

The Beacon MONTHLY



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery Newsletter

2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

July 2016

Sundays in July

July Theme: *2nd Principle of UU: "justice, equity and compassion in human relations."*

July 3: Justice – It should be restorative, not simply retaliatory.

July 10: Equity – It can exist only in community.

July 17: Compassion - It encompasses solidarity and responsibility.

July 24: Human Relations - Affirming the 2nd Principle with those closest to us.

July 31: Celebration, honoring RE teachers and other volunteers.

Second Hour programs:

July 3: Harvest the Power: Lay Leadership in the Congregation (series)

July 10: a. Aid to Inmate Mothers
b. Transcendentalism (video/talk)

July 17: a. Membership: Growing UU Strong from the Inside
b. Harvest the Power (series)

July 24: a. Family and Friends Chapel
b. TED Talk – video and discussion

July 31: 5th Sunday Lunch – Bring something to share. Everyone is welcome.

Church Events

July 6: 6 p.m. First Wednesday Forum

July 8: 7 p.m. Dance for Bonnie Mitchell

July 9: 10:35 a.m. Philosophy Group

July 12: 7 p.m. Social Action Committee

July 13: 7 p.m. Finance Committee

July 15: 6-8 p.m. Panel on Penal System

July 21: 6 p.m. Board of Trustees

July 22: 6 p.m. Publicity Committee

Weekly Meetings

Every Sunday:

- 10 a.m. Worship Service
- 11:15 a.m. Second Hour/Lifespan
Religious Education
- 6 p.m. Real Connections

Every Monday:

- 7 p.m. Course in Miracles

Every Tuesday:

- 6 p.m. Choir Practice
- 7 p.m. Refuge Recovery

Every Tuesday:

- 8 p.m. Young People's AA

Every Wednesday:

- 9 a.m. CFQ "Moving Meditation"
- 7:15 p.m. Meditation/Discussion group

Every Thursday:

- 8 a.m. Building & Grounds
Committee

Every Saturday:

- 8 p.m. Young People's AA

Share the Plate for July: Aid to Inmate Mothers

Founded in 1987, Aid to Inmate Mothers works to provide services to Alabama's female inmates and their children.

AIM's projects include in-prison classes and pre-release planning as well as monthly

visitation for families and recordings that let children hear their mothers read them stories at home.

A representative of AIM will speak during Second Hour on July 10.

Panel to Discuss 'Fixing the Penal System'

UUFM will host a panel discussion, presented by Montgomery Pride United, on the state of the penal system Friday, July 15. Participants will include the Southern Poverty Law Center, the American Civil

Liberties Union of Alabama, the Equal Justice Initiative, and other legal Expertise as well as ex-offenders working to bring real justice to a broken system. The program is set for 6 – 8 p.m.

Group/Committee Notes

Sisterlight will resume its regular meetings in September on the second Thursday of each month.

Charlie Suhor has resigned from the

Nominating Committee for personal reasons. Other members chosen at the annual meeting are Tom Huber(chair), Ron Belcher and Mike Tatum.

Newsletter submission

UUFM phone: 334-279-9517

Email: info@uumontgomery.org

Web: www.uumontgomery.org

Submissions for the May newsletter should be submitted no later than July 23. Submissions can be sent to Andre Goheen at goheen100@yahoo.com and Janice Wood at jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com.

Ministerial Musings: Milestones in Time

By the Rev. Lynn Hopkins

Ah, summer in Alabama. In addition to being the time of spectacular flowers, movies and music in town, BBQ and relentless heat, it is the end of the church year.

It's a time of both celebration and sadness. At the annual meeting, you built the foundation for the entire congregation for coming year. The budget approved at that meeting was the culmination of many long hours of intense work, wrestling with impossible choices – work that happened out of sight for most of you. Felicia Wilburn, Mandy Goheen, Joan Boltz and Barbara Witt showed selfless dedication to the well-being of UUFM. The end result was a budget that will allow us to live within our means in the coming year. It's a remarkable achievement that, just a few weeks earlier, seemed impossible.

Living within our means requires giving up some things that we all cherished:

- We've said good-bye to Melissa Galanopoulos as our music director.
- We've had to cut hours for office coverage.
- We were forced to reduce the hours of the Religious Education staff, even as we celebrate Courtney's tenth year as Director of Religious Education.
- It's now my task as staff supervisor to figure out the details of what these funding cuts mean in reduced services.

There's much sadness, but it's **a time of celebration** as well for the following:

- This fall, we'll mark the 50th anniversary of the fellowship. Born in 1966 amidst turmoil and conflict in Montgomery, the fellowship remains strong and lively.
- We've created the Doda Walker Fund to support the health and longevity of UUFM.
- We have a new roof, and new ceiling tiles are going up.

Our building is growing in public awareness as a place for spiritual and social activities in the community, including these:

- We host recovery groups: an AA group that draws 40-50 people two nights a week, a Refuge Recovery group that supports recovery with a nontheist Buddhist approach, and Sexaholics Anonymous groups for those in recovery and for family members.
- We provided vital support for the Montgomery Pride Festival. We've made room for activities of more nonprofit groups than I have room to mention.
- This spring, we hosted three families of working people without a place to live, through Family Promise.

- We trained a strong team of Our Whole Lives teachers, and we're preparing to offer OWL age-appropriate human sexuality learning opportunities for the wider Montgomery community this fall.

It's groundbreaking work. It's ministry, to ourselves and each other. It's spiritual community and a space of hospitality for friends and strangers alike. It has been a very good year in very many ways.

Preparation: In July, I'm taking study leave. If you see me only on Sunday mornings, you may not even notice a change; I'll continue with my regular Sunday responsibilities. Otherwise, I'm available only as the need arises. I'll be engaged primarily in reading and writing, analysis and reflection, and spiritual restoration. Much of this time will be spent in planning for worship, education and small-group ministry programming in the new year. I'll meet with the new board but otherwise won't attend meetings, in or out of the fellowship. For this month, I'm dedicating my attention and energy to preparations for and laying stable foundations for the 2016-2017 year – our 50th anniversary year – in connection, growth and service.

A Year in the Life of RE

By Courtney McKenny, Director of Religious Education

It has been an exciting year in Religious Education, highlighted by a new playground, regional training sessions and a multigenerational emphasis.

Second Hour offerings included continuing conversations, offerings by the Social Action Committee and discussions led by Michael Kraig among others. We've begun series on transcendentalism and leadership development, and the Membership Committee has designed another. Our adult offerings are fully scheduled through mid-September.

In December, we held our annual Holiday Pageant and Chili Supper. Our new no-rehearsal pageant sent all the participants and attendees, young and old, on a little holiday adventure.

In January, we hosted training for Our Whole Lives program facilitators. The training was well attended by people throughout our region, and UUFM now has five facilitators as well as one community facilitator. We'll host our first OWL course this fall. OWL will be a wonderful resource to our UUFM families as well as an opportunity for outreach to our community.

I had the pleasure of leading three teacher trainings this year. We had an opportunity to focus on things like classroom management techniques and discussion facilitation methods. It was a good opportunity to check in with volunteers about how

things were going in the classrooms and to examine the curricula we were using. We will continue to schedule quarterly trainings.

Last summer, we used a multigenerational format of Evensong for Families as our summer program. This summer we will be having a *Star Wars*-based program - Jedi Academy - that focused on the UU principles. It continues through late August.

Professional Development

Professionally, I'm wrapping up my term as the Southeast Liberal Religious Educators Association Chapter president. I've served the chapter in one office or another for almost six years. It has been a very good experience and has helped me as a religious education professional. I am looking forward to passing on leadership to a new team. We are planning for this summer's RE Week at the Mountain, which I will attend in mid-July.

I continue to work on the Appointment Committee of the UUA Board, and I've found denominational work interesting. One of my goals as a part of this committee is reach out not only to religious educators but also to other people in the Southern Region. I would love to see more people from congregations in our region involved on a denominational level. Working with lay leaders and ministers from across the U.S. has been rewarding, and I'll serve on this committee for two more years with the possibility of being reappointed.

I enjoy being able to represent UUFM in a professional setting with my colleagues and peers. I take pride in representing the congregation and the work we do here to the best of my abilities.

Minister and Staff

Minister: Rev. Lynn Hopkins
Director of Religious Education: Courtney McKenny
Office & Bookkeeping Assistant: Steve Pearson
Music Director: Lynette Morse

Committee Chairs

(until the board approves new chairs)
Religious Education: Christine Freeman
Membership: Liz Campbell
Finance: Joan Boltz
Building & Grounds: Barbara Witt
Public Relations: Andre Goheen
Social Action: Beverly Shaffer

Board of Trustees (new)

President: Barbara Witt
Vice President: Sandy Loveday
Secretary: Janice Wood
Treasurer: Felicia Wilburn
Members at Large: Susan Enzweiler
Jimmie Ilachild
Pat Thomason