

# The Beacon MONTHLY



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery Newsletter

2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

November 2016

## Sundays in November

**November Theme:** 6th Principle of UU: “The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.”

### **Nov. 6 – Sermon: Day of Remembrance**

*Second Hour:*

- Continuing Conversation: sermon discussion.
- Arts and Crafts, with Sandy Loveday.
- Share the Plate community partner, with the Social Action Committee.

### **Nov. 13 – Sermon: The Goal of World Community**

*Second Hour:*

- Harvest the Power: UU lay leadership program.
- Learn American Sign Language Greetings: with Brian McKenny.

### **Nov. 20 – Sermon: Peace and Justice**

*Second Hour:*

- Poetry discussion: “When Death Comes” by Mary Oliver, with Charlie Suhor.
- Social Action Committee: with Beverly Shaffer.
- Harvest the Power: UU lay leadership program.

### **Nov. 27– Sermon Presenter: Sharon Sexton**

*Second Hour:*

- TED Talk: Video and discussion led by Roger Burdette.
- Friends and Family Chapel: with Courtney McKenny.

## What's Happening Downstairs this Month?

	Nov. 6	Nov. 13	Nov. 20	Nov. 27
<i>Elementary 1</i> <i>PreK – 2<sup>nd</sup></i>	Faith, hope and prayer	Social Justice Sunday	In another's shoes	Friends & Family Chapel
<i>Elementary 2</i> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup></i>	Double Herbology		Divination	
<i>Youth</i> <i>6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup></i>	Bart sells his soul		In Marge we Trust	

- *Elementary 1: "Moral Tales"* -- Good stories enlarge our student's minds and hearts. Stories not only nourish the imagination. They nourish the soul.
- *Elementary 2: "Harry and UU"* – A social action curriculum for grades 3-5 based on J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books.
- *Youth:* A middle-school Unitarian Universalist curriculum based on the religious teachings of the animated television show, "The Simpsons."

### Church Events

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| <p><b>Nov. 2:</b> 6 p.m. First Wednesday Forum:<br/>Montgomery Police and<br/>Black Lives Matter</p> <p><b>Nov. 3:</b> 7 p.m. Committee on Ministry</p> <p><b>Nov. 5:</b> 10:35 a.m. Philosophy Group</p> <p><b>Nov. 6:</b> 9 a.m. Greeter's Orientation<br/>2 p.m. Our Whole Lives Class</p> <p><b>Nov. 8:</b> 7 p.m. Social Action Committee</p> <p><b>Nov. 9:</b> 6 p.m. Harvest the Power</p> | <p><b>Nov. 12:</b> 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Setup at 7am)<br/>Arts and Crafts Fair and Book Sale</p> <p><b>Nov. 13:</b> 2 p.m. Our Whole Lives Class</p> <p><b>Nov. 14:</b> 6:30 p.m. Council of Committees</p> <p><b>Nov. 17:</b> 6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees</p> <p><b>Nov. 19:</b> 2:00 p.m. Dedication of Banner</p> <p><b>Nov. 20:</b> 6:00 p.m. Trans* Day of<br/>Remembrance</p> <p><b>Nov. 30:</b> 6:00 p.m. Fifth Wednesday with<br/>Social Action Comm: <i>Defying Hate</i></p> |
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### Weekly Meetings

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| <p><i>Every Sunday:</i></p> <p>10 a.m. Worship Service</p> <p>11:15 a.m. Second Hour/Lifespan<br/>Religious Education</p> <p>7 p.m. Real Connections</p> <p><i>Every Tuesday:</i></p> <p>6 p.m. Choir Practice</p> <p>7 p.m. Refuge Recovery</p> <p>8 p.m. Young People's AA</p> | <p><i>Every Wednesday:</i></p> <p>5 p.m. Baha'i Junior Youth Class</p> <p>7:15 p.m. Meditation/Discussion group</p> <p><i>Every Thursday:</i></p> <p>8 a.m. Building and Grounds<br/>Committee meets</p> <p><i>Every Saturday:</i></p> <p>8 p.m. Young People's AA</p> |
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## First Wednesday Forum: Standing Up for Black Lives

Rev. Lynn will open a discussion **Nov. 2** leading up to the raising of a “Black Lives Matter Here” banner to be displayed outdoors on the UUFM building. Representatives of the Montgomery Police Department (Chief Finley’s office has confirmed) and the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office have been invited to participate. The program will start at **6 p.m.**

## Say “Hello” to a Key Service Opportunity & Get Oriented

A friendly face, a kind word and an order of service go a long way when welcoming people into the fellowship on Sunday mornings – and more greeters are needed. If you can’t attend the “Greeter’s Orientation” at **9 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 6**, you can still volunteer.

See Liz Campbell, who will put your name on the Greeter’s Schedule with an experienced greeter. You’ll get an easy-to-follow one-page checklist and support for as long as you need it until you’re ready to serve as “Chief Greeter.” Wonder what Greeters really do, and how hard it is? Speak with someone who has experience. Mike Tatum, Nordis Smith, Loretta Bacon, Ruth DeRamus, Carolyn Cornett, Ron Belcher, and Weston Flippo have all served as greeters.

You can email Liz at [Lixenaalbright@yahoo.com](mailto:Lixenaalbright@yahoo.com). Call or text her at (334) 202-2305.

## UUFM Income & Expenses for the Month of September 2016

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenses: Operations</b>	
Pledges received	\$5,925*	Mortgage & Insurance	1,176
Regular donations not pledged	59	Utilities	1,187
Sunday collection	496	Building & Grounds	936
Fundraising (includes auction)	40	Kitchen & Office Expenses	272
Building rentals	100	Operations subtotal	\$3,571
Total income	\$6,620	<b>Expenses: Mission</b>	
<b>Expenses: Staff</b>		Religious Education	
Wages	5,415	Committee Expenses	
Benefits	2,528	Share the Plate	250
Taxes	108	Mission subtotal	\$250
Staff subtotal	\$8,051	<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$13,406</b>
		<b>NET INCOME OR (LOSS)</b>	<b>(\$5,252)</b>

\* Some full pledges were paid in previous months. Current expenses were paid from those available funds.

### Newsletter submission

Submissions for the December newsletter should be submitted no later than Nov. 23. Submissions can be sent to Janice Wood at [jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com](mailto:jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com)

# ***Taking Good Care***

By the Rev. Lynn Hopkins

**Stewardship.** It's a word often used as a euphemism for a church pledge drive. I think that's very unfortunate. Stewardship is a religious idea and a religious practice, even when it's used outside of the context of church. Put simply, stewardship means taking responsibility for the care of things that matter.

The word is derived from very old language for tending livestock: the disciplined and attentive care of living things that have real value. Over time, it came to refer to caring for the household. Stewardship includes guarding treasures that are inherited from previous generations, and it includes preparing the way for generations to come.

**As UUFM enters its yearlong celebration of 50 years** of life in Montgomery, that seems like a particularly relevant point.

**Stewardship isn't a pledge drive.** In fact, if we practice stewardship, we don't need a pledge drive. Can you imagine what that would be like? It's surprising how easy it would be to get there, if we are as committed to the strength and health of our congregation as we like to think we are.

**Practicing stewardship means:**

- being curious about what the needs are,
- making the effort to find out, and
- being eager to help meet those needs.

**Are you curious?** The place to begin is the budget. If you attended the Second Hour program presented by Barbara Witt recently, you already know a great deal about our current situation.

Under our current budget, a **30 percent increase in pledge amounts** would eliminate the need to use fundraising events for the general operating fund. It would free up more than \$30,000 that we now scramble to find every year, to fill the gaps in that bare-bones budget. The auction could be the gloriously fun and festive social event of the year, which also brings in funding for important new projects. Revenue from rentals could equip us for a new and bolder presence in the community, instead of being a lifeline to keep the lights on.

I'm not looking for a 30 percent increase in each member's pledge, of course. There are a few members who are diligent in their practice of stewardship, always attentive and responsive to the circumstances of our congregation. There are others who are deeply committed and pledged boldly, but face life circumstances that leave them unable to meet those pledges. There are members who have no discretionary income, spending all their pay on the basic necessities of living day to day. *(Continued on the next page.)*

*(Rev. Lynn, cont.)*

So it's a persistent challenge for people who, like me, are tasked with motivating people to participate more deeply in the financial life of the congregation. How do we ask people to pledge enough so that we can have a healthy budget, without laying guilt on those who are already doing as much as anyone could possibly expect? One way, I think, is to be clear about what we mean by stewardship.

True stewardship requires something very different from the "paying for what I get" mentality of NPR fund drives, or "helping those in need" as in the fundraising efforts of charitable organizations.

Stewardship is not giving. It is participation. It is membership writ large.

As a congregation, we don't ask people to give, as they would to a charity. We ask each other, and expect each other, to participate to the best of our ability.

## ***Religious Educators Take on Tough Topics***

By Courtney McKenny, Director of Religious Education

Once a year, religious educators from around the continent gather for the LREDA Fall Conference. **What is LREDA?** The Liberal Religious Educators Association began as the Unitarian Education Directors' Association in 1949.

Over the years, the name changed to reflect the merging of Unitarian and Universalist traditions, but the purpose behind the organization has stayed the same: to encourage and support the professional standards and accomplishments of those who serve our congregations in religious education.

This year, my colleagues and I **gathered in San Diego, California**, to dig deeper into some important themes in family ministry. "Money, Death, Race and Sex: Bringing the Spiritual Dimension to Tough Topics" was the theme for our conference. Each day, we focused on a topic. Our conversations were deep and authentic. We spent time examining how our own feelings and experiences in these areas could affect our ability to serve our congregations when these topics arise.

It gave us all an opportunity to think about how we as religious professionals can better help our congregations with tough topics. Like Jessica York, director of the UUA Faith Development Office, said, the intent of the conference was to know that by "experiencing firsthand that you can talk about hard topics and not only survive, but thrive."

**LREDA does amazing work** that not only supports religious educators, but it also works with the UU Ministers Association and the UU Musicians Network to identify best practices in shared ministry and to outline recommended training opportunities to nurture excellence in ministry for staff teams. *(Continued on the next page.)*

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Web: [www.uumontgomery.org](http://www.uumontgomery.org)

*(Religious Educators, cont.)*

These three professional organizations are working together to develop resources available for staff teams that focus on collaborative ministry. *From the UUA website:*

The most vital and thriving congregations practice Shared Ministry. This includes an intention to match personal gifts with opportunities to serve, in covenantal relationship, all in service to the mission and vision of the congregation. The health and vitality of the congregation depends on the health and vitality of its minister(s), religious educator(s), music professional(s), administrative professional(s), membership professional(s) and other staff.



*LREDA's website shows UUFM's Courtney McKenny (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) with other UU educators.*

**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: Rhonda Thomason  
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