

Universalist Anchor



March is Pledge Month!! Wanted: *Time, Talent, and Treasure*

With the beginning of Lent and the promise of new life that Easter brings, we are launching our pledge drive for the 2009-2010 church year. Each Sunday in March, Jeff Jacobs or another member of the Board of Trustees will be available after church to discuss current and prospective budget needs and initiatives, and to receive your pledge.

Pledging is an essential and necessary aspect of church life. It symbolizes our commitment to the fellowship of faith here at UNMC and the fulfillment of our desire to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the greater community. No matter what amount your circumstances may permit you to pledge, it is important for planning purposes to know how much can be counted on in congregational support as we prepare the budget for the next fiscal year, which begins on May 1st.

We will be asking for your *time, talent, and treasure* to assist with an expansion of our social outreach ministries and community service programs, as well as the maintenance of our church building and grounds.

This year the budget, finance, and stewardship (BF&S) committee will be offering the convenience of Visa/MasterCard billing for your monthly, quarterly, or annual pledge.

In addition, this is a good time to bring this year's pledge current if you have fallen behind in your contributions. If, as a result of the widespread issues affecting the economy, you find yourself unable to fulfill your pledge commitment for the current church year, it would also be helpful if you could let Jeff Jacobs, chair of BF&S, know at jjacobs@eedinc.com, or (202) 361-9887 so that expenditures can be adjusted accordingly during the remaining months of the year.

Thank you to everyone for your ongoing support of UNMC's ministries and programs!

From the heart...

We may look like a large church to passersby, but we are really a small church.

According to Gary McIntosh, church growth consultant, small churches have 15-200 worshippers each week, while medium churches have 201-400 worshipers on Sunday.

Having read dozens of books and attended several workshops on church growth, I can tell you that most of the well-known researchers say the same things about church growth. That includes, if you would like to do some reading on your own, the excellent work of McIntosh, who has written well over a dozen books on church growth, development and administration.

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Services for March

Services begin at 11:00a.m. except where noted

March 1 — the first Sunday of Lent. It is a time when we begin to prepare spiritually for Easter celebrations. “Giving Up” will be the title of Rev. Henley’s sermon. Have you ever thought about Lent as a time to grow spiritually? Have you ever thought you might give up something like chocolate, after-dinner drinks, or surprisingly enough complaining or gossiping? What about intentional addition of a spiritual exercise. Lent is a time to live beyond our everyday reality and create a life of affirmation instead of routine and habit.

March 8 — Rev. Henley will be exploring the many opportunities we have to serve. Whether it is a ministry to the homeless, jobless, a marginalized population, or children who are at-risk, we are called to reach out to the Greater Other. She will consider, with us, the many ways we can minister as a church and as individuals.

March 15 — “To Forsake Evil” will be Rev. Henley’s sermon. In a culture that despises weakness and fear, how can we really be ourselves, if part of being human is to be weak and fearful at times? What makes us authentic to ourselves and to others. In this exploration, “evil” will be considered that which harms us.

Rev. Henley will be on professional leave for two weeks.

March 22 — Kristen Grassel is preaching. She is a student at Wesley Theological Seminary and one of the few Unitarian Universalist seminarians there. “From Stranger to Guest” Hospitality is the intentional and responsible practice of welcoming strangers, and transforming them from strangers into guests in the process. Hospitality is foundational, and often obligatory, in many religious traditions including Christianity. We will explore the commonalities among various traditions of hospitality and suggest ways that these can inform and inspire our own practice of welcoming the stranger.

March 29 — Rev. Michael Relland, our intern minister for young adults, ponders that wonderful time in our lives when we reach out to someone or something. “You Really Want to Date?!” We try out things in our work and in our personal lives that inspire us to keep going, even when we are rejected by what we love. **Note: This is a sermon for all ages!**

A Covenant Group Begins in March!

A Covenant between Friends—Living Spiritually and Adopting a Worldview Mentality

7:30 - 8:30* pm, 2nd and 4th Mondays,
March 9th through June

Rev. Michael Relland, our intern minister, is facilitating a covenant group on spiritual disciplines. This small group (5-7 people) will

- 1) Discover spiritual disciplines present in Christian and other world faith traditions,
- 2) Draw up an intentional group plan, or covenant, to live by them and
- 3) Support and hold each other accountable in walking a more solid path in life!

This part class, part support group will meet every two weeks for discussion and planning for this important work. Please call or e-mail Rev. Relland if you are interested. 301-233-3552
mjvielle@yahoo.com

*Times become flexible as the group plans their work.

Chancel Flowers

Jeff Jacobs, Coordinator



March 1 – Communion Sunday (no chancel flowers).

March 8 – Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Richard E. Fogwell, Sr. and Richard E. Fogwell, Jr., by Esther and Hope Fogwell.

March 15 – Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of his grandparents, Paul F. Hannah, Sr., Elizabeth J. Hannah, the Rev. Floyd J. Taylor, and Margaret S. Taylor, by Paul Hannah.

March 22 – Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Frances Marin Pepper, beloved daughter of Vicki and Brian, beloved sister of Stephen and Irina, and beloved goddaughter of Pi-Rung.

March 29 – Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of her brother, Bill Hansford Thompson, by Amy Thompson Tipton.

Congregation Notes

Greeters Needed

We are requesting a gift of time. There is an opportunity each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. to be a greeter. This is an important function of the UNMC worship service. For more information on how to participate, please contact Ron Eanes or check the sign up sheet in the parlor.

Anchor Production Help Needed

One of the Anchor Production Team members, Richard Russo, is in the last two months of writing his dissertation and may be leaving during the summer to take up an academic post somewhere in the U.S.

Familiarity with (or willingness to learn) the very simple Publisher software is a plus. Please contact Richard or let Jan-Christine Johnson, Marguerite Bogle, or Rev. Lillie know you're interested.

Benefit for Gaza

On Sunday, February 8, 2009, the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, D.C., held its second benefit for United Palestinian Appeal. Our two organizations are located in the same downtown neighborhood of Dupont Circle and share a commitment to the human freedom and dignity of those impacted by war and disaster including the recent and ongoing siege in the Gaza Strip.

After a Palestinian fare of food cooked by Perry, Angela, and Marti, Pastor Lillie started the evening with a welcome with the theme of our Universalist heritage and the service spirit of Clara Barton who came to the aid of people in need in the aftermath of several wars and natural disasters. She also led the United States to adopt the first Geneva Conventions which set rules for the treatment of prisoners and civilians in warfare. Pastor Lillie told the crowd of fifty people that we are called to aid the people of Gaza in the spirit of Clara Barton. Fuad Foty and his daughter Nadine played Palestinian music on the oud (lute) and flute which he translated into English. Some of the songs were about the irony of Palestinian dispossession including a song about being born in Palestine but not having a passport.

Speakers from UPA detailed the programs and efforts currently in-place and under development to both aid and empower the residents of Gaza including a counseling program to help the children of Gaza to reduce symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The people in Gaza face severe problems including inadequate food, water and sanitation systems as well as debris from white phosphorous bombs that endanger children. Samer Badawi, the Director of UPA, began his speech with having everyone stand for a moment of silence for the 1300 persons who were killed in Gaza. He then asked people to remain standing for the 1.5 million persons who are still living there. He reminded the audience that "we are all Palestinians" in our struggle for a decent life and security for our families and children and reminded us that people there still have hope. Samer took questions including how his organization maintained integrity and got the supplies and services to people in need. At one point he made it clear that autonomy comes at a price: a very large donation had to be turned down because smaller efforts and grants would actually make more of an immediate impact. His moving story about how his father told him the tale of Hagar and Ishmael, with its meaning of unquenchable hope for the future, did make everyone in the audience truly feel "Tonight, we are all Palestinians."

Marti (UNMC deacon), who participates in the Child Sponsorship program, also read from one of the letters that he received from his "nephew" at the Atfaluna Society for the Deaf inviting him to come and visit Gaza.

Rev. Henley's "Welcome" to the Participants of the Gaza Benefit

Universalist National Memorial Church welcomes you. We are glad you came to this benefit for the Palestinian people of Gaza. We are a Unitarian Universalist Association church, with a deep rooted story in social service. Three in our Unitarian Universalist story are: Horace Mann, father of education in our country; Susan B. Anthony, suffragist; and Clara Barton, social service activist.

For us an event like this is a religious affair. The father of Universalism in our country was John Murray, and in the late 1700s he wrote:

Go out into the highways and by-ways.
 Give the people something of your ... vision.
 You may possess a small light,
 but uncover it, let it shine,
 use it in order to bring more light and understanding
 to the hearts and minds of men and women.
 Give them not hell, but hope and courage;
 preach the kindness and everlasting love of God.

That is what we are doing tonight.

Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross is a hero to Perry King, our Deacon who helped organize this gathering. He asked me to talk about her because she represents our religious, social action heritage.

She single-handedly initiated the movement which started the American Red Cross. Oh, there were people who agreed to help her, but in the end, it was Barton alone who lobbied the United States Congress and got them to pass the laws establishing the American Red Cross, AND also adopt the Geneva Convention. And this was a woman in the early 1900s when women were still not supposed to be public figures.

Barton attended the Washington DC Universalist church when she lived here. She often said that her faith provided the foundation for her work.

Again, we welcome you to this religious endeavor. Know that Universalism represents all people, all ethnicities, all beliefs, and all faiths. Each one of us here tonight is making a difference all the way around the world.

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Marti expressed doubt about this possibility now, but did not rule out the hope for this reunion in the future. Fuad's daughter, Nadine along with a high school friend of hers, presented a check to UPA in the amount of \$700 for funds raised at their school! Small acts of justice such as these (child sponsorship and donations) raised the bar for those in attendance to give aid and raise awareness in any way they can: giving money, writing letters, marching, taking to task our media and government, and prayer. The total amount raised was over \$2000. UNMC hopes to do other events in the future to aid UPA including a craft fair featuring crafts made in Gaza.

Please see UPA's website for their latest efforts: <http://www.helpupa.com>

Sharing Our Plate

In March, UNMC will share ten percent of its collected offerings to *Sasha Bruce Youthwork*. The mission of this organization is to improve the lives of runaway, homeless, abused, and neglected and at-risk youth and their families in the Washington area. We achieve this by providing shelter, counseling, life skills training and positive youth development activities to approximately 1,500 youth and 5,000 family members each year. Sasha Bruce Youthwork seeks to support and empower vulnerable young people and families. More information is available at www.sashabruce.org.

The Universalist National Memorial Church Artists' Series

Darryl Winston, Manager

Presents

The Washington National Wagner Society

Wagner: Contemporaries, Friends and Beyond
Join Maestro Winston, International Soloists, and
The Maytime Symphonette

In a concert of works by Wagner, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Masse-
net, Verdi, Saint-Saens and Tchaikovsky

Suggested Donation \$10.00
Sunday March 15 at 3pm

Joyce Lundy, soprano

In Concert
Sunday June 7 at 3pm



International Israeli Pianist

Rami Bar-Niv

Performing Works of Chopin,
Liszt, Mendelssohn, Gershwin, &
Bar-Niv

Suggested Donation \$15.00
Sunday March 1 at 3pm



The UNMC Choir Presents: Choral Feast

a Distinguished Vocal Program from Bach to
Gospel

Conducted by Darryl Winston

Free Lunch and Concert (a free-will donation
will be taken)

Sunday May 31st at 2pm



A
In

UNMC Choir — practice makes perfect!

2009 Service Trip

A Mission to New Orleans!

You are invited to join the social service committee from All Souls on a trip to New Orleans.

There are a few places left.

All Souls Church has made an on-going commitment to support the people of New Orleans as they rebuild their city after the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. 2009 will bring the 3rd year that we have sent service trips to New Orleans. In addition to our volunteer work we will also examine the role that racism and classism played in the flooding and the aftermath. And we'll learn about the importance of New Orleans in our country's culture.

When & Who? April 4-11 is a multigenerational trip for people 12 and over.

What is the cost? \$100 per person. This fee covers transportation to and from work site in New Orleans and some meals.

Meals: Breakfast and lunch will be provided Monday through Friday. Five evening group meals will be provided. Other meals are on your own.

Transportation: All trip participants must pay for their own transportation to and from New Orleans.

Housing: All trip participants must pay for their housing costs: Dorm Room Housing is \$20 per person per night at First UU. A limited number of private rooms will be available at Marquette House at very reasonable rates.

Where Will We Work in New Orleans?

We will work with LowerNine.org. In addition, we'll be volunteering for other organizations such as the animal shelter, a school, a park (work sites not yet confirmed). There will be work opportunities available for all ages and abilities. Our goal is for all of the adults to get to spend at least one day working with some of the youth.

Can Youth Work at LowerNine.Org?

LowerNine.org does not have specific age limits. Young people must be members of a group which include adult members who will be responsible for them. The only requirement is that they be prepared to work all day, along with the adults.

Can Youth Go on the Trip by Themselves?

Middle-schoolers must be accompanied by at least one parent. High-schoolers should be accompanied by their parent or another adult who will be responsible for them. The trip does not provide chaperones for the youth.

What Else Will We Do in New Orleans?

The general outline will look like this (not finalized and subject to change):

On Saturday evening we will have dinner together and an orientation session.

On Sunday, we will probably worship at FUUNO and then take a tour of the city and maybe do another training session.

Weekday evenings will include some programming and reflection and also time to relax and explore the city. Information on music venues and restaurants will be provided. Group activities will include some dinners together and will probably include Zydeco Night at [Rock & Bowl!](#)

Above all we will help and learn and build community.

If you want more information, contact Karen Armagost at karenarmdc@yahoo.com.

Partner Church Summer Pilgrimage to Transylvania, Romania

The UUA Partner Church Council is offering a special pilgrimage to Transylvania for Greater Washington Area UUs from July 9-21. This 14-day pilgrimage will include Budapest, many historic Unitarian sites in Romania, and three days in a Unitarian church village. The goal is to inform UUs more fully about the breadth and depth of our faith by fostering a new understanding of our historical roots and building deeper relationships with our co-religionists in Transylvania.

For the complete exciting itinerary and details about this pilgrimage, go to www.uupcc.org, and under "Travel," click on "public/private trips." The deadline for applications is mid-April. Questions? Please contact John Dale, jdaleuupcc@yahoo.com, or Carol Waser, waser@waser.us or 301-680-2291.

From the heart... continued from page 1

Most of the experts write that it is really quite simple to grow a church, if the congregation truly wants it to grow. Most writers advise us to

- Ask your friends and family to come to church with you. Talk about the ministries of the church and what they do for others.
- The church must create vital social outreach; begin or expand ministries to the community and those in need.
- Welcome all visitors intentionally, with an organized follow-up program.
- Find ways to integrate newcomers into the ministries of the church.
- Renew the church's sense of mission and purpose.

This means,

You need to invite others to share our unique, Christian, Universalist worship experience.

You need to make guests feel welcome and introduce them to others.

You need to create a church in which we live out the church's mission.

Our mission, adopted in a formal statement in 2002, is to "create a loving community for worship and service in the spirit of Jesus Christ." We all need to think about what we are doing to help create that community, and resolve to do more.

When I meet with newcomers during hospitality, or have a pastoral meeting with them, they generally ask, "What does the church **do**?" Or, "what kind of social justice and community outreach programs is the church promoting or supporting?" At a recent retreat, the church Board made plans to expand our activities in this area.

As much as worship, people are looking for community these days -- a community that welcomes them, believes in them, and gives them a purpose outside their careers.

If you would like to be part of an expanded ministry here that is inclusive of a diverse, multi-orientation,

Interweave

UNMC Interweave Chapter, Pastor Lillie and other church members prepared a meal for Leland Place on Feb. 21. Marti Martinson was chief chef and bottle washer. Marti and Ron Eanes did the shopping. Seventeen Leland Place men enjoyed a chicken dinner, salad, bread and an apple spice cake baked by Jeff Jacobs. Leland Place is a halfway house on North Capitol Street for men recovering from addictions and homelessness. A March social has been planned for March 15 with Interweave members from All Souls Unitarian Church. We will be meeting for Sunday brunch at 1:00 p.m. in the second floor dining room of the Dupont Italian Kitchen at 17th & R Sts. All are welcome. Interweave is the UUA's gay, lesbian bi-sexual, transgender and queer (GLBTQ) group guided by UU principles.

Leland Place

Our next dinner is scheduled for Saturday, March 21. If you would like to participate, please RSVP in advance to Leland coordinator Dave Skidmore at 703-237-2145, dave_skidmore@cox.net.

We plan to gather in the church kitchen at 2:30 p.m., cook the meal, and break bread with the men of Leland at about 5 p.m. Volunteers generally contribute \$15 to \$25 toward the cost of the meal, which includes their own. Anyone wishing to donate their labor, but not financially, should see Pastor Lillie or Dave Skidmore. Leland is a program of So Others Might Eat—S.O.M.E

multi-ethnic community, please talk to Ron Eanes; Vicki Pepper; William Spruiell; Michael Relland, our intern minister; or me.

Great works and church growth, can begin right here on the corner of 16th and S, NW. They are in our near future, I believe—ministering to the many needs of the community around us. Let us all be a part of an inclusive, evangelical, liberal Christian Universalism that spiritually nourishes each of us and helps us reach out to others, in a way that will cause others to want to join us in our mission.

See you in church, Pastor Lillie