

# The Beacon MONTHLY



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery Newsletter

2810 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery AL 36109-3402

Rev. Lynn Hopkins, Minister

May 2017

## SUNDAYS

Theme for May - "The Spirit of UU"

### May 7 – Unitarian

*Second Hour:*

- Share the Plate partner: Mental Health America, with the Social Action Committee
- Guided Meditation with Jay Valentine
- A Course in Miracles

### May 14 – Universalist

*Second Hour:*

- Chair Yoga: with Susan Enzweiler
- Guided Meditation with Jay Valentine
- A Course in Miracles

### May 21 – Fellowship

*Second Hour:*

- *Envy in Our Everyday Experience* by Louisa Camps, discussion with Charlie Suhor
- Social Action Committee
- A Course in Miracles

# Did You Know?

By Rhonda Thomason, Chair of Finance Committee

Did you know that your pledge helps provide \$600 for coffee and other supplies for the Chalice Café?

The Finance Committee and our Fellowship appreciates your support and contributions of time, treasure and talent in the coming year. While we have completed our pledge and membership drive, our stewardship is ongoing. The sum is greater than the parts, and what we create together is of great value.

May our bounty and care for each other continue to flourish.

## Church Events

**May 3:** 6 p.m. First Wednesday Forum

**May 17:** 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee

**May 6:** 10:35 a.m. Philosophy Group

**May 18:** 6:30 p.m. Board of Trustees

**May 9:** 5:15 p.m. Faith in Action Montgomery Hub at Old Ship AME Zion Church

## Weekly Meetings

*Every Sunday:*

- 9:15 a.m. Choir Practice
- 10 a.m. Worship Service
- 11:30 a.m. Second Hour/R.E.
- 7 p.m. Real Connections

*Every Monday:*

- 7 p.m. Refuge Recovery

*Every Tuesday:*

- 6 p.m. Choir Practice

*Every Tuesday (cont.):*

- 8 p.m. Young People's AA

*Every Wednesday:*

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

*Every Thursday:*

- 8 a.m. Building & Grounds

*Every Saturday:*

- 8 p.m. Young People's AA

## Share the Plate Partner: Mental Health America

Mental Health America in Montgomery is a non-profit United Way agency that serves individuals with mental illness. Its purpose is to develop a coordinated citizens volunteer movement to work toward:

- (1) the improved care and treatment of persons with mental illness,
- (2) the empowerment of clients to improve and enhance the quality of their lives,
- (3) the public education and promotion of good mental health,
- (4) the early intervention and assessment of emotional and mental disorders, and
- (5) the advocacy of education and research to promote mental wellness and to benefit the mentally ill.

# The true work starts after the drive is over

By the Rev. Lynn Hopkins

The membership drive officially ended on April 9. Now the really hard, largely invisible work has begun: crafting a budget for a fellowship whose aspirations always far exceed its resources. The pledge total as of this writing is more than last year but only sufficient to maintain current operations for about nine months; the rest of our operating budget comes through often delightful but always labor-intensive fundraising efforts throughout the year.

**We are committed to living within our means,** budgeting for resources that are actually available. This year's pledge total, along with strong fundraising, will allow us to maintain our current size and status. It does not give us room to use funds for programs and ministries, like music, outreach, social action and community education. It keeps the lights on and the doors open but no more.

An organization has an automatic, almost instinctive response to this reality: push for more. Ask people to give. Unfortunately, we are still stuck in this mindset: thinking of, and talking about, our financial pledge as though it were simply a charitable contribution. It isn't. Members of this fellowship are invited to participate fully in the life of the congregation, not to give their money away, but to manifest a religious body that they hope for, to take an active role in creation.

**One of the things that drew me to this congregation was its economic diversity.** I realize that means serving a congregation that does not have an average income as high as many others. It means that the average annual pledge won't be as high as elsewhere. Welcoming members with little or no income means welcoming members who are unable to make a substantial pledge relative to our total budget.

It also means that we can only thrive if those who have the means, and who are committed to this larger life, do make a substantial pledge relative to our total budget. Our health and longevity depend on the full participation of those who are able.

**The UUA's suggested approach,** adopted by most congregations, includes a framework that was included in the membership drive packet: the Fair Share Guide. It identifies four levels of membership:

- **Supporter:** congregation is a significant part of my spiritual and intellectual life (2%-6%).
- **Sustainer:** committed to sustaining the programs and ministries of congregation (3%-7%).
- **Visionary:** congregation has unique importance central to my spiritual principles (5%-9%).
- **Transformer:** deeply committed to the congregation; my pledge provides fuel for transformation and is one of my spiritual practices in living UU Principles (10%).

**One point that is rarely mentioned in Fair Share discussions has been on my mind as we consider budget issues. It is this: a congregation made up of entirely Supporter and Sustainer members is not one that can afford professional leadership.**

The membership drive is an invitation to envision and transform, to participate - physically, spiritually, financially as each is able – in the life of something much more than each of us. It is an invitation to dedicate ourselves to what we believe can be, to tell ourselves the truth and then act on it.

I trust that members are doing that. I see people taking active part in activities, sharing their resources as they are able. When committed members don't find what they need here, they are creating it within our walls. When committed members are concerned or disturbed about something being done or said here, they are expressing it directly to those involved.

I see great possibility in the days and years ahead. I know that we have all that we need to accomplish our dreams and visions. It is my sincere hope that we are courageous and generous enough to share it with each other - and make that a reality.

### **UUFM Income & Expenses for the Month of February 2017**

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenses: Operations</b>	
Pledges received	\$6,420	Mortgage & Insurance	1,609
Regular donations not pledged	285	Utilities	1,016
Sunday collection	835	Building & Grounds	826
Fundraising (incl. EOY donations)	8,596	Kitchen & Office Expenses	99
Building rentals	1,165	Operations subtotal	\$3,550
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$17,301</b>	<b>Expenses: Mission</b>	
<b>Expenses: Staff</b>		Religious Education	82
Wages	4,492	UUA Gift	500
Benefits	1,814	Share the Plate	531
Taxes	38	Mission subtotal	\$1,113
Staff subtotal	\$6,344	<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$11,007</b>
		<b>NET INCOME OR (LOSS)</b>	<b>\$6,294</b>

### **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 submissions**

Submissions for the June newsletter should be submitted no later than May 24.  
Submissions can be sent to Janice Wood at [jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com](mailto:jrwood.montgomery@gmail.com)