

Universalist Anchor



April 2005

Musings from Mary Katherine

In early March I spent two days with Unitarian Universalist ministers in Maine. While I was there to participate in their business meeting as a representative of the national executive committee, I also attended their continuing education program on the subject of “appreciative inquiry.”

Through small group work and lecture we learned about this approach to organizational development. As I understand it, appreciative inquiry invites individuals in organizations to focus on strengths and successes. The proponents of this approach believe this maximizes strengths and success even in the midst of challenge or conflict.

One of the primary exercises in appreciative inquiry is the individual interview. With a partner we answered a set of questions about experiences we have had when we felt most alive and engaged, strengths we bring, and dreams we have for the future. I experienced all this as a strategy with real merit. It’s a common sense approach that has been somewhat made into a “program.”

This experience reminded me of the first time I went kayaking. I kept steering my boat into rocks. A more experienced kayaker told me that while it was important to be aware of the rocks ahead, that I should never focus my attention on them—that as soon as I looked at them my kayak would go there. I tried it out. He was right. I did much better steering my kayak when I was focused on where I wanted to go. And what a powerful feeling it was to hold awareness of the obstacles in the way as I paddled past them.

I guess it’s an “eyes on the prize” approach. If, by chance, you’ve lost sight of the amazing things about Universalist National Memorial Church, I invite you to remember what first attracted you to the church. Why did you stay around? What memories do you have that lighten your spirit? What are your dreams for Universalist National Memorial Church?

The sanctuary full of warmth and bodies on Easter Sunday was a sign for me. The relief and appreciation of visitors as they experienced the welcome of not only our community but also our liberal theology. Ours is a liberating gospel of God’s love. What better gift is there than that?

In faith,

Mary Katherine

April Worship & Activity Schedule at UNMC

Sunday, April 10

11 a.m. Worship: Ben Van Dyne returns from his study abroad in Latin America to preach to us again.

12:30 p.m. Meeting to discuss heating and air conditioning renovations. All are welcome.

7 p.m. Speech and discussion: "Moral and Ethical Issues in the Israel/Palestine Conflict." Speaker - Israeli "new historian" Theodore Katz. Sponsor: <http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org>

Sunday, April 17

10:50 a.m. PLEASE NOTE EARLIER TIME! Joint worship service with All Souls Unitarian Church at All Souls (16th and Harvard Streets) "Glad and Generous Hearts," Rev. Morn preaching. In a description of the early Christian Church it is said, "Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles." How might we in the 21st century church practice wonders and signs that inspire awe? Text: Acts 2:42-47

Wednesday, April 20

7 p.m. Monthly theology discussion. Lisa Harris will lead a discussion of Marcus Borg's book [Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time](#). All are welcome!

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April Worship & Activity Schedule at UNMC continued from page 1

Friday-Sunday, April 22-24

[Joseph Priestly District Women and Religion Annual Retreat](#)

"Unraveling the Gender Knot," Lancaster, PA

Saturday, April 23

9 a.m.-4 p.m. [Social Justice Pilgrimage](#) sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
All Souls Unitarian Church, 16th and Harvard Streets

Sunday, April 24

11 a.m. Worship: "Passover Faith," Rev. Morn preaching. Passover is a story of struggle and a celebration of liberation. The hagaddah (the liturgy of the Passover Seder) speaks of the participants in the events of the struggle in the first person. Perhaps this is because each of us inherits the struggle and the victory.
Text: Exodus 15:1-21

12:30 p.m. Meeting sponsored by the Committee on Ministry for discussion of the congregational covenant currently under development.

Sunday, April 30

Cleanup/fixup day to make the church shine for the Open House.

More Future Events

Sunday, May 1

UNMC Neighborhood Open House

Friday-Sunday, May 6-8

[Mayhem 2005: A Riotous Social Justice Journey!](#)

The annual spring retreat of the JPD UU Young Adult Network focusing on faith-based social justice, at the midpoint of the Appalachian Trail at the Ironmaster's Mansion, Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

Saturday, May 14

8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Regional Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival in Charlottesville

Sunday, May 15

UNMC Annual Congregational Meeting
Election of officers, approval of other budget, and other business of the congregation.

YOUTH GROUP

The Uber Fellowship of Light (aka UNMC's youth group) is wrapping up their year of studying religious conflict. In February, Robert Mosher came to talk to the group about Northern Ireland. In November, Ubers Ian and Brett McCully, presented a session on the effect of the medieval Crusades on the modern Islamic view of the West. These examples are just of the few of the interesting perspectives our youth are investigating in their quest for a religious life. If you are interested in working with this dynamic group of teens, contact Rev. Morn at church.

Staff Notes

Marguerite Bogle is the new Church Administrator, and is at the Church in the mornings from 9 to 12, Monday through Friday.

Please let her know of any space needs at the church. There is a lot of interest from those wanting to rent space in the church, so we need to know the members' needs as well.

Deadline for Items in May Anchor

The May Anchor will go out sooner than the April one, so the deadline for items will be April 25. Email the church office with your submissions. It must go in the mail that week.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

This is the first of many updates on the work of your Ministerial Search Committee. The members are Rob Bertram, Elizabeth Crawford, Clint McCully, and Donna Simonton. The group has had an initial “get to know each other meeting” and a meeting with the Joseph Priestley District Ministerial Settlement Representative, John Hansman.

Mr. Hansman’s visit detailed the content of the ministerial search timeline outlined by the UNMC Board of Trustees. Our initial work is to develop a congregational survey that will tell ministerial candidates about the members and friends of this church. We started with the survey from the last search and looked at the resources available from the UUA and other congregations, and we discussed our own experiences with UNMC and other ministerial search surveys. We expect to complete survey development and distribution within the next few weeks. We hope that each person involved in the life of the church will carefully and thoughtfully complete the survey so we can identify what is important to the congregation in selecting our new minister.

Clint McCully and Donna Simonton will be attending the Joseph Priestley District Meeting on April 8th and 9th in Pennsylvania. There are workshops on congregational growth, the “vital congregations” for the Baltimore-Washington area growth program, and the UU Funding Program (plus 27 other topics). This will be an opportunity to get the word out that we’re searching. Perhaps we’ll get some leads on potential candidates.

A question for everyone to think about: How will our next minister find us? The UUA provides us with information about ministers who have expressed interest in interviewing with our committee. It is also acceptable for the Search Committee to seek out individuals and invite them to candidate – including non-UUA ministers. So, if you know someone from any denomination who you think might be our next minister, contact the committee so we can get additional information.

What can you do right now? We would like your help documenting the life of our church for a packet we are creating. The packet will let interested candidates know more about us and will include highlights of past events and social functions. Bring your cameras to church or to any event sponsored by the church and take pictures. Look through pictures from past years and loan, give or send electronically a copy to the committee.

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Work Day, Saturday, April 30, Before UNMC Open House

In preparation for the UNMC Open House on Sunday, May 1, 2005, the Buildings and Grounds group will be hosting an all-church “work holiday” on Saturday, April 30, 2005. The activities to be carried on will depend on the likely turnout of volunteers.

Possible activities for the day would include vacuuming and dusting some of the rooms in the second and third floors of the church, clearing out debris in the basement kitchen where plaster has come down from the walls due to previous leaks in the roof, collecting for disposal various unneeded items of clutter throughout the church, and possible work on various interior walls of the church to remove layers of paint that were [perhaps in earlier error] applied to the interior walls of pressed plaster or concrete. Further interior work could consist simply of washing windows in various rooms.

On the outside of the church, there are a number of activities that could be carried on. These include work on the front and side lawns, trimming the hedges, and picking up trash that has accumulated under the shrubbery over the last several months. In the back yard of the church, there is likewise work to be done including reasonably aggressive removal and or clipping of much of the shrubbery and weeds that have grown up. The church has been advised by the rodent-control staff of the DC government that the less underbrush there is in which rat burrows could exist, the better it is for purposes of achieving the goal of discourage rats around the church building as much as possible.

Anyone who is interested in participating, who has a particular task in mind, or who has known times of availability during daylight hours on Saturday before 4:00 PM should send e-mail to the church office.

METRO DC LGBT PARENTING

Saturday, April 30th

Sligo Middle School

1401 Dennis Avenue, Silver Spring, MD

10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

(Registration/child care drop-off begins at 9:00)

Rainbow Families/DC, the National Family Pride Coalition, Whitman-Walker Clinic, and COLAGE will host our first DC regional conference for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents, their children, and allies.

The conference will feature over a dozen workshops for LGBT parents (and prospective parents), exciting and fun programming for youth 9 and older led by COLAGE, and on-site child care/activities for children 2 to 8.

Registration is \$20 per adult, \$10 for children 9 and older, \$5 for children 2 through 8, and includes lunch, refreshments and the "Family Dance" from 5 to 6 PM.

Sliding scale available upon request. For information or to register, call (202) 797-3522.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

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Identify other documents that reflect the history of our church. We will be establishing a Search Committee mailbox in the church office this Sunday. Information that you think should be included in our packet can be put there or given to any committee member. Please be sure you label things you wish to have returned.

Another thing you can do is to make sure that your contact information (address, phone, email) is correct in the church office so that the Ministerial Search Committee can include you in this time of transition. It will also give you a chance to meet our new administrator, Marguerite Bogle.

Board Recruitment under Way

April is the month when the Nominating Committee starts recruiting new Board of Trustees members to fill positions that will be voted on at the annual congregational meeting May 15. Watch the bulletin board in the hallway for descriptions of these and other open positions, including that of Secretary.

If you're interested in exploring these or other potential paths to personal service within the church, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee - Lynn Cook, Richard Hurst, or Sue Mosher.

Mini-Revival May 14: "Being Present"

Members of the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship (UUCF) in the Joseph Priestly and Thomas Jefferson districts invite you to attend an all-day mini-revival at Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church in Charlottesville on Saturday, May 14. This first-ever regional UUCF gathering is a wonderful opportunity to experience the same worship, learning, and lively conversation that takes place at the continental UUCF Revival conferences, but in a one-day format, close to home! The schedule includes:

- 8:30 Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 Greetings, David Dawson, UUCF board member
- 9:15 Opening Worship
- 10:00 Workshops
- 11:45 Lunch
- 12:45 Worship, led by Rev. Danny Reed, minister at the Unitarian Church of Norfolk
- 2:15 Labyrinth Walk
- 4:00 Communion Service, led by Paul Russell, member TJMC UUCF and former Baptist minister
- 4:45 Closing, UUCF executive director Rev. Ron Robinson

The cost is \$15. Home stays are available in TJMC UUCF members' homes on Friday night. Brochures and registration forms are on the information table in the parlor. If you're interested in going and want to carpool, please contact the church office

Adult Religious Education at UNMC

UNMC has a new adult religious education program with our Third Wednesday theology discussion. In February we discussed the theology of Martin Luther King, particularly his moving from a liberal to more neo-orthodox view of sin. As Martin's life progressed he abandoned the liberal view of humans as basically good and came to see them as complex persons with sinful inclinations in need of redemption. One of the biggest factors in this shift was his disappointment with white clergy for not being more supportive of the civil rights struggle. We discussed how this tied in with our own statement of faith regarding "the certainty of the just retribution for sin."

In March we held a discussion of the theology of Charles Hartshorne led by UNMC member David Burton. His theology presented a "logical case for the existence of God" related to the idea of deism. We then branched out into a discussion of modernism and postmodernism and how this related to the present diversity of UU theology.

On April 20 at 7:00 pm Lisa Harris, frequent visitor and member of the Goodloe Memorial UU congregation in Bowie Md. will lead a discussion on Marcus Borg's book, "Meeting Jesus for the First Time." Lisa is also leading a three part discussion of this important and popular book at her church. If you would like to lead a theology discussion or want to suggest a topic please contact the church office. Join us every 3rd Wed. @ 7:00pm at our church for a good discussion and fellowship.

Social Justice Pilgrimage *April 23*

Enjoy a day of worship, reflection, and community connections as the Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice sponsor an all-day pilgrimage on Saturday, April 23, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The schedule includes:

Morning:

Worship at All Souls Unitarian Church, 16th and Harvard Streets, NW

Bus tour of community action sites table in the parlor.

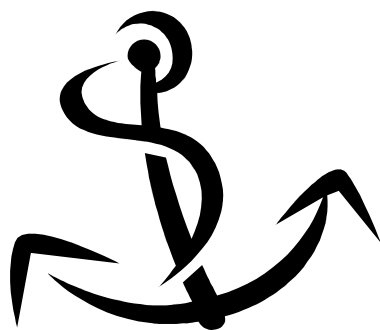
Afternoon:

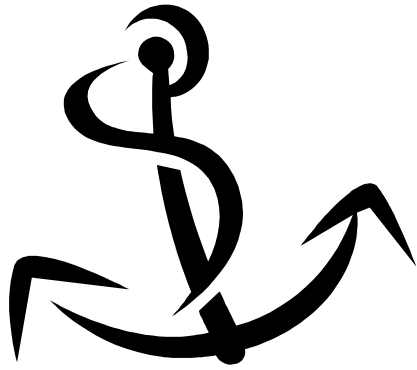
Lunch back at All Souls

Reflection, conversation, music, and inspirational speakers

The bus tour will give you a change to experience directly some of the inspiring work by UU ministries. You will have a chance to talk with people who have benefited from the after-school programs of Beacon House and from the community development work of UUs for Affordable Housing.

There is no cost to participate, but registration is required. You can register on the UUSJ Web site at <http://www.uusj.org>, by calling (301) 588-1951, or by completing the registration form on the information table in the church parlor.





The *Universalist Anchor* is published monthly for the members and friends of the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, DC.

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The Rev. Mary Katherine Morn, Interim Minister

The Rev. Dr. William L. Fox, Minister Emeritus

Board of Trustees: Rob Bertram, Kathryn Desmond, Richard Hurst (Vice Moderator), Perry King, Clint McCully (Assistant Treasurer), Sue Mosher, Brian Pepper (Treasurer), Greg Wigle (Moderator)

Mr. David Skidmore, Head Deacon

Dr. Michael O'Brien, Music Director

Mr. Kirk Denton, Organist

Marguerite Bogle, Church Office
office@universalist.org

Our Mission (adopted May 2002)

We create a loving community
for worship and service
in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We welcome all and respect individual
beliefs as we grow together.

The Universalist Anchor
Universalist National Memorial Church
1810 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

