew from four to seven members, too large for the living room they were using. Because of judgment and/or fear, no other religious or community group will rent to them. I accepted their deposit and signed an agreement for the first quarter of 2015. This is listed on our calendar as "private rental." If you have any questions, please let me know. ~rev lynn

Slogan for Selma

Win a sermon from Lynn by submitting the perfect slogan for the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Selma-to-Montgomery March. See the special Weekly Beacon sent on December 16th for details — and don't delay!

Pledge Statements

Pledge statements will be sent out in mid-January. If you would like official documentation for your contributions to UUFM this year, please e-mail Gale at gtwasserman@gmail.com or drop a written note into her UUFM mailbox.

Staff Gifts

As we come to the close of the year, it is our practice to show our appreciation for our paid staff with monetary gifts. Look for the envelopes in the card racks on the pews. Lump sum donations will be split between the employees. You may write a separate check to each employee or put cash in an envelope with their name on it. Our paid staff are: Courtney, Director of Religious Education; Melissa, Choir Director; Jacoria, Childcare; and R.J., Our new Office Assistant.

Guest at Your Table

During the upcoming holiday season, think about sharing your table with others around the world during UUSC's annual membership and fundraising drive. We will have contribution boxes for those of you who would like to visually represent the idea of inviting others into our lives. We will also have envelopes for your contributions, which can be made out directly to UUSC. Questions? Contact Gale Wasserman at gtwasserman@gmail.com. Contributions can be made until **January 26th**.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a human rights organization powered by grassroots collaboration. In more than a dozen countries throughout the world, UUSC fosters social justice and works toward a world free from oppression. UUSC's innovative approaches and measurable impact are grounded in the moral belief that all people have inherent power, dignity, and rights. - See more at: <http://www.uusc.org>

Lunch Bunch

1/4	San Marcos	61 N. Burbank Drive
1/11	Panera Bread	2998 Carter Hill Rd.
1/18	Maki Fresh	2938 Carter Hill Rd.
1/25	Asia Bistro	7839 Vaughn Rd.

Newsletter Production Schedule (2015)		
Hard deadline for submitting material*	Editor signs off on newsletter copy**	Newsletter-mailed to congregation***
Dec. 19 ?	Dec. 22 ?	Dec. 29 ?
Jan. 23	Jan. 26	Jan. 28
Feb. 20	Feb. 23	Feb. 25
Mar. 27	Mar. 30	Apr. 1
Apr. 24	Apr. 27	Apr. 29
May 29	June 1	June 3
June 26	June 29	July 1
July 31	Aug. 3	Aug. 5
Aug. 28	Aug. 31	Sept. 2
Sept. 25	Sept. 28	Sept. 30
Oct. 30	Nov. 2	Nov. 4
Nov. 27	Nov. 30	Dec. 2
Dec. 18 ?	Dec. 21 ?	Dec. 28 ?
<p>* The most essential items are the sermon titles and (short) descriptions and the minister's essay. These go on the first and second pages. Preferred mode of submission: to rhodes.peele@att.net. E-mail plain text or Microsoft Word.</p> <p>** Editor typesets newsletter over the weekend and E-mails it to UUFM office. Minister looks it over and makes final changes.</p> <p>*** Office administrator adds monthly calendar as the newsletter's last page, E-mails newsletter to congregation, and mails out any requested hardcopies.</p>		

Jan. Calendar page