



# STEEPLETALK

## FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

*A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association*

Volume 11 Number 3

13 February 2005

809 S. Fourth Street • Louisville KY 40203 • (502)585-5110 or 589-6028 • Fax (502)587-8446  
www.firstulou.org • Office Hours: 9:00am - 3:00pm M-F • Celebration of Life 10:55am Sundays  
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Lisa Willner, Director of Religious Education (502)585-5110 • Bryan Reiff, Office Manager  
Rebecca Johnson, Music Director • Anne Miller, DRE Emeritus • Robert Reed, Minister Emeritus

### First U Starts Planning for 175th Birthday!

This year marks the 175th anniversary of First Unitarian Church. Plans are underway to mark this momentous occasion with a variety of events beginning in September 2005. Many of you have expressed an interest in helping with these activities. A temporary steering committee has been formed, and they are seeking new members.

If you would like to help, or if you are interested in hearing more about these developing plans, please contact **Rose Stevens** at xxx-xxxx, **Susan Wilburn** at xxx-xxxx, or **Kathy Kremer** at xxx-xxxx. A planning meeting will be held at church on **Thursday, February 10** from noon to 2:00 p.m.

### A Fish Bowl Conversation of the Systems Change Index *Congregational Self-Definition*



**Who:** The Learning Team and all members of First Unitarian

**What:** Engaging in further steps of the Alice Mann Process to assess our current context and calling. Members have an opportunity to engage in and observe others in conversation about the subject.

**When:** Sunday, Feb.13 12:30-2:pm      Wed., Feb.16 7-8:30pm

**Topic:** “The Pastor’s Role”      “Size of Paid Staff”

**Facilitators:** Marty      Doug  
Doug      Marty  
David      Penny

**Where:** First Unitarian Church

Child and nursery care will be provided.

“Love is the spirit of this church...”

# Learning Team /Discernment Update

## Finding Answers in a Fishbowl

by Emil Roy

The First UU's Learning Team has sponsored two FishBowl discussions of Alice Mann's Factor #1: "Congregational self-definition," after church Sunday, January 16, then again during Chalice Night, Wednesday, January 19. Groups of 20-30 congregants reflected their ambivalence about the Church they want us to be.

Speakers liked the FishBowl's openness, their sense of safety, and the time it provided for reflection. The discussion process is working, participants thought, but we need to give it time. Although speakers felt positively about the Church, the topic—"Who are we?"—brought out a number of critical comments.

We're good at initially making room for new people, some thought, welcoming them warmly for the first few times of attendance. Then, newcomers had a sense that the congregation was more concerned about fitting newcomers into its set structures rather than accommodating the newcomers' needs.

The issue of access surfaced repeatedly, involving physical as well as organizational openness. Newcomers have difficulty gaining information about the Church, finding the Church and its "front" entrance, then negotiating the entrance from the parking lot if physically disabled, or, once inside, finding child or nursery care.

If newcomers try to create new groups to meet their needs, one person mentioned, the in-

sular Church "establishment" becomes defensive, confronting efforts to form new groups with inertia or resistance. Some thought the Church has turned inward in the last several years, forgetting about population segments such as young adults and the elderly.

Speakers also mentioned communication problems. Groups and committees seem isolated from one another and the congregation, reflecting separations between "upstairs" and "downstairs"; "insiders" and "outsiders"; members, committees, and the Board. We know how to be upbeat and positive but don't

know how to change.

Members also expressed anxiety about how the minister carried out pastoral functions in a "program church." All agreed that "program church" describes our present organization. Many don't understand how the minister balances traditional pastoral duties (visitation, counseling) with the demands of the Church's programs.

After both the Sunday afternoon and Chalice Night discussions, participants rated the Church "low" or "medium" (a 1.6 average) on Mann's 3-point rating scale.



## Chalice Night

## Stewardship

### Chalice Night Schedule

Wednesdays  
5:30 - 6:15 -- Dinner  
6:30 - 6:50 -- Service  
7:00 - 8:30 -- Programs

### Chalice Night Offerings

from Rita Sasse

#### February 16

**Menu:** West Indian pumpkin soup, cheesy potato casserole, chocolate cake

**Class Offerings:** Buddhism, 12 Lessons in Personal Spirituality, Introduction to 5 week course in Surviving with Violence (Intro of Violence) with **Kent McDaniels**, Partnerchurch Book Group with **Bev Moore**, and kids' activities "Let's Cook" with **Tiffany Taylor**

#### February 23

**Menu:** fiesta frittata, zucchini salad, sour cream cornbread and caramel bars

**Class Offerings:** Paganism 101, Modern Religious Thought, **Jill Harmer's** travel presentation (Costa Rica) - bring you travel tales to share

- Norm will be presenting a new class; dates and details to be made available soon.

### In Memoriam Genevieve Sibley

November 10, 1913 - January 31, 2005

### Stewardship Campaign Dates

✓ **Sun., Feb. 20 (12:30-1:00 approx.): Canvasser Training.** Sandwich, chips and drink will be provided (please RSVP to **Jane Buckley**, jane\_buckley@earthlink.net or xxx-xxxx, if you have not already done so).

✓ **Wed., Feb. 23 (6:15-6:45 approx.): Makeup Canvasser Training.**

✓ **Sun., Feb. 27 (12:30 - 2:00): FAST TRACK Canvassing.** If you are not a FIRST YEAR MEMBER, and are familiar with the church's vision, mission and financial situation, this is an opportunity for you to quickly fill out you 2005-2006 pledge card, give your comments and be done. [Note: This option for the Stewardship is based on some of the post-canvass comments and survey following the 2004-2005 campaign.]

✓ **Mar. 2-Mar. 20: Traditional STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN** will be in force.

### Did You Know?

Did you know that we have a **Severe Winter Weather Procedure?** Under most circumstances, the Celebration of Life Service will NOT be cancelled. However, if weather is bad enough, we may cancel first hour RE activities. The minister, RE Director, and Board President will make the decision, and the Shared Ministry Coordinator will change the outgoing message on the answering machine, and post a message to the listserve and on the website. The easiest way to get information about church closing is to call the office at 585-5110 on Sunday mornings. Check it out!



## REviews

On February 13 our Religious Education program will offer Session One of the Senior High Our Whole Lives (OWL) course. This is a significant event in itself, since our high school-age youth will have the opportunity to participate in this age-appropriate, comprehensive, values-based sexuality education course. But it is also important because it marks the culmination of a committee's forward thinking and careful long-term planning. The successful fulfillment of an ambitious five-year plan is an accomplishment for this congregation to celebrate.

In 2000-2001, my first year as your religious educator, we completed our first round of Junior High OWL, which had recently replaced the older "About Your Sexuality" curriculum. The 00-01 Religious Education Committee expressed a strong commitment to the OWL program and its values, and a desire to expand our OWL offerings to include OWL at all five age levels: K/1, 4-6, Junior High, Senior High, and Adult. The Committee understood that this was an ambitious undertaking. Successful OWL programming involves extensive training, purchasing curricula and up-to-date support materials, and developing community resources. The OWL program is not inexpensive, and would require the entire congregation's ongoing support. Since OWL rests on an assumption that parents are children's primary sexuality educators, successful OWL programming requires the commitment and participation of parents who are already overworked and overextended. In short, the worthy goal of offering all five levels of OWL was not to be taken lightly, or undertaken without careful planning.

The Committee laid out a five-year plan that involved adding program components one at a time. In 01-02 Junior High OWL was offered again, while several First U members received training to lead OWL for adults and younger children. In 02-03, we added OWL for 5th / 6th graders and adults. Working our way younger, we offered K/1 and 4/5 OWL in 03-04, while also anticipating needs for this year by training several more OWL facilitators. This year we offered Junior High OWL again and, at long last...our inaugural Senior High OWL class begins later this month.

Since 2000, we've built up a rather impressive "stable" of 14 certified OWL trainers, covering all five age groups. We have a 15-year plan in place to continue offering OWL on a regular rotation\*, so that all children who participate in K/1 OWL will have the opportunity to complete the next three OWL levels by the time they finish high school.

As we celebrate this congregation's considerable achievement, we can also take pride in the Unitarian Universalist values we are disseminating through the excellent OWL curricula -- values of self-worth, responsibility to self and others, and a celebration of loving and healthy relationships grounded in social justice and inclusiveness. Blessed be.

Peace, *Lisa*

\*K/1, 4/5, and Junior High every 2 years; Senior High and Adult every 3 years. K/1 and 4/5 OWL will be offered in 05-06.

## R.E. Announcements

## S.M.A.R.T.

**First Hour Programs for the young and young-at-heart, Sunday mornings 9:45 – 10:45 in the Open Classroom:**

➔ **Feb. 13: Heart to Heart:** Design valentine hearts with **Geneva Fry**. These may be used to send messages to the Indiana legislature about same-sex marriage.

➔ **Feb. 20: Joke Swap:** Bring your favorite shaggy dog stories, knock-knock and elephant jokes and join **Rick Rinehart, Greg Byrne, Ben xxxxxx, and John Scruton** for an hour of witty repartee. ALL AGES!

• **NEW ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE SERIES FOR ALL AGES! February 20, 27, and March 6.** Join **Rose and David Stevens** for three sessions of **International Folk Dancing**. 9:45 – 10:45 in the SOCIAL HALL. (There will be no first hour programs in the Open Classroom on these dates.) Adults, Youth, and Children -- This is a great opportunity for multigenerational community building!

• **Senior High OWL dates:** February 13, 27, March 13, 20, 1:00 – 3:00. There will be no Senior High Youth Group on these dates. *OWL class participation requires pre-registration and parental permission.*

• **Intergenerational Worship:** The February 13 Celebration of Life is a multigenerational service. There will be no R.E. classes for children and youth. Childcare will be provided for kindergartners and younger. All other children and youth are invited and encouraged to attend the service seated with their families.

• Juice donations are still needed for snack time in our children's R.E. classes. Contributions may go in the Preschool Room refrigerator.

### Sunday Morning Adult Round Table

Church Library  
Sharing at 9:30am  
Program - 9:40 until 10:45am

- **Feb 13 -- *What Do UUs Believe About Prayer?*** **Frank Slesnick**, discussion leader. UUA curriculum.
- **Feb 20 -- *Confucianism*.** Confucianism deals primarily with individual morality and ethics, and the proper exercise of political power by rulers, while incorporating life-stage rituals. **Helen Longley**, speaker.

Next curricula meeting Tuesday, Feb 22, 6:15pm. For questions, comments, topic requests, or to offer a program, email the Curricula Team at [smart@firstulou.org](mailto:smart@firstulou.org), or call Lisa Willner at 585-5110.



**Lisa Willner**  
Religious Education Director

*Telephone*  
(502) 585-5110 (Office)

*E-mail*  
[dre@firstulou.org](mailto:dre@firstulou.org)

*Office Hours*

Monday 11 - 3

Tuesday 12 - evening

Wednesday 11 - 3

*Additional times available by appointment.*



# News and Notes

## March is Partner Church Month at First Unitarian

by Beverly Moore

First Unitarian Church has a partner in the Transylvanian region of Romania, the **Unitarian Church in Nagyenyed** (Hungarian name). In March we will celebrate that relationship in several ways. Please mark your calendars and get ready!

➔ **March 2, Chalice Night Service** about our partnership.

➔ **March 16, at Chalice Night**--A very special **book discussion** about the life of a Unitarian minister/theologian who was jailed by the Communists and banished to a small village. It will help us understand the oppression of Unitarians and other minorities in Romania in the twentieth century. The biography, *Prisoner of Liberte'* is written by his daughter, **Judit Gellerd**, who has been very active in the Partner Church Program.

When I wrote her to get copies of the books, which are out of print, she responded, "What a kind surprise your letter was! I am so grateful to you for discussing my father's life story--on the 25th anniversary of his martyrdom!" She also reported that **Elie Wiesel** liked the book so much, he offered to write a preface for it and sent it to his publishers for another printing. Right now, Judit is writing a Hungarian version for the commemoration of his martyrdom in Transylvania this summer.

**We have found 15 copies of the book.** Please let **Beverly Moore** (beverlydm@aol.com or xxx-xxxx) know as soon as possible if you would like a book. She will distribute them at the Feb. 16 Partner Church Meeting at Chalice Night.

➔ **March 19, Transylvanian Fling!** -- Big Intergenerational Party sponsored by RE Committee and Partner Church Group. Romanian and

Hungarian Dancing by the First Hour RE participants and more!

➔ **March 27, Easter and our Partner Church**

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## Women's Alliance Organizes

by Kathy Thackeray

The First Unitarian Women's Alliance gathered for brunch on January 8 to decide what structure we would have, and we decided to follow the Lincoln, Nebraska, model. We have an umbrella group that will gather four times a year. There is a Steering Committee to plan these gatherings, which are open to all women connected to First Unitarian Church--members and friends and newcomers.

Various topic groups will operate under the Umbrella Group. One is now meeting, the needlework group, known as "Those Liberal Sew and Sew's." It meets the first Wednesday of every month on Chalice Night and is open to all folks interested in any kind of needlework. Two other topic groups are in the works. All topic groups are advertised in the *Steepletalk* and on the church List Serve; **Angela Klueber** will help us start a Yahoo group on the Internet.

The dues for the Women's Alliance is \$5.00 per year. If you wish to be part of our national organization, the UU Women's Federation, that is \$20.00. You can see **Joan Beal**, our Alliance treasurer. The next Umbrella gathering will be on Tuesday evening, March 8 (International Women's Day) at 5:30 for a pot luck supper. Hope to see you then. If you have questions, please contact **Kathy Thackeray**, xxx-xxxx or margituu@yahoo.com.

# Social Responsibility

## First U Volunteers Continue Service to Tingley House

by Janet Rink

Gregory and Duane operate a kitchen repair service. They transport the ailing refrigerator or range to their shop, get the tools out of the red plastic case, and take turns wearing the hard hat. Gregory is 5 and Duane is 4. They live at Tingley House, the Volunteers of America's Family Emergency Shelter.

In the playroom at Tingley House, volunteers from our church enjoy nurturing children like Gregory and Duane every Tuesday from 6:30 to 8 pm. The VOA provides housing, three meals a day, transportation assistance and case management with the goal of returning each family to stability. Families often stay for several months, living in one or two rooms. Parents are understandably overwhelmed by their circumstances, with little energy to play with their children.

Our service focuses on children ages 3-6, in a well-equipped playroom. We provide nurturing activities with the emphasis on one-on-one contact. We snuggle in the reading corner with a stack of books, fit puzzle pieces together at the play table or knead Playdoh into fanciful shapes. A play kitchen offers feats for the imagination.

Volunteers in the playroom from December 7 – January 25 were **David Runge, Erica Cates, Pam and xxx Moe, Bridgette Porter, Tish Moore, Kathy Kremer, Felicia and Jeff Schultz, Levin and xxx Elpers.**

We also provided volunteers for the Study Buddy room where school age children receive help with homework. These volunteers were **Fran Fargen, Roger Ohlman, Tim and Jane Martin Buckley, Roger Bradshaw, Mikel Childer, Claudia and David Runge.**

Tingley House is located at the corner of S. Preston and Ormsby with a secure, well-lit park-

ing lot in the back. Ideal participation is a commitment of one Tuesday each month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. But if your schedule allows less frequent involvement, the children need you whenever you can come.

For more information or to volunteer, talk to **Janet Rink** in the social hour after church or call her at (502) xxx-xxxx.

## “Truth Tour” Forum at TJ Unitarian

from Jill Harmer

On **Sunday, Feb. 13, at 12:45**, Thomas Jefferson Unitarian will host a forum about the upcoming “Truth Tour” by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). **Romero Ramirez**, a farm worker originally from Guatemala, will speak. He is one of the winners of the 2003 Robert F Kennedy Memorial Human Rights Award for his work to end slavery and sweatshops and a leader in the Taco Bell campaign. The CIW will be in Louisville on March 7 – 12 to educate and organize a rally. The **UU Service Committee** supports their boycotts. See [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org) and [www.ciw-online.org](http://www.ciw-online.org). A light lunch will be served. Call Martha Flack, xxx-xxxx, to arrange childcare.

• **ALSO - Human Rights, Farm Workers, the Fast Food Industry and You!** Attend the 3rd Thursday Lunch sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), **Feb. 17, 11:30 a.m.** at the Ruyard Kipling Restaurant, 422 W. Oak St. \$6.00. Questions: Make reservations to 473-8435 or 458-8056. Representatives of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers leading a campaign to pressure Taco Bell and YUM brands regarding human rights abuses in tomato harvesting fields will talk about their work in Louisville.

## Church Members



### The Moss Family

by Glenn Ellison

The Moss family came to us over two years ago from the nearby Greater Louisville environs. They are a family of four, and add a lot to our church makeup. **Margaret Kellams Moss** is as responsible for the family being with us as anyone. She has been a pagan since her teen years and came to us through her involvement in CUUPS. She has a B.S. in Ed. From IU and a B.S.N. from Spalding. She has worked in education and critical care nursing, but her first love is to stay at home and work as a disabilities ad-

vocate. Margaret has served six years on the Mental Retardation-Developmental Disabilities Committee at Seven County Services, and ten as chair of the Oldham Co. Association for Exceptional Citizens.

Her husband of 29 years, **Ralph**, studied electrical engineering and computer science at Speed Scientific School and has been programming various computers for 25 years. He sings with the church choir faithfully and reads music quickly. Ralph pitches in at other spots in our church life as needed, such as working the sound system for church services, and ad hoc with whatever else comes up.

Their son, **Geoffrey**, graduated from South Oldham High where he was basketball Homecoming King in 2001. He works in a video store where he checks and re-shelves videos. He also enjoys several sports which he participates in through Special Olympics. He is pretty much a music freak in the best sense of the word. Daughter, **Eleanor** Moss, is now a junior at Hanover College, almost 100% on academic scholarship.

When you meet these people, you will find them to be warm and insightful.

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### More Opportunities to be Socially Responsible

- ➔ Note several **peace and justice lectures at Presbyterian Seminary**: Feb. 23, March 14 & 15; call 895-3411 for more information.
- ➔ **Ky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty** meets the last Tuesday of each month. Call **Tish Moore**, xxx-xxxx for company in attending the meeting that upholds this stand by our congregation.
- ➔ The **HELP office** (ministries for central Louisville), is always in need of more volunteers. Our church supports this effort financially, and

Tish Moore sits on their board. Call her at xxx-xxxx or call the HELP office directly.

➔ Please look at the **Social Responsibility Committee's table** for current issues about which you can write letters.

➔ On **February 13** we will have very dark **chocolate bars** in time for your Valentine's Day gifts to others and yourself. The money goes directly to the farmers rather than the middleman. They have more pure chocolate and less sugar than most candy bars.

# Calendar: February 10 - 26

## February

- 10 Thursday**  
7:15pm Choir Practice, choir room
- 11 Friday**  
6:00pm Community Service Project -- Valentine's Day pizza party, social hall  
7:00pm UU Christian Fellowship, library
- 12 Saturday**  
9:00am Worship Associates  
1:00pm Interweave planning mtg., library  
6:00pm Middle school sleepover/bake sale, 2fl, kitchen/social hall
- 13 Sunday**  
9:00am End of Middle school sleepover/bake sale-2fl, k/sh  
9:00am Learning Team, parlor  
10:55am Celebration of Life  
12:30pm Learning Team Open Forum, sanct.  
1:00pm SR high OWL class  
7:00pm Flute Choir practice, choir rm
- 14 Monday - Valentine's Day**
- 15 Tuesday**  
6:30pm Board of Trustees, library
- 16 Wednesday**  
5:30pm Chalice Night
- 17 Thursday**  
7:15pm Choir Practice, choir room
- 18 Friday**  
12:00pm **Steepletalk Deadline**



- 20 Sunday**  
9:00am Learning Team, parlor  
10:55am Celebration of Life  
12:15pm Church Building Tour  
12:15pm Canvasser training, library
- 21 Monday - President's Day**  
11:30pm Brownbaggers -Meet at church 11:15  
7:00pm Shared Ministry Comm., library
- 22 Tuesday**  
9:30am **Steepletalk** Folding Party, library  
5:30pm Worship Comm., choir room  
6:15pm SMART Curriculum planning, library  
6:30pm RE Committee, open classroom
- 23 Wednesday**  
5:30pm Chalice Night
- 24 Thursday**  
5:30pm Activities Comm., library  
7:15pm Choir Practice, choir room
- 25 Friday**  
7:00pm UU Christian Fellowship, library

## Just among ourselves...

Our sympathies to the family of **Genevieve Sibley**, a long-time, beloved member of First Unitarian Church, who died Jan. 31. A memorial service will be held at First U on Sunday, Feb. 27, at 4:00pm.

**Glenn Ellison** reports that the doctors are pleased with the progress he has made since his knee accident and resulting surgery in January. Although he will probably be off work for four more weeks, he hopes to show up at church before then. Glenn expresses sincere thanks for the wonderful support he has received from church folks.

**Ron, Kathie and Cassidy Johnson** are thrilled to announce the arrival of granddaughter and niece, **xxxx xxxxx xxxxxx** on January 31. **xxxx** weighed in at 7 lbs, 14.25 oz, and was 21 inches long. Her older sister **xxxxx** is totally enthralled by her, as are her parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts and uncles.

## STEEPLETALK

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### **Celebrations of Life**

*Sunday services begin at 10:55 a.m.*

**February 13**      *Love and Commitment.* **Rev. Norm Stewart, Worship Associates Kathie Johnson and Carol Edelen.** In this multigenerational Valentine's Eve service, we will be lifting up the joys of love and the challenges of commitment. We will have a special ritual that calls us to remember what is "highest and best" in our lives.

**February 20**      *Tell Me a Story I've Never Heard Before.* **Guest minister Rev. Gail Seavey** will tell a story and some UU history that traces the way we make meaning as individuals and as church communities today. She will ask us to reflect upon the church stories our congregation tells to newcomers and what personal stories we tell to each other. **Worship Associate, Jo Ann Dale.** The choir will sing.

**February 27**      *God's Politics.* **Rev. Norm Stewart, Worship Associates Jo Ann Dale and Carol Uebelhoer.** Rather than abandoning the intersection of religion and politics to fundamentalists, perhaps we should consider a progressive agenda that is based in liberal prophetic religion.