

Universalist Anchor

Newsletter of the Universalist National Memorial Church

February 2003 · www.universalist.org

1810 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington DC 20009



February at UNMC

Revival is coming to town. Chili is coming to church. Jesus ends up at the Temple. All this and more this February at UNMC.

Bold events occur on Sundays. Sunday worship services begin at 11:00 am.

1 February. Saturday. Dinner with the men of Leland Place. Cooks meet in the kitchen at 3:00 pm.

2 February. *Secret Thoughts*. **Candlemas (or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple) marks an “everyday” activity in the life of the Mary-and-Joseph family, and points to our own lives. The reading is Luke 2:22-40.**

3 February. Monday. 7:30 pm. Board of Trustees meeting in the Romaine-van Schaick room. All are welcome.

5 February. Wednesday. 12:30 pm. “Strategic plan round tables” meet in the Romaine-van Schaick room. All are welcome.

7-13 February. Pastor Wells is out of town for personal leave. *Lunch Around Town* is canceled this month.

9 February. We welcome the Rev. Virginia Knowles, of Silver Spring, Maryland, to the pulpit. See her introduction on page 3.

After service at 1:00 pm, in the sanctuary, there will be a memorial service for Tracy Carlson's mother, Dr. Rae Carlson. All are welcome to attend.

15 February. Saturday. Dinner with the men of Leland Place. Cooks meet in the kitchen at 3:00 pm.

First Universalist Church of Washington, D.C., our predecessor, founded, 1875.

16 February. *Too Much Information*. The man Jesus healed from leprosy did not present himself for examination, but shared the news of his freely, causing unforeseen headaches. What kind of balance can we make in disclosing ourselves, or does the “increasing Light” make us deny our boundaries? The reading in Mark 1:40-45. Pastor Wells returns to the pulpit.

Monthly collection of non-perishable food and toiletries for the men of Leland Place.

19 February. Wednesday. 12:30 pm. “Strategic plan round tables” meet in the Romaine-van Schaick room. All are welcome.

7:00-9:00 pm. Church Orientation. Feeling disorientated? New timers and old timers, please call the church to sign up for this learning experience.

22 February. Saturday. 4:00-7:00 pm. Chili Cook Off. See story on page 3.

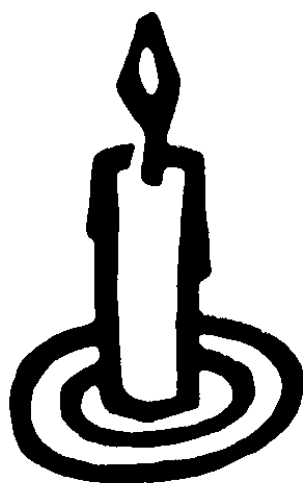
23 February. *Mid-Season Replacement*. **God is better than television executives — when there is a mid-season change, we can be sure it is for the better. The reading is 2 Corinthians 1:18-22.**

27 February-2 March. *Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival 2003* meets at UNMC. See the full story on page 4.

Coming events

5 March. Ash Wednesday service. Noon.

12 March. 7:00-9:00 pm. Roundtable discussion on worship.



February 2 is the Feast of the Purification, also known as the Presentation of Jesus, or Candlemas. Traditionally, candles were blessed on this day. Figuratively and literally, the light is expanding into the everyday world, and the grip of winter is ending.

Continued on page three.

The *Universalist Anchor* is published eleven times a year (July and August are combined) for the members and friends of the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, D.C.

The Rev. Scott Wells, Minister
 The Rev. Dr. William L. Fox,
 Minister Emeritus
 Mr. Paul Hannah, Moderator
 Dr. Michael O'Brien, Music
 Director
 Mr. Kirk Denton, Visiting Organist
 Ms. Kimberly Durham Bates,
 Church Administrator

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The mission and goals of the church, adopted at our annual meeting this year, are:

Mission

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.

Goals

We want to grow as a spiritual community, both in numbers and in the depth of our faith experience.
 We want to revitalize our building to make it a welcoming house of worship, study, fellowship, and service with the potential to contribute financially to the long-term viability of this congregation.

Minister's Moment

Making a New Understanding with "Unitarian Universalism"

It is no secret that we, as a church, have had a strained relationship with the institutions of "Unitarian Universalism," and in particular, with the Unitarian Universalist Association itself. This church opposed the consolidation of the Universalist Church of America, of which we were the national representative church, and the American Unitarian Association. One fear was that the overwhelming non-theistic tone — and condescension towards theists and Christians — among the Unitarians would ruin Universalism. (Indeed, the Unitarian Christians formed a "lifeboard" organization in 1944, which today as the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship, will be holding its "Revival 2003" here at UNMC later this month.) Despite assurances that the new UUA would be a cooperative venture between two traditions, there is a hint of "I told you so" now that the mid-twentieth-century phenomenon of Unitarian Universalism has largely supplanted traditional Universalism *and* Unitarianism. These have survived only in those places where there is both a pre-consolidation Unitarian and Universalist church extant, like Washington, and I believe there not been All Souls Church, Unitarian, and our church, neither would have its distinct qualities, and perhaps neither would be alive today.

But even if the past leaves us with little to celebrate, the future is wide open for us, and the irony is that this future will be shared with the Unitarian Universalist Association and its most earnest supporters. *Depth* is a word much in use to describe a quality of religious life marked by sincerity, understanding, discernible practice, and personal equilibrium. Depth is fed, among other ways, by fulfilling worship and a link to a complete tradition. "Unitarian Universalism" — again, meaning a phenomenon only about fifty years old — has tried to do this by reaching outside itself, in turn to materialistic humanism, Jungian psychology, EST, (euphemistically) "free love", left-of-center political movements, and other novelties. Like road-weary travelers, some Unitarian Universalists have found themselves coming full circle, and one of these harbors is the kind of Universalist Christianity that we have here. It is telling that most of the people who visit this church have visited or been a member of a member church of the Unitarian Universalist Association before coming here. And even those people who are not interested in us for what we do are less likely to criticize for being who we are.

Our biggest threat today is not that we will be co-opted, subsumed, or destroyed by outside interests, but that our memories and our remembered ways of acting will undermine the interest people have in *this church as it is*. Kathryn Desmond, Sue Mosher, Vicki Pepper, and I participated in a growth workshop for small churches, sponsored by the regional Joseph Priestley District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. I am very proud of the work we accomplished, and you will hear more about this in coming weeks. But the part — if I may

Minister's Moment *continued on page three.*

The Rev. Virginia Knowles Visits UNMC Pulpit February 9

The Rev. Virginia Knowles, of Silver Spring, Maryland, will preach for the church on February 9.

She is an Accredited Interim Minister with the Unitarian Universalist Association, and has most recently served interim ministry at Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church, Adelphi, Maryland

She is also on the board of directors of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office, a non-governmental organization. Dr. Knowles is the mother of three grown children. Before entering the ministry, she spent fifteen years in overseas education, and with the Central Intelligence Agency.

Chili Cook-off Attracts the Best

Come prepared to share your best chili — meaty or vegetarian — at the Chili Cook-off on Saturday, February 22, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Sue Mosher has the details, and the sign up sheet at church.

A Message from the Glove Fairy

“My friends, I noticed several pairs of lovely gloves and mittens have been left in your church. Before I leave you another pair, would you please see if your's have been found?”

Thank you, Glove Fairy. If you've misplaced your gloves, mittens, hats, scarves, and the like, call the church office at (202) 387-3411 and see if they have been turned in.

Growing in Service

Leland Place

Leland Place, a residential facility on North Capital Street for men in recovery from homelessness and addiction to alcohol and other drugs, needs your help this month. We are scheduled to cook and share dinner with the men of Leland Place on the first and third Saturday of the month — February 1 and 15. We meet in the church kitchen at 3:00 pm. and serve the meal at Leland at 5:00 pm. Volunteers

share the cost of the meal, usually \$10 to \$20. As always, we will be collecting groceries and men's toiletries on Sunday, February 15, so bring your groceries to the church kitchen and place them on the counter by the microwave. To sign up, in advance of the scheduled events, please contact Dave Skidmore at (703) 237-2145 or leland@universalist.org. Leland Place is a program of So Others May Eat, Inc. (SOME), which is designate #8189 in the CFC/United Way Campaign.

Beacon House

Beacon House is a Unitarian Universalist ministry in the Brookland neighborhood in northeast Washington. It deserves support and you can learn more by reading its website at users.erols.com/carlson2/gwa/beacon.htm. It is CFC/United Way designate #7529.

Chancel Flowers

February 2, 2003. In memory of her family by Frances A. Ambursen.

February 9, 2003. In memory of her father James L. Benson and her brother James L. Benson, Jr., by Frances Benson Pearce.

February 16, 2003. In memory of her brother Ben Hanford Thompson by Amy Thompson Tipton.

February 23, 2003. In loving memory of his grandmother, Anna Sponza by James Estes and family

Minister's Moment concluded

speak for the others — that sticks with us the longest was the warmth of greeting, genuine curiosity, and pleasant comradery we shared with other church delegations. One message stands out: we can work together because we have more commonalities than differences.

What is Revival? Some Questions Answered

What is Revival? Revival is a conference sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship (UUCF), and has been held every two years since 1999. The first two were held in New Orleans and St. Louis. UNMC members have attended both.

What is the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship? Is the church a member? The UUCF, described in the Minister's Moment, was founded by churches, but today is a individual-membership organization, and some UNMC members have joined it. Apart from the Revival conferences, the UUCF has a publication ministry, and hosts activities at General Assembly, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) annual meeting. The church is a member of the Council of Christian Churches within the Unitarian Universalist Association (CXCUIA). These, and the Magi Network, an organization dedicated to developing new Christian churches within the UUA, will hold meetings here before Revival.

How can I participate? Registration blanks are available at the church, or online at

www.uucf.uua.org. Some members might want to take advantage of the day rate; Saturday will be the most active day. UNMC-ers not registered are welcome to attend (1) the Communion service, Saturday night, March 1, at , where Bishop Arpad Szabo, of the Unitarian Church in Romania (Transylvania) will preside; and (2) a lecture by the Rev. John Morgan, at 9:30 am Sunday morning. The Revival conferees will join the church for worship, and there will be a Communion service in our usual style.

More information? Information will be included in orders of worship, announced in worship, and can be found at the church website, www.universalist.org. Pastor Wells welcomes calls on the subject at (202) 387-3411, or email to wells@universalist.org.

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