

The Beacon MONTHLY



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery Newsletter

2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

March 2017

SUNDAYS

Theme for March - "Stewardship: Caring for what is entrusted to us."

March 5 – Our Inheritance, Rev. Lynn and Mandy Goheen

Second Hour:

- Share the Plate: POWER House
- Bring Your Favorite Poem, with Charlie Suhor
- Course in Miracles, with Maureene Bass

March 12 – Taking Care of Here and Now, Rev. Lynn and Mandy Goheen

Second Hour:

- What Moves Us: UU Theology, with Mandy Goheen
- The Best Time of Our Lives: Mental Health over 60, with Diana White
- Course in Miracles, with Maureene Bass

March 19 – Looking Away, Rev. Lynn and Mandy Goheen

Second Hour:

- Common Read: *The Third Reconstruction*, with Beverly Shaffer
- Discussion: *Sam Harris' Secular Spirituality* by Franklin Brumi, with Charlie Suhor
- Course in Miracles, with Maureene Bass.

Membership Renewal and Pledge Drive

By Rhonda Thomason, Chair of Finance Committee

We are entering the visioning and membership renewal season when we decide on our personal contributions of time, talent, and treasure to UUFM for the coming year. Over the next few weeks, we'll be sharing testimonials and celebrating our membership renewal pledge drive, which runs from March 11 through April 9.

Please mark your calendar for our **kickoff pledge dinner at the fellowship at 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 11**. Janet Robbins is preparing a wonderful meal, and there will be special entertainment. Come and let us serve you. It will be fun, free, and fabulous! Email me at patrhonda@charter.net or call the office and leave your name, phone number and number of attendees if you want to come and haven't been able to sign up at the fellowship.

Church Events

March 4: 10 a.m. Read Across America

March 4: 10:35 a.m. Philosophy Group

March 11: Membership renewal dinner

March 11-31: Renewal/pledge drive

March 14: 7 p.m. Social Action Committee meeting

March 15: 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee

March 16: 6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees

Weekly Meetings

Every Sunday:

9:15 a.m. Choir Practice

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

Every Tuesday (cont.):

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 & Grounds Comm. Meets

Every Saturday:

8 p.m. Young People's AA

Share the Plate Partner for March: the POWER House

The POWER House is a multi-purpose building that houses the offices of the Montgomery Area Reproductive Justice Coalition and serves the patients of Reproductive Health Services in Montgomery. POWER stands for People Organizing for Women's Empowerment and Rights.

The POWER House provides these main services:

- Escort services for RHS patients,
- Break space for RHS patients and companions,
- Space for accompanied children of RHS patients,
- Overnight accommodations for low-income patients of RHS,
- Support for the LGBTQIA community.

UUFM phone: 334-279-9517

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Beginning at Breakthrough

By the Rev. Lynn Hopkins

I received the email this week notifying me that it is time to designate congregational representatives for General Assembly in June. It reminded me of current UUA president Peter Morales' reflections following GA last year. Here is an excerpt:

I heard a number of people—leaders whose opinions I respect—express the feeling that we had reached a new level of understanding and commitment. Clearly, we are involving a new generation of UU activists. A new level of hope is palpable. I hope they are right. And I am deeply afraid that they might be wrong. Why the caution? My hope is tempered by a tendency I have experienced among us in our antiracism, antioppression, multicultural work in the last twenty years: we tend to confuse catharsis with progress. I have been to too many painful and emotional meetings in which, after agonizing expressions of hurt and frustration, the gathering culminated in a catharsis. People felt we had broken through. We hadn't. Nothing much changed. I desperately don't want this GA to join the list of frustrating disappointments.

I often bemoan the tendency of progressives -- white progressives in particular, because that's what I know -- to reach some great goal and relax (Voting Rights Act. CHIP. Marriage Equality, etc.). When we get to a place previously thought impossible, at least in our lifetime, we celebrate ourselves, fold our tents, and go home. A few years later, we are shocked and amazed to find that our gains were inadequate, our assurances eroded, our achievements virtually irrelevant.

I keep saying, "Yes! It's great! But we can't stop here. ... How do we keep energy up, attention focused, work ongoing?" And a few do toil on, tirelessly working and serving and dying in cities and in prisons and everywhere else, unnoticed until the next crisis -- the next Ferguson or Orlando, the next Roy Moore or Steve Bannon. Then we rush in, again, only to repeat the cycle.

I confess to skepticism about the capacity of UUA to move past its ingrained whiteness in a healthy and productive way. I know people who stood on both sides of the Black Empowerment Controversy that nearly destroyed the association 50 years ago. I am sure that we did the best we could back then. I am even sure that we do better now. But I really, deep down, doubt that we can do well enough as a body.

I hope I am wrong about this. In Montgomery, we see what happens, what's left hanging in the air when people can't find a way to talk to each other from opposing sides that are not enemy camps. The cultural refrain is consistent: It's too hard. We don't know how. That will only make it worse. It could cost us everything if we try. You mean well but you don't know, you weren't here when we went through all that. Let it lie and it will go away eventually on its own.

I did not attend GA last year, or the year before. **It is now possible to attend virtually, joining the discussion and even voting through internet connection. It's in New Orleans this year,** so close but not close enough for a daily commute. There is always so little money on hand and so much right here

to do. It could be argued that economic class is at least as threatening as race to full inclusion and real community for the UUA, and in some ways much more complicated. I do not expect that people like me, voices like mine, will ever really be relevant in the UUA. Ever.

Still, I love it and I choose it and I will fight for it to my very end. **Unitarian Universalism is the truth I have found and the meaning I have made in my life.** The Association is its one body, and its only hope for the continuation and the progress of the movement. In his September, 2016 essay quoted above, Peter Morales gave me a little more hope for its future. He put words to the nagging sorrow and suspicion I have carried for so many years. Catharsis is necessary for progress, but the great UUA-Black Lives Matter breakthrough of the last two years is not the end we need. It isn't even really a step toward it. It's a significant and important crack in the wall of our history and our culture.

Now, not just today or in June or over the next year but every day, in every assembly and every worship service and every conversation, we must continue to push through, to clear those bricks, to work across boundaries with passion and compassion for others and for ourselves.

The last GA showed great promise, but it is promise not yet kept. If we think we did it and we are done now, it would be better if we had never started. Celebrating this achievement, folding our tents and going home will only make it more difficult to begin the real work in the next generation.

Thank you, Peter Morales, for giving me hope that this recent breakthrough can be a beginning for the UUA, and not just another sad chapter.

UUFM Income & Expenses for the Month of January 2017

Income		Expenses: Operations	
Pledges received	\$8,925	Mortgage & Insurance	4,609
Regular donations not pledged	105	Utilities	1,053
Sunday collection	915	Building & Grounds	3,472
Fundraising (incl. EOY donations)	3,322	Kitchen & Office Expenses	742
Building rentals	20	Operations subtotal	\$9,876
Total income	\$13,287	Expenses: Mission	
Expenses: Staff		Religious Education	
Wages	5,693	Committee Expenses	
Benefits	2,143	Share the Plate	\$633
Taxes	116	Mission subtotal	\$633
Staff subtotal	\$7,952	Total expenses	\$18,461
		NET INCOME OR (LOSS)	(\$5,174)

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
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 April newsletter should be submitted no later than March 24.
Submissions can be sent to Janice Wood at jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com