

# The Beacon MONTHLY



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery Newsletter

2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

February 2017

## **Black History Month:**

*Feb. 5* – Howard Thurman / God of Exiles

*Feb. 12* – Audre Lorde / God of Difference

*Feb. 19* – James Cone / God of Blackness

*Feb. 26* – Jonathan Peterson (JP da Poet)

## **Celebrate *Mardi Gras* at the Annual Auction Feb. 18!**

Care to accompany a wildlife rescue? You can!

Do you need a toddler's sleeping bag? One's available!

These and other items, activities and services will be available Feb. 18 at the Annual Auction. UUFM's biggest fund-raising event of the year, the auction will feature a Mardi Gras theme. The festivities will include a parade and the crowning of a queen. Dinner with red beans and rice, po' boys and king cake will complete the picture.

Tickets will be on sale each Sunday in the fellowship hall after the morning service. Adult tickets are \$20 each, and children under 16 get in free. Donations forms for auction items are also available.

*Laissez les bon temps rouler – and laissez les big bucks roll in for UUFM!*

UUFM phone: 334-279-9517

Email: [info@uumontgomery.org](mailto:info@uumontgomery.org)

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

## Church Events

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| <p><b>Feb. 4:</b> 10 a.m. RE Committee Meeting<br/>         10:35 a.m. Philosophy Group<br/>         11 a.m. Project REACH<br/>         1 p.m. Learn the Lege</p> <p><b>Feb. 7:</b> 12 p.m. Moral Stand @ State House</p> <p><b>Feb. 11:</b> 2 p.m. Moral Movement Alabama</p> <p><b>Feb. 14:</b> 7 p.m. Social Action Committee</p> <p><b>Feb. 15</b> 6 p.m. Montgomery Pride United(MPU)<br/>         @ Bayard Rustin Community Ctr<br/>         6:30 p.m. Finance Committee Mtg</p> | <p><b>Feb 16.</b> 6:30 p.m. Stand as One (see info<br/>         on following page)<br/>         6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees</p> <p><b>Feb. 18:</b> 5 p.m. UUFM Annual Auction.</p> <p><b>Feb. 19:</b> 4 p.m. Hate Crimes Vigil<br/>         at AUM Goodwyn Hall</p> <p><b>Feb. 21:</b> 6 p.m. Showing Up for Racial<br/>         Justice (SURJ) @ Bayard Rustin CC</p> <p><b>Feb. 28:</b> 6 p.m. MPU @ Bayard Rustin CC</p> |
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## 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:*

- 5 p.m. Baha'i Junior Youth Class
- 7:15 p.m. Meditation/Discussion group

*Every Thursday:*

- 8 a.m. Building and Grounds  
     Committee meets

*Every Saturday:*

- 8 p.m. Young People's AA

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

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenses: Operations</b>	
Pledges received	\$11,340	Mortgage & Insurance	1,173
Regular donations not pledged	255	Utilities	692
Sunday collection	601	Building & Grounds	1,087
Fundraising (incl. EOY donations)	3,061	Kitchen & Office Expenses	381
Building rentals	530	Operations subtotal	\$3,333
Total income	\$15,787	<b>Expenses: Mission</b>	
<b>Expenses: Staff</b>		Religious Education	
Wages	5,394	Committee Expenses	
Benefits	698	Share the Plate	\$249
Taxes	107	Mission subtotal	\$249
Staff subtotal	\$6,199	<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$9,781</b>
		<b>NET INCOME OR (LOSS)</b>	<b>\$6,006</b>



# Stand As One

## Empowering Marginalized Voices in Birmingham

An interactive forum with panel discussion featuring:

- Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice
- Black Lives Matter Birmingham Chapter
- Birmingham Islamic Society
- Disability Rights & Resources
- Greater Birmingham Ministries
- Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama
- Magic City Acceptance Center
- National Organization of Women - Birmingham Chapter

**Thursday, February 16**

6:30 pm, UAB Campbell Hall 405

Free and open to the public



Sponsors include: Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice, Black Lives Matter - Birmingham Chapter, Birmingham Islamic Society, Birmingham Public Library, Greater Birmingham Ministries, Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama, Law for of John Charles Bell, Magic City Acceptance Center, Unitarian Universalist Church of Birmingham, UAB Institute for Human Rights, and UAB Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Parking: 12th Street Parking Deck, (1212 University Blvd), across from Campbell Hall (1300 University Blvd), Pre-registration appreciated but walk-ups welcome!

To register or for more information please contact the UAB Institute for Human Rights at [ihr@uab.edu](mailto:ihr@uab.edu) or 205-934-5643.

**FORWARD TOGETHER  
NOT ONE STEP BACK**



**STANDING TO RESIST  
THE ROLLBACK OF CIVIL RIGHTS  
PROTECTIONS**

**JOIN US AT NOON  
IN FRONT OF THE  
ALABAMA  
STATE HOUSE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
BENARD SIMELTON 256-426-6406**

**FEB. 7TH, 2017  
MOBILIZATION  
FOR LOVE AND  
JUSTICE**



**FIND US ON FACEBOOK  
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MORALMOVEMENTAL](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MORALMOVEMENTAL)**

# What doesn't kill us...

"That which does not kill us, makes us stronger." ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

Not necessarily.

In a meeting I attended back in 1989, someone made a statement that stuck with me: "Don't you dare tell me that what doesn't kill you will make you stronger. Sometimes, it just makes you bitter and cold and broken." At the height of the AIDS crisis in 1989, it was true.

It still is.

What doesn't kill us has the potential to make us stronger. That's not as comforting or reassuring as Nietzsche's bold claim, but it's more truthful. Sometimes, the woundedness is too deep, and the damage too severe, for strength to return and grow.

In the last two weeks, I've thought a lot about those years, the AIDS years. It was the defining historical phenomenon of my early adulthood. I'm sure it has a lot to do with who I am today.

In those days, gay people woke up wondering whose death would come that day. Every gathering - parties, bowling leagues, even church - began with scanning the room, trying to determine who was missing. If you heard that someone was "sick," you knew what that meant; they would be next.

Sometimes, you wondered how they contracted it. You wondered, even though it didn't matter, in the same way you might wonder about someone's ethnic origin. It might help you know them better if you knew. So you were curious, but you didn't ask. It doesn't matter.

I think this equipped me to connect with inmates, not caring what the crime was, and to be in solidarity with immigrants without regard for their status. Many of us got the habit of seeing people as just people, people with a past but not defined by their past. I can be grateful today that many of those who lived through that time have passed this trait on to children and grandchildren.

The experience also helped me to expect, and to encounter with equanimity, those people who respond to the unknown with hatred and violence. I remember taking a four-year-old child (the first person I ever met with full-blown AIDS) past a campaign table for a local candidate in Virginia. He was promoting a quarantine for all people infected with HIV. His campaign signs said, "Mosquitoes can't wear condoms." I wanted to strike out, to yell and turn over his tables, but my task was to protect that little girl. I carefully positioned myself as a shield so that she wouldn't see these messages of exclusion and dehumanization, talking to her the whole time so that she would not hear it, and we reached our destination in peace that day. It was a day like most days, and an event like hundreds of others I experienced, in that dark time.

Simultaneous with the daily experience of loss, along with the pervasive fear and uncertainty about the next discovery and the next diagnosis, survivor's guilt raged as epidemic. At the same time, we shared the same air with people who experienced themselves as untouched by all of this, people who went for days without it even entering their minds. Elected officials and religious leaders were largely silent. Those of us who lived with the loss, trying to comfort the dying and those left behind, trying to make sense of it all, responded in two significant ways: rage, and solidarity.

It was easy to drown in the grief and the anger, especially in the face of the isolation and apathy all around. Many of those who survived did not get stronger. Some got lost in drugs, alcohol, high-risk behaviors, even suicide. But we as a nation got stronger.

The gay rights movement, that officially began with the Stonewall riot in 1969, was no longer a tiny band of big thinkers and relentless idealists, but a tide of social change. The deep darkness of those awful years gave birth to a new day. No one who was there, in the days of no hope, will ever be glad for it. But we earned the strength that would carry us through the likes of Jerry Falwell, Fred Phelps, Roy Moore and Mike Pence. We took the ashes of ruin and built what might otherwise have taken centuries to accomplish. And by God, we'll do it again.

## Did You Know ... ?

... that your pledge helps provide \$6,000 annually for janitorial services for our facility?

### Minister and Staff

Minister: Rev. Lynn Hopkins  
Office & Bookkeeping Assistant: Steve Pearson  
Music Director: Lynette Morse

### Committee Chairs

Building & Grounds: Bill Weaver  
Finance: Rhonda Thomason  
Membership: Liz Campbell  
Public Relations: vacant  
Religious Education: Christine Freeman  
Social Action: Beverly Shaffer

### Board of Trustees

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

### Newsletter submission

Submissions for the March newsletter should be submitted no later than Feb. 27. Submissions can be sent to Janice Wood at [jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com](mailto:jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com)