

Universalist Anchor



March 2005

March Worship & Activity Schedule at UNMC

Sunday, March 6

"To Dwell in the House of the Lord" Psalm 23.
Our guest preacher, Rev. Greg Ward, Minister,
Unitarian Universalists of Metro Atlanta North,
serves a growing congregation in North Atlanta.
Rev. Morn will assist. Dave Skidmore is liturgist.

Sunday March 13

"Them Dry Bones"
Our guest preacher, Rev. Evan Keely, is minister of
the Henry David Thoreau, Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Fort Bend County, Stafford (just
outside Houston), Texas. Sue Mosher is liturgist.

Sunday, March 20, 75th Anniversary Sunday

"See How Jesus loved Him," John 11:1-45.

The Rev. Mary Katherine Morn.

In the story of Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the
dead, we learn perhaps, most of all, of Jesus' love
and compassion for Lazarus. The story of this most
dramatic miracle is foundational to the Christian
story and, so, to the story of Universalist National
Memorial Church.

Thursday, March 24, 7:00 PM

Maundy Thursday Communion and Potluck

Friday, March 25, 12:00 Noon

Good Friday Service

Sunday, March 27

"There Shall Be a Day," Matthew 28:1-10.

The Rev. Mary Katherine Morn.

Join us for our celebration of Easter.

Musings from Mary Katherine

Dear Friends,

We have made our way through the first part of
Lent, including our community covenanting
activity. The Committee on Ministry (Vicki Pepper,
Clint McCully, and Al Templeton) will be taking all
that was shared and attempting to craft a covenant
for us. That document will be circulated and your
comments solicited. We sincerely appreciate your
participation in this process

As most of you know by now, I have accepted an
invitation to be the candidate for ministry at the

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax. I
will be gone the week of April 2 through April 10,
doing my candidating with them. If they call me, I
will begin my ministry there in August. I will
complete the commitment I made to your Search
Committee to serve as your Interim Minister for one
year, ending July 31.

I have spoken with the Search Committee at the
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax
about the importance of my being able to
concentrate on my ministry at UNMC during this
period of decision and transition. They are being

served by an Interim Minister too, and I also do not want to interfere with his ministry. So be assured that I am your minister. And I will be your minister through the end of July.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns. There is much that can be

accomplished in these next months. I am grateful for this time to work with you on behalf of Universalist National Memorial Church.

Sincerely,
Mary Katherine

UNMC's New Worship Committee

The Board of Trustees has constituted a Worship Committee to assist the Minister in making our worship experience more meaningful, and to reflect the needs and hopes of our congregation on matters pertaining to worship. Our responsibilities include: evaluation of elements of worship; liturgical structure of the worship services; planning for special services; and, working with the minister to fill the pulpit when the minister is away. Several of the liturgists serve on the Committee.

In undertaking these tasks, the Committee is keeping in view the many aspects of our worship that truly do make it “the best hour of the week.” Part of our role is to help provide the opportunity for people to share their thoughts about our worship experience, an important service in a diverse and liberal religious community such as ours. Rev. Morn has already begun to hold open monthly discussions about worship matters after our social hour, where we can exchange ideas, pose questions and make suggestions. One or more members of the Worship Committee usually participate.

We began our work in November, using outcomes from the “Quick Start” process and other suggestions in getting underway. An important focus for us will be how and where to integrate more inclusive language in ways that resonate with the tradition and solemnity characteristic of our worship service. We have identified three areas in which to concentrate our work at the outset:

Hymnal: Last fall the church received a generous gift from a member—a full set of Singing the

Living Tradition, the hymnal published by the UUA in 1993. The hymnal contains a wide range of music not found in Hymns of the Spirit. It also includes revisions of some hymns in our hymnal, with modified language, including gender-inclusive references to God. The Board of Trustees accepted the gift of the new hymnals on a trial basis. We have now been using the new “Gray Hymnal” to supplement our “Red Hymnal” for several months.

As part of the decision-making process regarding Singing the Living Tradition or any new hymnal, the Committee is taking this opportunity to consider broadly the question of what is (are) the best hymnal(s) to supplement Hymns of the Spirit. Committee members Sue Mosher, Kathryn Desmond and Kirk Denton are taking the lead in this effort. Several members of the Committee were able to discuss a range of considerations and options around hymnals with other UU Christians attending the recent Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival in Massachusetts. Committee member Richard Hurst is conducting an in-depth analysis of language, music, and meaning of versions of hymns from a range of hymnals.

Readings

On the question of readings used in the service, the Committee has concluded that the Minister and liturgists should continue to draw on their judgment, experience, and wisdom in selecting readings, as has been our practice to date. Biblical texts, occasionally supplemented by non-scriptural sources, would, thus, continue to be the norm. On

the matter of gender-inclusiveness, our suggestion

exercise discretion, bearing in mind our goal of increasing inclusiveness while maintaining the meaning and beauty of language.

Declaration of Faith—Five Principles

The Worship Committee recognizes that the declaration of faith in our worship service is a subject of great importance to the congregation. Some believe it defines us, while others argue it circumscribes us. Concerns focus on anywhere from the theological content to the strongly paternalistic language of the Declaration.

The Committee is recommending, without any prejudice as to the eventual outcome, that our congregation discuss what the Declaration of Faith means to us—what place it has in worship, its importance to us and its relevance to our identity. To this end, beginning in April, a series of discussion sessions will be held, where congregants can exchange views and hopes concerning our current—or any alternative--statement of faith or covenant in the worship service.

November Elections Provoke Response by Rev. Adams

by Tom McCready

Rev. Jim Adams, founder and president of The Center for Progressive Christianity, recently gave four talks in this region. I heard him in Poolesville, MD on February 17. He asked me about my provenance. When I replied that I attended a Universalist church and that “they” were a member of his organization, he said, “Universalist? What street is it on?” Since he had served as an Episcopal priest at St. Mark’s on Capitol Hill, he knew Washington well. When I told him, “Sixteenth Street,” he said, “Oh, it is a UU church.” He then added “It is a long and proud tradition.”

Condolences

Our condolences go out to Mary O’Connell on the death of her brother, William.

is that the Minister and liturgists should be able to

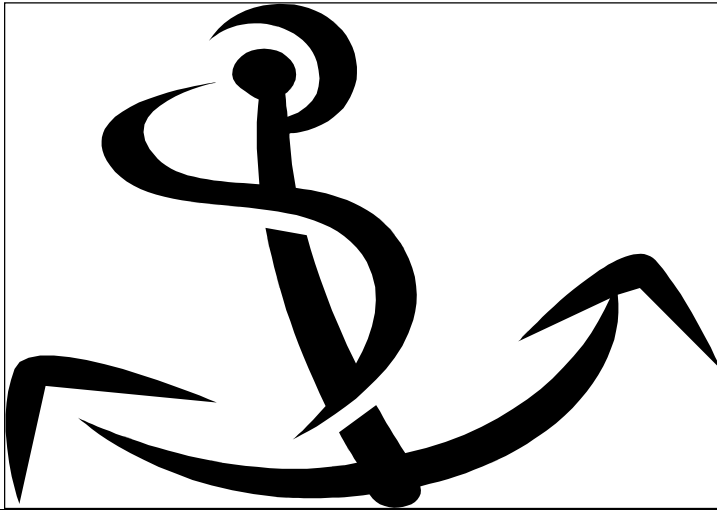
All Are Welcome

The Committee plans to hold monthly meetings open to all. Dates have not yet been set, but 7:00 PM on Wednesdays before the meetings of the Board of Trustees’ is the likely choice. (This could mean either the last or first Wednesday of the month.) Future meetings of the Committee will be announced in the Anchor and in the Order of Worship.

Committee members (David Burton, Kirk Denton, Kathryn Desmond, James Estes, Richard Hurst, Sue Mosher, David Skidmore), Reverend Morn, and I invite you to share--formally or informally--your thoughts and, also, to participate in the planned discussions. Members and friends farther afield, please feel free to send me emails for distribution to, and consideration by, the Committee. You can also call me or write (2809 28th St., N.W., Washington DC 20008), I will do my best to convey their thoughts or concerns to the Committee.

Rob Bertram
Worship Committee Chair

In his talk, Rev. Adams said that he had focused on process instead of goal definition as he expanded his organization, beginning in 1994. He began his talk by mentioning the plight of the working poor. He said that the triumphs of conservative Christians in the November election would cause him to redouble his efforts. He said that conservative Christians justify their actions by quoting passages—which are open to interpretation--of the Bible. He hopes that liberal Christians will challenge those interpretations, thereby gaining clout in the future.



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* 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

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