

STEEPLETALK

UNITARIAN

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April 15, 2001

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CUUPS Plans May Day Celebration

Your local CUUPS group, or Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, is sponsoring a May Day celebration. May Day, or Beltane, is a celebration of fertility and renewal. Ancient peoples focused on their crops and animals; many modern celebrants find inspiration for their creative efforts as well, focusing on what is growing within our hearts and minds and spirits throughout this solar cycle. **Please join us on Sunday evening, April 29th.**

At 5pm we will start re-stringing our Maypole, so come add your creative energies to this necessary spring cleaning! Then at 7pm, we will eat a potluck supper. Bring a dish to serve 4 to 6 and a drink. Following supper we will have a celebratory ritual, to dance the Maypole and weave together what we shall create for this growing season. Call **Linda Berry** for more information: xxx-xxxx.

Want more information on CUUPS? Please check out the national website at www.cuups.org. This is a great website to better understand what CUUPS is about. One of the purposes of CUUPS is "Promoting the practice and understanding of Pagan and Earth-centered spirituality within the Unitarian Universalist Association." Each local group decides on its own program. Groups welcome members from all religious and spiritual traditions. Membership in CUUPS is open to anyone who supports the Purposes of CUUPS and the Principles and Purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

You're Invited to a Dinner and Movie Party!

Join us for the all-church potluck dinner on **Friday, April 20, at 6:30p.m.** in the social hall. Bring your favorite springtime dish and enjoy the good company and good cooking of your fellow UU's. After dinner, all who wish to do so can stay to watch the movie, *Muriel's Wedding*, which we'll be showing in the sanctuary. Following the movie (which takes place in Australia), **John and Carol Findling** will lead a discussion, drawing upon their recent experiences while in Australia. Hope you can be there!



New UU Sessions

Sunday, April 22nd & Sunday, April 29th

12:15 p.m. in the Library

A light lunch will be available.

These sessions are geared for new friends, visitors and new members of First Unitarian, but we invite all who would like to attend. The sessions will provide participants with some more detailed information about Unitarian Universalism and our church, First Unitarian.

"To dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another."

WAYWARD PULPIT

“To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together ... riders on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold.”

from the statement **Archibald MacLeish** made after the pictures taken at the time of the first landing on the moon were shown.

COMMENTARY

“... on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold ...” What an extraordinary line! How rich it is if we let it open us to the specialness of this home world of ours! For this is the only orb we know of in the minute portion of the universe our instruments can explore. There may well be other forms of life in the universe. But if there are, there are none we can scan anywhere near us. In that sense we are tremendously alone out here at the end of a spiral arm of our galaxy. And MacLeish is absolutely right that it is cold in the deeps of space through which our planet orbits. Only the thinnest layer of atmosphere separates us from that annihilating absence of heat.

It's been a long time since humanity first reached the moon. Long enough so that many of us who were vastly excited at the accomplishment and as awed as MacLeish by the picture of the brilliantly lit earth rotating in the black emptiness of space have largely forgotten that excitement. Most of us who live in cities, near interstate highways, or close to

airports and shopping centers are rarely reminded of the depth of the universe which surrounds us. For light pollution rarely allows us to see more than a very few of the thousands of stars that are visible where the night skies are clear and dark. Unlike our ancestors we are only infrequently eye to eye with the starry heavens and the immensity of being the heavens reveal.

I thought of this as I listened to **John Miller** report to the Special Congregational Meeting earlier today that we are nowhere near as reduced in pledging as some of us had been fearful we might be. Money will continue – as it always is in this church – to be tight. But the church will not be looking at closing its doors in the immediate future.

I thought of the picture of our planet sweeping about our sun when John made this announcement because it seems to me that this church is not unlike the earth itself, unique in its small place in the larger scheme of things, special in our immediate urban context. For we too are somewhat suspended in a disinterested and therefore chilly space. We're not as alone as the earth is, for there are three to five hundred people who know and in some ways depend upon our being here. They don't all pledge by any means. Nor do we even see them in the building very often (if at all).

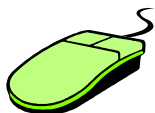
In a world increasingly cold to the morals, values, ethics, and process we represent, and increas-

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Steepletalk

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Steepletalk Schedule for May, June, July

In the next few months, I will be out of town on some weekends that I normally lay out *Steepletalk*. This means that several editions will cover three weeks, instead of two. Please take note of these deadlines and the time period covered by each issue:

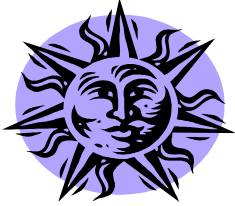
Deadline	Covers
April 20	April 29 - May 12 (2 weeks)
May 4	May 13 - June 2 (3 weeks)
May 25	June 3 - June 23 (3 weeks)
June 15	June 24 - July 14 (3 weeks)
July 6	July 15 - 28 (2 weeks)
July 20	July 29 - August 18 (3 weeks)
August 10	August 18 - September 2 (2 weeks)

Thanks, *Claudia*

Denominational and Church Affairs

UU Camp Schedules Available

If you are new to the church and to UUism, you may not know this interesting piece of information. There are UU summer camp programs all over the country..not just for children, but for adults too. Lake



Geneva, Wisconsin and The Mountain in North Carolina are among the popular programs in our region. If you are interested in these or other camps in other sections of the country, check the pamphlet rack

for schedules and costs. There are also numerous people in the church who have either gone to these programs themselves or sent their children. Ask or call **Joan Beal** for more information.

GA Approaches

It's time to firm up your commitment if you want to be a delegate to GA this year. The dates are June 21-25 and the place is Cleveland. It's unlikely to be so close to us again for several more years. It will be an exciting GA, since there is also an election for president of the UUA.

The church will pay for at least part of your registration, and if you decide early enough, you can get a greatly reduced rate. It takes much longer to sort out delegates for GA than it does for a district meeting, so please get your name in early to the DAPR committee or to **Joan Beal**. We are entitled to 5 delegates.

Adult Religious Education
Sunday morning -- 9:45 to 10:45
Church Library

Upcoming Topics

April 15--*What do Easter and Passover mean to you?*

April 22--*Recycling*

April 29--*Expressive Therapy*

Spirituality Group

First Unitarian's Spirituality Group helps to nurture members' spirituality by providing a centering time and opportunity for sharing. **The group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Parlor.** We encourage participants to arrive on time so that opening rituals are not interrupted. All are welcome, and regular attendance will help us build our support for one another. Childcare is provided. Call **Marty Horrar at xxx-xxxx** for more information.

April 25 *Drumming/Creating Sacred Space--*
Creation Spirituality of Louisville
May 9 *Meditation Beads--***Amy Russell**

Early Pledge Results Promising

With as many as 40 pledge cards still to be tabulated, the early pledge estimates appear to be on a par, or slightly ahead of last year's totals. Despite the recent controversies and the resignation of Richard Beal, there are **26 new pledge groups**, adding nearly \$16,000 to the canvass at this writing. **Fifty-three current pledgers were able to increase their pledge**, and that added almost \$9,000 to our canvass total. **Fifty-one pledge groups were able to maintain their giving level from last year**, and these generous souls account for nearly \$62,000, a very substantial portion of the budget.



If you still have not met with your canvasser or been able to decide on a giving level, please contact **Alice McKinley** or **Beverly Daly** to help us complete the Stewardship Campaign. We thank all the canvassers and especially the donors for their help in making this a successful campaign.

Adult Programming Project Team: Survey Results and More

by Melissa Draut

The Adult Programming Project Team, comprised of **Marty Horrar, Jeff Matthias, Beverly Moore, Melissa Draut** with assistance from **Jane Martin Buckley** and **Lisa Willner**, charged itself with developing ways to offer a variety of adult religious education programming to meet the needs of members and friends. We assessed current adult programming at First Unitarian, looked at what members and friends would like to see offered and created (or are creating) ways to make it easier to offer more program opportunities.

Why did we do this? In the Shared Ministry study that was conducted last year, we overwhelmingly heard that members and friends wanted ways to build their UU identity and meaningful connections with others in the church. One of the best ways to do this is through adult programming.

We currently have a weekly Sunday morning ARE program that provides a forum for UU and other programs chosen by those involved. The Spirituality Group now in its third year has provided a centering time for participants with ritual and discussion surrounding a variety of topics. These two programs help to serve particular member needs.

As our congregation changes and grows, we need to provide a variety of programming like these with different time frames and focus to serve a more diverse membership. Additionally, we learned through studying Shared Ministry and other successful churches that having a variety of small groups meeting concurrently provides meaningful support and connection for members.

First, we did a little housekeeping. We put together a "Facilitating a Small Group: Suggestions and Tips" sheet to help future facilitators more easily implement programs. Next, we organized and created a list of all the adult programming curricula available in our RE office. Both of these are available for anyone interested.

Secondly, this winter Jeff Matthias and Beverly Moore conducted a survey of church members and friends to gauge interest in future adult religious education programming. Thanks to Beverly and Jeff for making the survey happen, and for working through all the details of collecting and reporting the information. Thirty three people responded to the survey. "Being Liberal in An Illiberal Age" and "Our Chosen Faith" ranked the highest in interest level from respondents (18-22 respondents checking "yes" they would like to participate in this program). The three parenting topics grouped together ranked as high with a total of 22 respondents interested. "Life Tapestry," "Building Your Own Theology-Ethics" and "Religious Liberals Read the Bible" had 16, 15 and 14 respondents interested in those programs respectively. We now have lists of those who are interested in particular programs and their time preferences. Facilitators will contact these people when their program preferences are being offered.

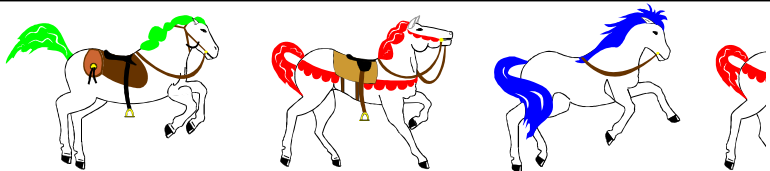
Most immediately, Beverly Moore and a co-facilitator have begun an "Our Chosen Faith" discussion group. It is still not too late to get in on this, so contact Beverly if you're interested. The group meets on alternate Wednesday nights.

About a dozen respondents expressed interest in attending an Exploratory Workshop to identify other opportunities for meeting adult programming needs and to learn how to set up a program. Jeff Matthias is coordinating this workshop to be held in the summer. Out of this workshop, we are hoping to train future facilitators for UU curriculum programs.

In the works for the 2001-02 church year:

- **Isabel Silverman** and a co-facilitator will offer the "Being Liberal in an Illiberal Age." This program explores **Jack Mendelsohn's** book which introduces Unitarian Universalism and encourages development of personal beliefs and values. This program is tentatively slated for Wednesday evenings. For Sunday mornings in Fall 2001 and Spring 2002, we are planning to alternate the requested programs around the new Artist-in-Residence.

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All-Church Derby Party

Saturday, May 5, 2001

12:00 noon until after the last race

(come for a little while or stay all day!)

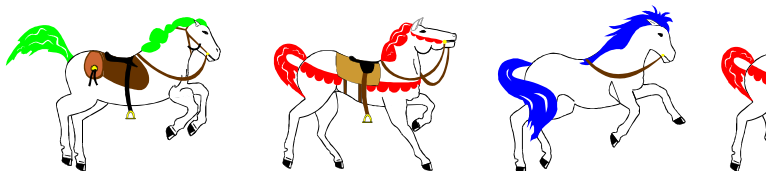
Hosted by Tiffany Taylor & Anne Miller

(Special thanks to Idell Rosen for her many years of hosting this event!)

You need to bring:

- Pot-luck dish to serve at least 12
- Your own alcoholic beverages if you want them
(coffee and soft drinks provided)
- Plenty of \$1 bills
(betting on all races straight \$1 per bet;
all money split among holders of winning tickets)

Don't miss this great annual event!



Church Members

Audrey Little

You may be familiar with Audrey Little from her part in the recent worship committee service, “Take Time for Your Life.” Audrey’s participation in worship committee activities, and this service in particular, follows naturally her own religious journey prior to First U. Audrey has always enjoyed discussing different religious ideas and has experimented with lots of religions in her life. A significant experience was her discovery of the book “You Can Hear Your Life,” by Louise Hay, which directs people to look inward at their own life, rather than outward, for a deity. “I have always been searching for something else,” she says.



Born into the Baptist religion in New York City, Audrey moved to Louisville with her mother and siblings at age 16 and has been here ever since. She got her GED and has attended college off and on over the years. She is living not far from the church.

After Audrey read UU materials and found our church, she also became involved with Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. She worked at the RCRC booth at the State Fair, sharing the booth with someone from First U. Since joining First Unitarian, she has also become involved in volunteering for Fairness activities. She enjoys work in which she

can type, file, or do office work.

Audrey does like to watch thought-provoking TV shows, like “Oprah” and “Judging Amy,” but besides Audrey’s social justice and religious journey, she also has a grittier, (maybe rowdier?) side to her life. This is when you might find her watching wrestling, checking out how her favorites, Kevin Nash and Stone Cold Steve Austin, are doing. Welcome, Audrey, and thanks for all your contributions to First U.

Polyamory Awareness Group: The Polyamory Awareness Group will discuss “Coming Out” on **Thursday, April 26, at 7:00 pm** in the parlor.

Have You Seen the Church Banner?

We’re wondering because it is missing. It was probably last used at General Assembly last June. Jackey has not been able to locate it in the building, and Richard doesn’t know where it might be. Perhaps a member took it home for cleaning or repairs. If you know the whereabouts of the banner and its poles, please contact **Alice** in the church office, **585-5110**.

Please Respect Church Space

Several times in the last month, the front church door and the doors to the courtyard have been found unlocked in the morning. When you leave, please be sure to check the doors, even if you think someone else is in the building. If there are others in the building when you leave, you may even remind them to lock doors and turn out lights.

Closing Checklist Upon Leaving the Building:

1. Turn Coffeemaker OFF.
2. Lock Courtyard Doors.
3. Pick Up Belongings.
4. Replace Furniture As You Found It.
5. Set Heating/AC Control To Night Setting.
6. Turn Lights OFF, including Restrooms and Hallways.
7. Close All Doors.

RE News and Announcements

(continued from p.4)

- **Jen Lavery** and a co-facilitator will explore “Religious Liberals Read the Bible” or “Building Your Own Theology 3.”
- **Lisa Willner** and co-facilitator will offer one or more of the UU parenting programs.

With all of the programs we would like to have co-facilitators to help and learn from the experienced facilitators. So if you see yourself as an “intern” for adult programming in our church, please let one of those involved with the Adult Programming Project team know of your desire, or plan to attend the Exploratory Workshop when it is offered this summer.

Adult religious education programs offer an excellent way for us to build our Unitarian Universalist identity and a way for us to foster meaningful connections with one another. Adult programming will be an important part of our Shared Ministry mission as we provide opportunity for our members to grow personally and to minister to one another. If you are interested in planning or coordinating future adult programs, please contact **Melissa Draut** at xx-xxxx or e-mail her at meldraut@bellsouth.net.

Easter Activities and Schedule

Our **Senior High youth group** will serve an elegant **breakfast on Easter morning, 9:15 - 10:45**. The Middle School youth group will be sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt, so bring your children and their Easter baskets. Times for the egg hunts are:

🐣 **10:10 Egg hunt for children 1st through 5th grade on the church grounds.**

🐣 **10:30 Egg hunt for toddlers through kindergartners in the courtyard.**

ALL CHILDREN are invited to attend the first part of the Celebration of Life on Easter Sunday. Joan Beal will share a special Easter story. Following the story, children 2ND GRADE AND UNDER who do not wish to remain in the service may go upstairs for stories and activities led by **Laura Jennings** and **Kathleen** and **David Reed**. Older children will be asked to remain in the service with their families.

We recognize that this is a bit different than in recent years when all children went upstairs for a video. Several RE Council members and your interim RE Coordinator agreed that children, although they may not be entertained during every moment, get something of value from the Celebration of Life, even if it is only enjoying the music, learning about our services, or having time to sit together with family. And, without a doubt, the presence of the children and youth in the sanctuary adds something special to our Celebrations of Life. Let's welcome them as they remain with us in our Easter Sunday morning service.



RE Announcements

- Remember that our **Passover Seder** is **April 13th at 6:30**. Please join us for this annual celebration and remembrance. (Please call Lisa if you are available to help with set-up.)

- **Beverly Moore** has generously offered to present a program for parents on “How to Talk to Your Child About Sex.” Bev received special training from Planned Parenthood to facilitate this 3 hour program. If there is sufficient interest, we would like to schedule it to coincide with the Red Cross babysitting course on **April 28th, either 9:15 - 12:15 or 2:15 to 5:15**. The course is designed for parents of any age child or teen. If you are interested, please respond as soon as possible and let Lisa know which time slot you would prefer.

- There is still some space available for the **Red Cross Babysitting Course, April 28th, 9:00 to 5:30**. The cost is \$10.00 (such a deal!) and lunch is included. Sign up on the RE bulletin board if you are between the ages of 11 and 18 and would like to learn valuable skills and be eligible to provide childcare for church events.

- **ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM BEGINS SOON!!** Remember to sign up for **morris dancing: April 22, April 29, May 6th--9:45 to 10:45** in the social hall. Open to adults, youth and children over 5. Come alone, as a couple, family, or in a group. Musicians welcome!

Social Responsibility

Earth Day at the Falls of the Ohio State Park 201 W. Riverside Drive, Clarksville, IN Saturday, April 14 between 10 and 4pm

Activities and events will be found outside, in the lobby, in the auditorium and in other spaces in the center. Most activities are free, but those located within the museum have the normal charge of \$4 for adults and \$1 for children between 2 and 18.

Numerous groups and businesses will be there to share information and ideas to increase our Earth awareness. There will be live animal shows at 10 a.m., 12 and 2 p.m., as well as food and music. Several members of our church will be participating. For more information, speak to **Carol Findling** at church or call her at xxx-xxxx.

This event is sponsored by the Falls of the Ohio State Park and Trash Force, Inc., the group that recycles our office paper.



Socially responsible investments: Larry Carter, a Louisville-based financial consultant with A.G. Edwards & Sons, will conduct a seminar entitled "Guide to Socially Responsible Investing" on **Saturday, May 12, from 11am to 1pm**, in the church social hall. Although this is not a church-sponsored event, members and friends of First Unitarian may be interested in attending.

Letter Carriers' Food Drive: Remember to leave non-perishable food by your mailbox on **Saturday, May 12** to support the Food Drive sponsored by the National Association of Letter Carriers. All food will be given to the Dare to Care Food Bank for needy and hungry people in the Louisville Metropolitan Area.

Annual Reports Due Soon!

Committees are charged in the Bylaws to submit an annual Report to the Congregation for the Annual Meeting. To allow for distribution before the Annual Congregational Meeting on June 4, 2001, **please submit the committee's report to the office by May 1, 2001**

COMMENTARY (continued from p.2)

ingly dismissive of liberal religion and the kind of diversity to which we witness, it can be a bit lonely. Not just lonely as a community, but even more so as individuals. Over and over again we're told how valuable it is for people to have found a place where they can feel free to be themselves and feel supported and affirmed by other members and friends of the church who may not see things the way they do at all. While we're not exactly the cat's meow for every seeker who comes through our doors, we could be for a great many who don't even know we exist and are for many of us here. We're not the cat's meow because we're of one mind, or because everyone is in agreement as to how we should dress, which hymns we should sing, how uniform in behavior and lifestyle we should be, or that our Purposes and Prin-

ciples are an adequate expression of our faith. Quite the opposite. Those institutions can be found all over the place. Whereas we continue to attempt, as we have been attempting it for over four hundred years, to be open to and inclusive of a wide range of belief and, to the extent possible, a wide range of actions in this one community. This makes us special. And it sets us somewhat apart.

Hence my sense of gladness that the church still has a very good chance of remaining: relatively small and green, needed and beautiful in that eternal cacophony where it floats. For it's necessary to see ourselves as riders on the earth ... riders on this bright loveliness.

See you in church,

Richard

Calendar: April 11 - 28

April 2001

11 Wednesday

6:00pm Finance Committee (Library)
7:00pm Spirituality Group (Sanctuary)

12 Thursday

6:30-9:00pm Growth Coordinators (Library)
7:00-8:00pm Choir Practice (special for Easter)

13 Friday

6:30-9:00pm PASSOVER FAMILY SEDER

15 Sunday

9:15-10:45 EASTER BREAKFAST
9:45-10:50am Adult RE (Library)
9:45-10:45am Middle School & Sr. High Groups (Upstairs)
9:45-10:55am Parenting Teens Group (Parlor)
10:00 Choir Practice (Rm 210)
10:10 & 10:30 EGG HUNTS

17 Tuesday

5:30-8:30pm DAPR Committee (Parlor)
7:30pm Council (Library)

18 Wednesday

6:00-8:30pm Adult Programming Team (Rms. 206 & 207)
7:30pm Ministerial Advisory Committee (Richard's office)

19 Thursday

7:00pm Care Committee (Library or Parlor)

20 Friday

6:00-10:00pm All Church Pot Luck - 1st floor

22 YOUTH SUNDAY - JR. HIGH Service

9:00am Choir Practice (Rm 210)
9:30-10:45am Morris Dancing (Social Hall)
9:45-10:50am Adult RE (Library)
9:45-10:45am Middle School & Sr High Groups - (Upstairs)
12:15-2:15pm Budget Hearing 2001/2002 (Social Hall)
12:30-3:00pm New UU Sessions (Library)

23 Monday

5:30pm Stewardship Meeting (Library)

25 Wednesday

7:00-9:00pm Worship Committee (Library)
7:00pm Spirituality Group (Sanctuary)

26 Thursday

7:00pm Polyamory Awareness Group (Parlor)

28 Saturday

9:00am-6:00pm Red Cross BabySitting Course (Open Classroom)

Just among ourselves

We hope you saw **Tom Louderback's** picture and column on favorite web bookmarks in *The Courier-Journal* on April 5. And he had another good letter in *LEO* recently.

Lynn Slaughter's picture and article appeared in the February edition of *Louisville Parent*. She's a frequent contributor to this free magazine available about town. Her article was entitled "Family Rituals That Make Even 'Big Kids' Feel Loved."

The newsletter of the Public Radio Partnership recently featured **Marge Warden**, retired office manager for First U, as outstanding volunteer. It will be no surprise to First U folks that she was praised for her willingness and ability to take care of all the little "extras" that needed to be done.



**First Unitarian Church
809 South Fourth Street
Louisville, KY 40203-2115**

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Scryings

Celebrations of Life

Sunday services begin at 10:55 a.m.

April 15 As is our custom, Easter will begin with a pancake breakfast put on by the Senior High Youth Group, followed by an Easter Egg hunt for the younger children (assisted by Jr. High members), and then the children - second grade and older - and youth will join the adults in the service for a story and the rest of the service. The theme for our Celebration of Life this Easter Sunday will be a presentation on *a Unitarian Universalist understanding of the Easter story*, which we have not brought up for several years. As always, people are free to “dress up” or “dress down” for this service.

April 22 Our Jr. and Sr. Youth Groups alternate presenting our *annual Youth Service*. This year it is the Jr. High’s turn to create what is very often an interesting and enlightening Celebration of Life.

April 29 **The Rev. Maureen Tighe**, an Episcopalian priest (and friend of **Suzie Onwood**) will conduct this Worship Committee service on her experience of ministry as a hospice worker with terminally ill patients.