



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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Sunday Services for February 2015

Feb 1: Welcome

Forget transformation; we don't come to church seeking change. Most of us arrive seeking sanctuary: comfort, safety, acceptance and encouragement. Curiously, though, it is in that space that transformation becomes possible.

Feb 8: Healing

Dr Rachel Naomi Remen writes, "Wounding and healing are not opposites. They are part of the same thing." Without pretending that suffering is a thing to celebrate, can we see its power to heal and transform?

Feb 15: Circular Staircase

Progress (whether social or personal) is not steady climb. Our evolution is more like a strange repetition, encountering the same things from different perspectives -- always familiar and always new.

Feb 22: Mandy Goheen

Letter from Lynn

Things are changing all around. A few days of sixty-degree temperatures (in January?!) brought tree buds and wildflowers in my yard. Alabama scheduled its first execution date in almost two years for mid-February, and a federal court cancelled it (headed to federal appellate court at this writing). The Moral Monday Movement is preparing to greet the March 3 legislative opening with words of witness in compassion and challenge; UUFM will host a public information session February 22. A few of us got set to consecrate some (newly legal) marriages last week, only to have our plans changed a few hours later by a temporary injunction.

Closer to home, our new office administrator voluntarily ended his employment in January without explanation. Renovation, cleaning and organization continue to make our meeting space more inviting and productive, thanks to tireless volunteer effort of several members and committees.

In February, we will hold our annual auction – the most important fundraising event of the church year. On the 15th, we gather at SPLC for the Montgomery Vigil for Victims of Hate and Violence, an event to call attention to who have died of murder or suicide related to sexual orientation and gender identity, in which our congregation has played an important role since its beginning. At the same time, we begin a series of informational and conversational events in anticipation of the Selma commemoration. This month will require some thoughtful reflection about our current capacities and our collective aspirations. It is a time of looking forward as well as honoring our past.

As we bid farewell to January, let us remember those who gave their lives for freedom in January of years past:

Jan. 3, 1966 • Tuskegee, Alabama



Samuel Leamon Younge Jr., a Tuskegee student civil rights activist, was fatally shot by a white gas station owner following an argument over segregated restrooms.

Jan. 10, 1966 • Hattiesburg, Mississippi



Vernon Ferdinand Dahmer, a wealthy businessman, offered to pay poll taxes for those who couldn't afford the fee required to vote. The night after a radio station broadcasted Dahmer's offer, his home was firebombed. Dahmer died later from severe burns.

Jan. 23, 1957 • Montgomery, Alabama



Willie Edwards Jr., a truck driver, was on his way to work when he was stopped by four Klansmen. The men mistook Edwards for another man who they believed was dating a white woman. They forced Edwards at gunpoint to jump off a bridge into the Alabama River.

January 31, 1964 • Liberty, Mississippi



Louis Allen, who witnessed the murder of civil rights worker Herbert Lee, endured years of threats, jailings and harassment. He was making arrangements to move north on the day he was killed. Edwards' body was found three months later.

Rev. Lynn Hopkins

(Information from SPLC; thanks to Diana White for compiling this list.)

Reflections on RE

As parents, there are many things that challenge us everyday when it comes to raising children. Helping them make healthy eating choices, keeping up with their active schedules, guiding them through the trials and tribulations of friendships. That doesn't even take in to account laundry, homework, bedtimes, teeth brushing, etc. Parenting is a full time, hard job and it does not come with instructions.

One of the issues I have been struggling with recently how to discuss race with my kids. That is a little more complex than why they need to eat their broccoli and finish their reading. To them, race is not an issue. They firmly believe that skin color has nothing to do with someone character. This is a wonderful thing! The hard part is helping them understand that not everyone thinks the way they do. In their minds, it's a non-issue. Isn't that how everyone feels? How do you explain to kids that there are people in our world who judge people based only on the color of their skin? And that there are people who will treat someone badly because of their skin color?

I wish these were things I didn't have to explain to them. I wish the rest of the world would catch up to the kids I know who, like my children, love people for who they are not for what they look like. I am very lucky to know some really awesome kids!

So how do we as parents handle this? What I have choose to do is to be pretty honest with my kids. I simply said that some people don't feel the same way that we do. I encourage them to speak up when they see something happening that they feel isn't right. I remind them that they can always be allies to someone, even if it is a hard thing to do. But most of all, I show them that they are not the only one who will stand up. I take them to vigils and rallies. I talk to them about people who have stood up in the past. We watch movies, like Selma, and we talk about them. I let them ask questions and give them the best answers I can. That might mean I have to say I don't know, but let's find out together. I work to be an ally in my life so that they see my example.

A friend once told me I was brave to take my children to the Michael Brown vigil a few weeks ago. I responded that I didn't think it was brave. I thought it was my responsibility. I thought the same thing when I took them to the Trayvon Martin Ra to teach them how to let their voices be heard and how it is their responsibility to stand up for what is right. So that is what I hope to keep doing, raising strong kids who will be even stronger allies.

Courtney McKenny, DRE

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!

Chalice Café Instructions for Volunteers*—2015

* (details of tasks are introduced during training/orientation for new volunteers)

Thank you for arriving by 9:30 am each of four Sundays per year to:

- Prepare coffee and tea
- Set up water, juice or other kid-friendly drinks in plastic pitchers when practical
- Disperse snacks from the freezer, refrigerator, and cabinet plus donated items
- Set up tables with chairs for children and a few adults (ask other members for help)
- Stay to clean up—coordinate this task with the dishwasher
- Seal and store supplies and leftovers only if they can be served next Sunday
- Give perishable food away, take it home or dispose of it (do not refrigerate it)
- Remove all trash to the bins located outside the back door; replace liners
- Roll the trash bins to the last parking space on the right near the street

If you are unable to serve on your assigned day:

(continued next column)

1. Trade with another server (see updated* annual schedule) OR
2. Call Cyndi Brown. She may be available for either of the volunteer positions as coffee server, snack set-up/cleanup or dishwasher
3. If you are unable to locate a substitute call Joan Boltz at 318-1704. If you DO find a substitute, call or E-mail Joan so that the changes can be published in the Order of Service
4. Don't worry, someone will make coffee.

If your swap triggers the need for a dishwasher, please call Jimmy Ilachild at 288-1224. Your suggestions are welcome. Thank you for your Sunday morning service.

Joan Boltz, kitchen coordinator

* You will receive an E-mail reminder with an updated annual schedule just prior to the month in which you are scheduled to serve. The E-mailed schedule-of-the-month may be vastly different from the annual schedule because of accommodations for vacations, illness, etc.

Dishwashers & Coffee Servers

Date	Dishwasher	Coffee Servers
2/1	Michelle Alger	Yvonne Messer
2/8	Paul Hayes	Paul & Lisa Murphy
2/15	Roger Burdette	Cheryl & Rhodes Peele & Janice Woods
2/22	Lynn Shaw	Gale & Adam Wasserrman

Lunch Bunch

2/1	San Marcos	61 N. Burbank Drive
2/8	Panera Bread	2998 Carter Hill Rd.
2/15	Maki Fresh	2938 Carter Hill Rd.
2/22	Asia Bistro	7839 Vaughn Rd.