

Universalist Anchor

February 2005

February Worship & Activity Schedule at UNMC

Sunday, February 6

9:30 a.m. Inquirers Class - Session 2. All are welcome to attend, whether or not you attended the first session.

11 a.m. Worship: Our guest preacher is Lyn Cameron, Intern Minister at Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis. Please welcome Lyn for her first visit to UNMC.

Noon: 4th Annual Pancake Brunch hosted by the Über Fellowship of Light youth group.

Monday, February 7

7 p.m. Board of Trustees monthly meeting. All are welcome to attend.

Tuesday, February 8

6 p.m. Washington's National Churches: Lecture on Washington's national churches (of which UNMC is one) at the City Museum at Mount Vernon Square. Contact Rev. Morn for more information.

Wednesday, February 9, Ash Wednesday

Noon: Worship service, followed by a light lunch. Contact Rev. Morn or Sue Mosher if you plan to bring food or drink to share.

6:30 p.m. Visit to Whitman-Walker Clinic to learn about the work of and volunteer opportunities at this community health provider helping to lead the fight against HIV/AIDS. Contact Perry King or Sue Mosher for more information.

Saturday, February 12

10 a.m. Monthly deacons meeting

Sunday, February 13

11 a.m. Worship: "The Promise of Communion." On this first Sunday of Lent, we will share in a communion service. The homily will address the meaning of communion as a ritual and as a way to live our faith. Scripture readings: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

12:30 p.m. Congregational meeting to elect the ministerial search committee

Wednesday, February 16

7 p.m. Theology Discussion: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Contact Perry King for more information.

Sunday, February 20

11 a.m. Worship: "Lead us Not Into Temptation." Using two scriptural stories of temptation, we will consider the barriers in our lives to living as fully and faithfully as we would like. Scripture readings: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

12:30 p.m. Monthly worship dialogue: This time we will discuss the Bible and other readings used in worship, including issues of gender-specific language. Please join us to share your ideas and hear from others.

Sunday, February 27

11 a.m. Worship: "Love Again." The well-known affirmation by Universalist minister Griswold Williams begins, "Love is the doctrine of this church." What might it mean for us to embrace the doctrine of love (This sermon is rescheduled from January 23.). Scripture reading: 1 John 4:7-12

Noon Community event: Lunch and discussion of ideas for developing a community covenant for UNMC expressing the practical attitudes, actions, and behaviors that can help us live up to our mission statement.

Musings from Mary Katherine

Dear Friends,

During Lent, I prefer the practice of adding something to taking something away. Some years I have added journaling or writing letters or daily meditation. This year my Lenten practice will be a time of prayer for UNMC. Each day (or at least most days) I will set aside some time to open my heart in prayer on behalf of our church.

It has been my experience that prayer changes things, well, I mean, changes me. I don't know beyond that—but that is a lot. Or even if it isn't a lot—it is really all I can do. And so I will do that.

I invite you to consider some practice for yourself during this Lent. Only you can know what your spirit needs. Only you can decide to answer your spirit's yearning. Only you can embrace the gift of this season to look deeply and challenge yourself to grow.

During the season of Lent we will also have the opportunity to consider what the spirit of this congregation needs; what our community

yearns for; how we will embrace this season for the growth and deepening of Universalist National Memorial Church.

After conferring with members of the Board and the Deacons, the Committee on Ministry and I are inviting you to support the process of developing a congregational covenant. On February 27, following the service, we will gather to consider this. Please mark that date on your calendar. You will receive more information in the mail in the coming weeks.

Our worship together during Lent will focus on themes related to community. May this be a time for us of deepening, of opening, of sharing, and of commitment to the best hopes we have for UNMC.

Please be in touch with me if you are willing to share your best hopes. I would welcome the opportunity to hear from you.

Love,
Mary Katherine

A Progressive Christian Response to the Role of Religion in Politics

Spend an evening with Jim Adams, founder of The Center for Progressive Christianity (<http://www.tcpc.org>), of which UNMC is an affiliate. On Thursday, February 17, Jim will be at the Sanctuary Retreat Center in Beallsville, Maryland, inviting us to reflect on the ways that progressive Christians might respond to the influence that religious beliefs have had on recent American political dialogue and policies.

Jim Adams is the former rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill and founded TCPC in 1994. He is the author of *So You Think You're Not Religious? A Thinking Person's Guide to the Church* and of *So You Can't stand Evangelism? A Thinking Person's Guide to Church Growth*.

Schedule: 6-7 p.m., casual dinner and conversation. 7-9 p.m., presentation and discussion.

To attend, please RSVP. at 301-407-0662 or email SanctuaryRetreatCenter@verizon.net. Space for the dinner is limited, so reserve early.

The Sanctuary Retreat Center is located at 19520 Darnestown Road, Beallsville, MD 20839. Directions can be found at <http://www.sanctuaryretreatcenter.com>

Donations to underwrite the cost of the dinner and for the support of TCPC will be welcomed.

From the Board of Trustees

At its regular monthly meeting January 10, the Board of Trustees set February 13 as the date for a congregational meeting to elect the ministerial search committee. The board also discussed a purchase offer to sell the parsonage and the proposed restoration contract for the McKim organ, but took no action on those issues.

Treasurer Brian Pepper reported that the pledge canvass had generated \$49,500 from 17 pledges. Donations to the Red Cross for tsunami relief on January 2 and 9 amounted to slightly more than \$1100. The Christmas Eve collection for the Pastoral Discretionary Fund drew about \$400, and the PDF now contains slightly more than \$1000.

Regarding the offer to purchase the parsonage from a resident of the same building, market analyses performed by real estate brokers contacted by board members came in with values comparable to the offer. No action was taken.

Greg Wigle reported that he was continuing to try to recruit someone to chair a fundraising committee for the restoration of the McKim organ. The board agreed to make a decision on the organ restoration contract, which carries a total cost of \$360,000, by January 24; the deadline to accept the contract is January 31.

Moderator Greg Wigle reported that the Eritrean congregation will be worshipping at UNMC only two or three more weeks, and that their new building will be dedicated the second week of February.

Worship Committee Chair Rob Bertram reported that the committee is looking at three issues -- hymnals, the content of readings, and the Declaration of Faith (Five Principles of 1899). The committee wants to grapple with the declaration while we have an interim minister and plans to launch a process in February in which members of the congregation will be in-

vited to talk about what the Five Principles mean to them in the context of our worship.

It was noted that in the time remaining in the current budget year, which ends April 30, the choir will be singing every Sunday except for two -- the Presidents Day holiday weekend and the Sunday after Easter.

Building & Grounds Committee Chair Jorn Dakin reported that repairs to the roof are pending; we are in the contractor's queue. He also reported that an unusable upright piano and old electronic organ have been removed.

Welcome & Membership Chair Perry King reported that many new people have attended worship in recent weeks. The committee is trying to create community and get people involved, not just within the church but also in the community, with some new events. Inquirers classes will be held January 30 and February 6.

Registrar Sue Mosher reported in the annual membership report to the UUA, due Feb. 1, she would be reporting 77 members, down two from last year's report.

Nominating Committee Chair Sue Mosher reported that the committee had received three written applications for the ministerial search committee, along with one verbal expression of interest, and would be doing additional recruiting before the February 13 meeting.

The board endorsed the idea of holding a neighborhood concert on Palm Sunday afternoon, to celebrate the church's 75th anniversary.

Special Meeting January 27

The Board of Trustees decided at a special meeting on January 27 to offer the parsonage for sale through a licensed real estate broker. While someone in the same building had offered to buy the parsonage, the Board felt that, if the apart-

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From the Board of Trustees

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ment is to be sold, the only way to find out what it is really worth is to put it on the open market.

The vote to sell the parsonage immediately, rather than waiting until the new minister is settled, was 5 to 3 and came after a great deal of discussion of the pros and cons. In the end, a majority of the board felt that the benefits from an immediate sale outweighed the potential gains that might be made by waiting another 18 months or longer, such as being able to offer the parsonage to a prospective minister and getting a higher sale price by selling at a future date.

The anticipated benefits of the parsonage sale include:

- A substantial improvement in the church's immediate cash flow situation, since we will no longer be paying a monthly \$800 co-op fee and will have investment income from the sale proceeds to offset the housing allowance that we are paying Rev. Morn, in lieu of her living in the parsonage.
- The elimination of a time and energy drain on the church's lay leadership, since we will no longer be trying to fix up and rent the parsonage. (The Board thanks Al Templeton for the work that he did to try to rent the apartment.)
- Funds available to a building revitalization plan, once such a plan is in place, this being another area that the board is working on.

The board has selected a real estate broker, after interviewing three highly qualified candidates, and will proceed to carry out the sale as soon as possible.

In the second part of the special meeting, the board discussed the implementation of the agreement with David Storey, Inc. to renovate and install the McKim organ in the Church. The McKim organ was given to the Church in February 2004. So far, \$30,000 has been spent for relocating the McKim organ and

for storage fees. The next phase of the renovation would require the Church to make three payments totaling \$120,000 by April 1, 2005. Given the uncertainties that funds would be available to complete the organ renovation and installation (estimated to cost a total of more than \$350,000), the fact that the Church is responsible under the agreement for ensuring that the Church building is properly prepared for the organ installation on the balcony, and that no work has been done yet to make such preparations for the building, the board decided to defer action on the organ renovation agreement until the funding and building issues are cleared.

The board then unanimously passed a resolution that affirmed the sentiment of the board of the importance of the organ in the life of the congregation and charged a task force to meet with consultants and begin assessment of feasibility of the McKim organ and other needed improvements in the building. This task force will take action to hire a consultant soon to help the church with these issues so that UNMC can move forward with the building improvements and the McKim organ project.

Staff Notes

Seeking Church Administrator: Due to the resignation of Kimberly Durham-Bates, UNMC is seeking a creative, energetic person for 15-20 hours per week of work in the church office. Please contact Rev. Morn if you are interested.

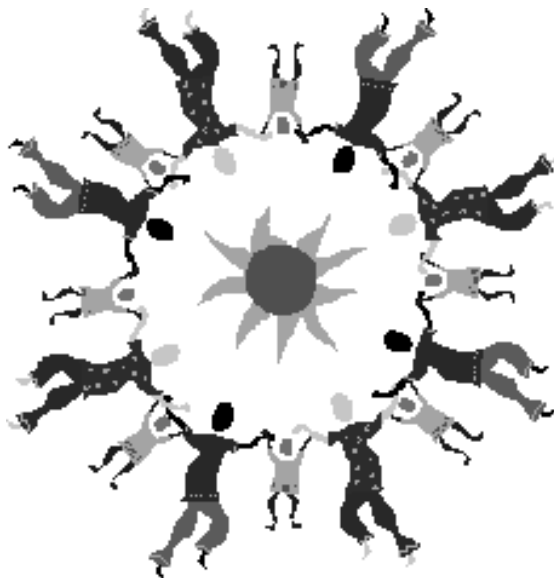
New Childcare Provider: Please help us welcome Alberta Bridges, our new childcare provider. Alberta started with us February 6. Check out our new and improved childcare room on the second floor. And spread the word! UNMC has childcare on Sunday mornings.

JPD Spring Conference Announced for April 8-9

The Joseph Priestly District of the Unitarian Universalist Association has announced its 2005 Spring Conference, to be held in King of Prussia, PA, Friday evening, April 8 and Saturday, April 9. This year's theme is *Faith Development: A Life-Long Journey*.

The conference schedule includes a Friday night concert and Saturday workshop by Nick Page, founder and director of The Mystic Chorale of Boston; worship services; a keynote address by the Rev. Dr. Tracey Robinson-Harris, Director for Congregational Services of the UUA; and more than two dozen workshops to choose from.

Attention young adults ages 18-35: Learn and grow with workshops on all aspects of UU life, from young adult ministry and church membership to social change and "generational personality." A discounted young adult registration fee will be offered.



Childcare and a children's program will be available. High school seniors and their parents are invited to participate in a bridging program that will culminate in a bridging ceremony.

To register online, visit the JPD web site at <http://www.jpduua.org>. Conference brochures and registration forms are also available in the church parlor, on the information table.

The Joseph Priestley District has reserved a block of

rooms with the Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel and Conference Center. The room rate, for either a king or double beds, is \$85 per night plus state and local taxes of 8%. To reserve a room, please call the Sheraton directly at 610-337-1800. Be sure to mention that you wish to reserve a room with the "Joseph Priestley District" group.

IMPORTANT: THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR MAKING HOTEL RESERVATIONS IS MARCH 9, 2005.

New Online Forum for Prayer and Spiritual Disciplines

UUCF-Prayer is an email discussion list organized by the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship as a respectful, affirming place to share personal prayer requests and prayers. Participants also discuss issues, stories, and different approaches to prayer -- both personal and community praying -- and to do the same with the many other spiritual practices in the broad free Christian tradition or from other traditions. To subscribe, visit <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/uucf-prayer>.

More Future Events

Sunday, March 20 - Palm Sunday & UNMC's 75th anniversary

Sunday, March 27 - Easter

Sunday, April 17 - Joint worship service with All Souls Unitarian Church

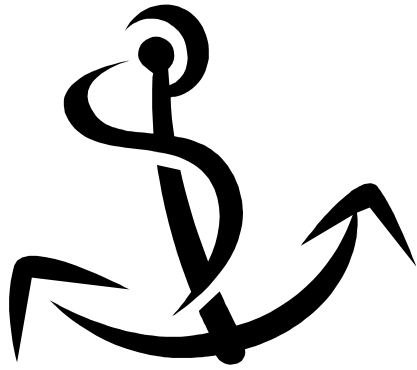
Sunday, May 1 - UNMC Neighborhood Open House

Saturday, May 13 - Regional Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship mini-revival, Charlottesville, VA

Sunday, May 14 - UNMC annual meeting

June 23-27 - UUA General Assembly, Fort Worth, TX

November 3-6 - Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival, Fort Worth, TX



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

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
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