



# STEEPLETALK

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## FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

*A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association*

Volume 11 Number 5

13 March 2005

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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  
Johanna Mehring, Board President (xxx)xxx-xxxx • Norm Stewart, Minister (502)561-8326  
Lisa Willner, Director of Religious Education (502)585-5110 • Vince Coombs, Office Manager  
Rebecca Johnson, Music Director • Anne Miller, DRE Emeritus • Robert Reed, Minister Emeritus

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**The Partner Church Group and Religious Education  
Committee invite you to celebrate Partner Church Month at the**

***First Unitarian Transylvania Fling...***  
**a social event for all ages!**

**Saturday, March 19**

**A Hungarian Supper begins at 5:30:**  
\$2.00/person, \$5.00/family  
There will be vegetarian options.

**Hungarian, Romanian, and Transylvanian Dancing begin at 7:00:**  
Demonstrations by the Louisville Ethnic Dancers and the First U Artist-in-Residence Participants. Members of the Louisville Ethnic Dancers will teach traditional dances to all who wish to participate. Experienced dancers, novices, and non-dancers are all welcome.

**RSVP if possible (585-5110), but come anyway!**

**Contact Lisa Willner ([dre@firstulou.org](mailto:dre@firstulou.org)) for more information.**

*If you are available to help with decorations and other set up, please join members of the Partner Church Group on Saturday, March 19, at 10:00 in the Social Hall. For more information about set-up needs, contact **Beverly Moore** (xxxxxxxxxx).*

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

## Notes from Norm

One of my favorite responsive readings in our *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal is “I Call That Church Free” (# 591). It is by UU theologian James Luther Adams. It is no coincidence that I normally use this reading several times a year. It challenges all of us to a very high standard as a prophetic, inclusive, relational religious community.

As I read it, it says that our liberal religious community takes religious questions about what is most intimate and ultimate in our lives seriously. Adams tells us that as a community of faith we can protect one another from the idolatry of any human claim to absolute truth or authority. We can support and care for one another in life and in death. The Free Church protects and nourishes [our] integrity and spiritual freedom. It is a church for seekers who are open to insight and conscience from every source and it is a church for those who want to be of service to the common good.

The prophethood and priesthood of all believers means that each one of us is called to share our own unique gifts within this congregation and the wider community. This is the call to Shared Ministry that we have been working to further develop here at First U over the past few years.

There is a major challenge to The Free Church concept as Adams explains it. For most free churches it is an ongoing struggle. The only way that a free church can survive (i.e., remain free and be fully autonomous with no organization or authority on high telling us how or what to do) is by self-financing. That means you and I must support the mission and ministry of this church if it is going to continue to be a beacon of

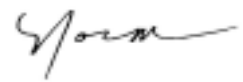
liberal religion in the Ohio River Valley. In recent years our aspirations have been greater than the amount of green energy that has come our way. Our current short term solution to this deficiency has been to dip into our savings / reserves / capital funds. We all know this is a solution which cannot continue forever.

This is the time of year when each of us, both members and friends, who are a part of this religious community must personally decide how important it is to have a non-creedal, non-doctrinal, liberal religious community available in downtown Louisville. A place where all of us can learn and grow in breadth and depth, where we can dedicate our children, raise our families, see our children married or joined in civil unions, enrich our own lives, and celebrate the lives of those who die.

If you are not quite sure about how valuable it is for you to have us here, consider a pledge of \$100 a month to start. If that feels comfortable, consider \$150-200 to start. If a \$100 a month feels like too much of stretch, start with \$50 a month or less if you have to. Only you can decide what it is worth to you and how much green energy you are able to contribute.

If you are like a lot of us you probably don't like hearing about money matters and how much we need to continue the work of this church year in and year out. I don't much like it either, however, that is the price of being a Free Church.

Blessed be,



# Stewardship

## Good News from the Stewardship Campaign!

During the first Sunday and Wednesday “Fast Track” session 33 pledgers pledged \$43,900 for the church’s 2005-2006 Operating Budget. Thank you all.

Those of you who have not yet pledged, should be hearing from your canvasser before Mar 20. Canvassers this year are members of your Church Board of Trustees, Council and Finance Committee.

If you are not contacted, or want to check to make sure YOU are on this year’s list of First Unitarian Members and Friends, contact Stew-

ardship Chairman **Jane Martin Buckley** (who has a master list of all people to be pledged).

Jane is often able to be contacted at church on Sunday, or can be reached at her home (xxx-xxxx, xxxxxxxxxxxx), or at work (xxx-xxxx, xxxxxxxxxxxx).

Don’t forget: we appreciate your comments as part of the Stewardship Campaign. Feel free to accompany your pledge card with a Stewardship Survey (our “scorecard” to let us know how our church is meeting your needs and living up to its mission).

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



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

**What:** 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, March 13

Wednesday, March 16

Sunday, March 20 – SMART

Wednesday, March 30

### Topics

➡ #3: Paid Staff; #4: Optimum Unfilled Capacity

➡ #7: Growing Aspirations to Quality; #8: Infrastructure for Member Care and Involvement

➡ #5: Movement toward “Multicell” Reality; #6: From Studies to Decisions to Implementation

➡ #9: Conflict Prevention and Management

Wednesday sessions take place at Chalice Night. Topics are subject to change.

**Where:** First Unitarian Church

**Child and nursery care will be provided.**

## R.E. Announcements

▶ For this month's R.E. social action project, children will be preparing **75+ Easter baskets for the children at the Volunteers of America Family Shelter** (formerly known as Tingley House). We are looking for donations of foil-wrapped chocolate Easter eggs. Bring these to church by March 13 (marked "VOA") so that planners will know how much additional shopping to do. ( Please don't bring in other types of Easter candies.) All children and youth are invited to help prepare the baskets - Sunday, March 20, 9:45 – 10:45 in the Open Classroom.



▶ **Juice donations are still needed for all our classrooms.** Donations may go to the Preschool Room refrigerator, or leave them outside the R.E. Office.

▶ **Upcoming Senior High OWL dates:** March 13 and 20. OWL class meets 1:00 – 3:00 in the OWL Classroom. There will be no Senior High Youth Group on these dates.

### Place Nametags Here!

The **Membership Committee** has placed a basket on a small table near the door at the Library Lane entrance/exit. The purpose of this basket is to allow you to **place your nametag in it BEFORE you leave our church.**



▶ Our **Artist-in-Residence series continues for one more week.** Join **David and Rose Stevens** for **International Folk Dancing**, March 13 in the Social Hall. Join this program for all ages as Rose and David teach dances from Romania, Hungary, Israel, and Germany. Participants will have an opportunity to showcase some of these dances during the March 19th Transylvania Fling. (During the Artist-in-Residence series, there will be no first hour programs in the Open Classroom.)



▶ **Volunteers are needed** for set-up and clean-up at the **Transylvania Fling** on March 19. Set-up will begin in the Social Hall at 10:00am. Come if you're available, or contact **Beverly Moore** (xxxxxxxxxxxx) for more information.

**Lisa Willner**  
Religious Education Director

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

*E-mail*  
dre@firstulou.org



*Office Hours*  
Monday 11 - 3  
Tuesday 12 - evening  
Wednesday 11 - 3

*Additional times available by appointment.*

## Sunday Morning Adult Round Table

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

- ✓ **March 13:** *Abortion Viewpoints Pro & Con*
- ✓ **March 20:** *Learning Team*
- ✓ **March 27:** *Americans United for Separation of Church and State*

Next curricula meeting Tuesday, March 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.

## Flowers for a Special Occasion



If you want to celebrate a special person or occasion, consider giving a floral decoration for Sunday service. To schedule a Sunday, call **Carol Tobe xxx-xxxx** or the church office.

## STEEPLETALK

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Editor: Claudia Runge



Contact us: [editor@firstulou.org](mailto:editor@firstulou.org)

## What is the Learning Team Doing?

from Penny Nader

The Learning Team meets at church every Sunday morning at 9am. We share any feedback that we individually have received from the congregation.

We plan the next steps in the defined process and who will be responsible for each event. So far, we have committed to a session at every other Chalice Night, one after-church forum a month and beginning this month, one SMART session a month, if possible. There is now a kiosk with discernment materials in the social hall and one or more team members will be available for questions near the Visitor's Table.

On Sunday, March 6, we will meet off-site from 2-8pm. The agenda includes checking our progress against the one defined by Alice Mann and determining what remains to be completed. We will also discuss the process to be used for getting to "Who are we called to be." Some attention will be given to what barriers this church has in moving toward this decision and what can be done to alleviate these barriers. Finally, on the agenda is the scope and content of the team's report to the Board and congregation.

As you can see, this is a heavy time commitment for the team and for the congregation. We have been encouraged not to rush the process. There is some urgency, however, because a clear sense of vision and purpose should help resolve staffing and funding issues for our church. Hopefully, the "doing" of this process as well as its successful completion will energize us all.

*See Learning Team "Fishbowl" schedule for Congregation on page 3.*



## News From The HUUD BOT

### (Heartland UU District Board of Trustees)

Your district Board of Trustees works under a “Policy Governance” model of nonprofit leadership. Under this model, the Board establishes ends (prioritized outcomes for member congregations to be accomplished through District programs and services) and gives the professional staff (District Executive) limitations policies (statements of what she cannot do) within which to accomplish the desired ends.

The District Executive then works with other staff (Lifespan Religious Education Program Consultant and Office Administrator) and volunteers (Program Council & Consultant Teams) to develop and implement programs to accomplish these ends. This model gives the District Executive broad authority, responsibility, and accountability for accomplishing the goals. It frees the Board to work on strategic issues of vision. An example of the excellent work our staff and volunteers are doing is shown in the planning and implementation of the district annual meeting -- details below.

### Harvest the Power!

Registration continues for the **Heartland District Spring Conference and Annual Meeting, April 8-9 in Cincinnati**. The keynote address, “Harvest the Power: What would it look like if Unitarian Universalism really DID harvest its power?” is right on target for First Unitarian.

Please plan to attend, and please consider serving as a First Unitarian delegate. The program brochure and registration are available online at [www.heartlanduu.org](http://www.heartlanduu.org). For a paper brochure, to volunteer to serve as a delegate, or for more information, contact **Jasmine Walston** at [pdr@firstulou.org](mailto:pdr@firstulou.org) or xxx-xxxx.

## Brownbaggers

The ghost of Sally Ward, aka **Susie Schuhmann**, will visit the Brownbaggers again at noon in the library of the First Unitarian Church on **March 21**. She is well documented by the Filson Club and by the Kentucky Historical Society. In the 1840’s she was the toast of two continents, wore highly improper makeup, and became the wife of four husbands; however, this is not an X-rated performance. Come, and see history in intriguing motion.



## Thanks to PRP Volunteers

A big “THANK YOU” from the Denominational and Public Relations committee (DPR) to all of the volunteers for the Public Radio Partnership’s Fall Fund Drive. On February 27, 18 First Unitarian volunteers brought in much needed donations for the public radio stations. Mark your calendars now for the 2005 spring fund drive! Those who spent part of the day included **Jay Dolen, Lynette Lowe, Troy Jackson, Clarissa Brundage, David Gitlin, John Nader, Carol Findling, Drew Patterson, Carol Uebelhour, Trish Packowski, Patricia Triplett, George Schuhmann, John Scruton, Claudia Runge, Joan Beal, Linda Parry, Kyle Ellison**, and last, but not least, **John Findling**, who spent the whole day as supervisor.

## Coming Event

### Health Fair Planned for April

from **Marty Huelsmann**, Interweave Chair  
Interweave, A.R.E., and the AIDS Project are sponsoring a Health Fair on **Saturday, April 16, between noon and 4pm at First Unitarian Church**. The Health Fair is open to the public.

The fair will consist of a variety of health and safety information. Local nurses will be available to answer questions and distribute information on health and safety topics, including healthy eating, injury prevention, and immunizations. Currently, the Red Cross has confirmed a booth on disaster preparedness and general information. The Mental Health Association will be doing mental health screenings and passing out information regarding depression.

We have extended an offer to the Center For Women and Families to come to dispense information on Domestic Violence & Rape Crisis assistance. Planned Parenthood is scheduled as well. The AIDS Project will offer free and anonymous HIV testing as well as literature on STDs. Moreover, we intend on offering free blood pressure screenings and are working on free cholesterol and diabetes testing. We are hoping to add other screenings including Body Mass Index - Height/Weight, Hearing & Vision, Lead Level, and Skin Cancer. We will be supplying information on C-reactive Protein, Stroke, and Alzheimer's.

The fair will also include Stress Management information such as Massage, Tai Chi, & Meditation. So please mark your calendars now and plan to attend. If you would like to help with this effort please contact **Marty Huelsmann** or **Barbara Hambaugh**.

## Chalice Night

**Dinner by Tiffany**  
(\$4 or \$2 small portion)  
**available from 5:30 to 6:15**  
**Lay-led service -- 6:30 to 6:50**  
**Programs -- 7:00 to 8:30**

### March 16

- Buddhism/Meditation (video)
- Partner Church facilitates a discussion of Judit Gellerd's *Prisoner of Liberte'* (B. Moore)
- Learning Team Fishbowl
- Let's Cook! (especially for kids) -- Cheese bites and raw apple cake (T. Taylor)

### March 23

- Modern Religious Thought -- Discussion of essays by a wide variety of thinkers (N. Stewart)
- Paganism 102 -- "When, Why ... If: An Ethics Workbook". Tonight's topic is "sex."
- Feminism for Men and Women -- Special guest **Georgia Davis Powers** discusses her recent book (K. Kremer)
- 175th Anniversary Quilters
- Fun Films (especially for kids)

### Dates to Remember

#### **Partner Church Month at First U**

➔ **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.

➔ **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! See page 1 for more information.

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

# Social Responsibility

## Kroger Bucks Fill the Bill

*Q: What costs you nothing but brings in significant funds to First Unitarian?*



*A: A Kroger Bucks card!*

See **Tish Moore** after the Sunday morning service to purchase your little piece of plastic (along with free instruction provided by Tish). The church will receive 5 cents for every dollar that you spend at Kroger's. What a deal!

## Georgia Powers to Speak on Book

On Wednesday, March 23, at 6:45, **Georgia Davis Powers**, first African American elected Kentucky Senator, will be at First U to talk about her historical novel, *Celia's Land*. This novel focuses on Ms. Power's great aunt, Celia Mudd, a freed slave of Nelson County during the 1860's. Once owned by the Lancaster family, Celia ends up owning 840 acres of prime property. Of course, controversy followed- how could this "uppity Negro woman" own the finest land in the Bardstown area!

For those wishing to purchase the novel prior to Ms. Power's visit, they will be on sale in the Social Hall after the service on Sunday, May 13. Contact **Kathy Kremer** if you desire the novel and can't attend that Sunday.



## Social Responsibility

### Learning/Action Opportunities

- **KY Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty** meets the last Tuesday of each month at Highland Presbyterian Church. Call Tish Moore, xxx-xxxx for company and/or information in attending the meetings that uphold 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 the HELP office at xxx-xxxx.
- Since our church is a partner in support of the HELP office, we HELP supplies the **most essential needs** for the minimum comfort of the **homeless and the poorest of the poor**. We urgently need deodorants, toothbrushes, toothpaste, tissues, toilet paper, and soap. **Please leave donations in the special box in the entrance hall off Library Lane.**

## Did You Know?

Did you know that we have a really fine website on the Internet? If you have access to the Internet from any computer, go to [www.firstulou.org](http://www.firstulou.org) and give it a look-see. You can see the church calendar, get info on room rentals, read the constitution and bylaws, see photos, read about our partner church in Nagenyed, and get links to affiliate organizations such as Interweave, CUUPs, the Women's Alliance, and much more. You can also read *Steeple-talk* online! Check it out!



# Calendar: March 10 - 27

## March

- 10 Thursday**  
7:15pm Choir Practice, choir room
- 11 Friday**  
7:00pm UU Christian Fellowship, library
- 13 Sunday**  
9:00am Learning Team, parlor  
9:45am Artist-In-Residence Intl. Folk dancing, social hall  
10:55am Celebration of Life  
12:30pm Learning Team Open Forum-sanct  
1:00pm SR high OWL class  
4:00pm Drum Circle rehearsal, choir room  
7:00pm Flute Choir practice, choir room
- 15 Tuesday**  
6:30pm Board Meeting, library
- 16 Wednesday**  
Chalice Night
- 17 Thursday - St. Patrick's Day**  
7:15pm Choir Practice, choir room
- 18 Friday**  
12:00pm Steepletalk Deadline
- 19 Saturday**  
**6:00pm Partner Church Transylvania Fling,**  
sh/kitch/sanct
- 20 Sunday - Palm Sunday**  
**End-of-Canvass Campaign potluck**  
9:00am Learning Team, parlor  
10:55am Celebration of Life  
12:15pm Church Building Tour after service  
1:00pm SR high OWL class  
5:00pm CUUPs-Ostara/Spring Equinox, sanc/sh/ctyd
- 21 Monday**  
12:00pm Brownbaggers meeting, library  
6:30pm Social Resp. Comm., parlor  
7:00pm Shared Ministry Comm, library
- 22 Tuesday**  
9:30am SteepleTalk Folding Party  
5:30pm Worship Comm., choir room  
6:15pm SMART Curriculum planning, library  
6:30pm RE Committee, open classroom



- 23 Wednesday**  
Chalice Night
- 24 Thursday**  
7:15pm Choir Practice, choir room
- 25 Friday**  
7:00pm UU Christian Fellowship, library
- 27 Sunday -- Easter**  
9:00am Learning Team, parlor  
10:55am Celebration of Life  
12:15pm Informational Mtg: UU101, library  
12:30pm Flute Choir practice, choir room

## Just among ourselves...

Due to a mix-up, we told you in the last issue that **Roger Ohlman's** home number had changed, which was incorrect. His old number, xxx-xxxx, is STILL his number. If you have telephone number xxx-xxxx, please let the church office know so we can correct this error.

## Please Respect Our Church Space

We must all work together to keep our building safe and welcoming. When your committee or group meets in the building, you're responsible for leaving the space in good order. 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**
- ✓ Turn coffeemaker OFF.
  - ✓ Lock courtyard doors.
  - ✓ Pick up belongings.
  - ✓ Replace furniture as you found it.
  - ✓ Set heating/AC control to night setting.
  - ✓ Turn lights OFF, including restrooms and hallways.
  - ✓ Close all doors.

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

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### Celebrations of Life

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

**March 13** *Water.* **Rev. Norm Stewart, Worship Associate, Jo Ann Dale.** Its sound is soothing, its appearance is healing, and its taste is life-giving, but a fast growing global crisis threatens equitable access to water. On this UU Service Committee Justice Sunday, we will explore water from spiritual and social justice points of view.

**March 20** *Ministry Is All That We Do – Together.* **Rev. Norm Stewart, Worship Associate Kathie Johnson.** Shared Ministry is not a new idea. It's a concept at least as old as the Bible. How does this age-old religious tradition manifest itself in our congregation today? How might we further expand and enrich the Shared Ministry at First Unitarian?

**March 27** *Easter with a Transylvanian Twist.* **Rev. Norm Stewart, Worship Associate Suzanne Meeks.** Since Easter falls during our Partner Church month we will be incorporating some Transylvanian traditions into our Celebration of Life today. Our Outreach Offering today will go to support our annual commitment to our partner church in Nagyenyed.