

The Beacon MONTHLY



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery Newsletter

2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

September 2016

Sundays in September

September Theme:

4th Principle of UU

“A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.”

Sept. 18: “and meaning” – How do we make meaning from all this ‘truth’?

Sept. 25: “Meaning and music” – to be led by Loretta Bacon, worship associate.

Second Hour programs:

Sept. 18: a. Harvest the Power: Lay Leadership Series

b. Poetry Series: *For the Sake of Strangers*

Sept. 25: a. Friends and Family Chapel

b. Congregational Life and Finance, to be led by Barbara Witt, president of the UUFM Board of Trustees.

Share the Plate: Trees for Schools

This program identifies schools in the Montgomery system that will benefit from trees and provides them at no cost to the schools. In alliance with each school’s principal, the Montgomery Public Schools Buildings and Grounds supervisor and Montgomery’s urban forester, members of the program plant native trees compatible with local soil conditions.

In return, the schools pledge to water the trees for two years, and members of Montgomery Trees for Schools monitor their progress. The purpose of this program is to beautify schools, provide shade for schoolchildren, and involve the children in tree care, so they learn to be active participants in creating a healthy environment.

UUFM phone: 334-279-9517

Email: info@uumontgomery.org

Web: www.uumontgomery.org

Church Events

Sept. 14: 6 p.m. Harvest the Power: Lay Leadership Series

Sept. 15, 6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees

Sept. 19, 6:30 p.m.: Council of Committees meeting

Sept. 24: Board of Trustees Retreat
10 a.m. OWL Teacher Meeting

Sept. 28: 6 p.m., Harvest the Power Series

Weekly Meetings

Every Sunday:

10 a.m. Worship Service

11:15 a.m. Second Hour/Lifespan
Religious Education

7 p.m. Real Connections

Every Tuesday:

6 p.m. Choir Practice

7 p.m. Refuge Recovery

8 p.m. Young People's AA

Every Wednesday:

9 a.m. CFQ "Moving Meditation"

5 p.m. Baha'i Junior Youth Class
in Virtues

7:15 p.m. Meditation/Discussion group

Every Thursday:

8 a.m. Building & Grounds Committee

Every Saturday:

8 p.m. Young People's AA

Get Ready Now for the Arts & Crafts Fair, Book Sale

The first fundraiser of the new fiscal year will be the Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair and Book Sale on Nov. 12. Here's how you can get involved:

- Consider donating hand-crafted items and artwork or rent a vendor space.
- Encourage artists and crafters to participate. The vendor agreement, guidelines, and application forms are available at <http://uumontgomery.org/holiday-fair/>.
- Volunteer to help with the fair.
- Bring gently used books to the fellowship for the Book Sale by the Nov. 1 deadline. Lead time is needed to sort and price books to make shopping easier. See Barbara Hightower, Deborah Little or Nordis Smith about storing books.
- For more information, contact Barbara Hightower at hightbeh@hotmail.com.

Former UUFM president passes away

The life of **John Six** was celebrated during a Montgomery service in July. Six, a UUFM president during the mid-1980s, had passed away in late April, preceded in death by Rita, his wife of nearly 50 years. For details, contact Jim Winkates at jwinkates@bham.rr.com.

How We Can Apply the Third Principle

By the Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

“Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.”

The statement above is what we call the “third principle” -- the third in a series of seven commitments that we, as members of the Unitarian Universalist Association, make to each other in covenant. Acceptance of one another is hard enough. We seem to do pretty well, most of the time. But sometimes, if we’re honest, we have to admit that tolerance is the best we can give at the moment. Our congregational covenant points out some of the rough spots in acceptance: “... honor our differences, working to better understand them in conflict.” That requires more attention and less opinion. That is hard.

At least it is pretty clear, though, what acceptance means. We know what it looks like, when we get it right. But what is “encouragement to spiritual growth”? If we all started with the same text, traveling the same path, reaching the same conclusions, we could do it together and encourage each other with no problem. That isn’t who we are, though.

We’re individuals traveling individual paths, with no single teacher or text holding authority over us. How do I encourage your spiritual growth, if I don't begin with the same assumptions or travel the same path? Sure, we accept each other's spiritual convictions, ideas, and practices. We hope (perhaps some of us even pray!) that each person grows and moves more deeply and securely along the path of their choosing, but encouragement seems like a very tall order if I don't even know what your path looks like.

Maybe it’s not as complicated as it seems at first. If I want to encourage the spiritual growth of one whose path is humanist, I show up when the conversation or sermon is about humanist topics. Maybe I don't care about that topic; if I care about the people in this congregation, and I care about the covenant that we share, I show up anyway. If the topic is all about Christian scripture, and I’ve had my fill of that, I show up anyway. If it’s all talk and I just want music, or if it's music and I just want discussion, or if it's a kids' service or a justice-oriented service or a Buddhist event, no matter. I show up.

It means understanding -- and accepting -- that not every service will be my “cup of tea,” but if it contributes to your spiritual growth, I support it. Sitting through an hour of worship that does not speak to me is my gift to those who feel spiritually fed by what happens in that hour. Encouragement doesn't mean I have to give more money or do more work. It does mean that I rejoice in our diversity and support those activities that foster that diversity. Even if I think it is boring, or silly, or a waste of my time. It's just an hour. I can do that. I will do that, to encourage your spiritual growth, because I know that you will do that for me.

10 Reasons to Invest 1 Hour a Month

By Courtney McKenny, Director of Religious Education

We're very lucky to have an amazing group of children and youth as a part of our congregation. One of the best parts of being a multigenerational community is actually getting to know and spend time with people who aren't in our own generation.

We have so many gifts to share with one another – and so much we can learn from one another. Taking part in our religious education program for children and youth is a wonderful way for you to share your gifts.

If that isn't a good enough reason for you to want to spend an hour a month with some bright young minds, here are a few more reasons:

10. Dirt, hula hoops, chalk, togas ... find out what is going on down there.

What can you learn when you look at things from a new perspective? Sometimes that's all it takes to see things differently.

9. Learn all you need to know about UUism but were too afraid to ask.

The curricula we use in our classrooms are well-written and detailed. You'll likely walk away from a lesson learning something you didn't know.

8. Because it is more fun than a committee meeting.

I love a good committee meeting, but our children and youth keep things lively and exciting.

7. Because it takes a village to raise a child.

Our UUFM family is such a gift to the children and youth. They can be a gift to all of us as well! We are raising up future UU's together.

6. Kids say the darndest things; you're guaranteed a smile.

We have some comedians in our midst but some bright, thoughtful, future leaders, too.

5. If you play with clay and paint by yourself at church, people may look at you funny.

We like to keep our hands busy so we can listen better. The same idea works for adults, too.

4. The commitment is just 7-10 times per church year. That averages less than once a month.

One hour a month. You'll be provided a lesson ahead of time, and the supplies will be in the classroom waiting for you. There are always two teachers in the classrooms, so you'll always have a teammate with you.

3. It's fun and it's easy. Teachers get a lesson plan, and training is provided for all volunteers.

You'll get fed too. We'll talk about how teaching is a spiritual practice and about how to handle those sticky situations. We'll take great joy in our time together. The next training will be Saturday, Oct. 27 at 10 a.m. in the church library.

2. Change the world. If you change one life, you've made a difference.

The greatest change happens when we push ourselves outside of our comfort zones. We can all make a huge difference in the lives of our UUFM children and youth. They need to know

that they are an important part of our community and that we value them. We can do this in the classrooms one Sunday a month.

1. Karma credit.

Any questions? Please contact Courtney McKenny at dre@uumontgomery.org

UUFM Income and Expenses for the Month of July 2016

Income		Expenses: Operations	
Pledges received	\$6,870	Mortgage & Insurance	1,163
Regular donations not pledged	492	Utilities	1,048
Sunday collection	705	Building & Grounds	475
Fundraising (includes auction)	1,899	Kitchen & Office Expenses	148
Building rentals	935	<i>Operations subtotal</i>	\$2,834
Total income	\$10,901	Expenses: Mission	
Expenses: Staff		Religious Education	
Staff Wages	5,243	Committee Expenses	
Benefits	1,346	Share the Plate	375
Taxes	119	<i>Mission subtotal</i>	\$375
<i>Staff subtotal</i>	\$6,708	Total expenses	\$9,917
		NET INCOME	\$984

Minister and Staff

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

Committee Chairs

Building & Grounds: Bill Weaver
 Finance: Joan Boltz
 Membership: Liz Campbell
 Public Relations: Nick Morgan-Moore
 Religious Education: Christine Freeman
 Social Action: Beverly Shaffer

Board of Trustees

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

Newsletter submission

Submissions for the September newsletter should be submitted no later than Sept. 25. Submissions can be sent to Janice Wood at jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com.