

THE REPORTER

Newsletter of St. John's Unitarian Universalist Church

May 30, 2010

Sunday Community Worship Services

Community Worship Services and Children's Religious Exploration begin each Sunday at 11:00am. Child care is available.

Sunday June 6 at 11:00am

"Flower Communion"

ministerial candidate Cassandra Howe

We will celebrate the sacredness of community with this popular Unitarian Universalist spring ritual. Please bring flowers from your garden to share. Cassie Howe will offer the sermon.

Sundays June 13 and 20 at 11:00am

Rev. Denise Tracy

This winter we had a Taste of St John's Auction. Rev. Tracy auctioned a sermon, Cathy Roma auctioned conducting the choir, Rachel Kramer auctioned the winner choosing a piece of music for the Offertory. Also offered was highest bidder choosing a piece for the choir to sing. On Sundays June 13 and 20 we will have these "winners" as part of our worship experience.

On June 13, Wanda Crawford's sermon purchase will be a "jazz" sermon. Will Wagner's jazz group (the same one that played for the Partner Church Dinner) and Rev. Tracy will combine talents to do both the children's story and the sermon underscored with extemporaneous music. In addition, the jazz group will play the prelude and postlude. Tom Darner will conduct the St John's choir in John Rutter's "For the Beauty of the Earth." Judy Strong has chosen Intermezzo, Op. 117, No. 1 in E-Flat Major by Johannes Brahms for Rachel to play as the offertory.

On June 20, Rev. Tracy will offer a traditional Father's Day sermon. Rick Prairie has chosen as his auction item a wonderful gospel musical piece for the choir to close out the year.

Our Church Mission: St. John's is committed to creating a safe and caring community, working for peace and social justice, and celebrating beliefs that respect freedom of thought.

Interim Minister

the Rev. Denise Tracy

Minister Emerita

the Rev. Annie Foerster

Minister of Music

Dr. Catherine Roma

Assoc. Director of Music

Rachel Kramer

Acting Director of

Religious Exploration

Elizabeth Wilson

Caretaker

Tim Johnson

Office Administrator

Mary Jo (Josie) Arens

Church Office

513-961-1938

office@stjohnsuu.org

Church Office Hours

Monday-Friday

7:30am to 2pm

Church Website

www.stjohnsuu.org

e-News Submissions

enews@stjohnsuu.org

Newsletter Submissions

reporter@stjohnsuu.org

Next Newsletter Deadline

Thursday June 10 at 5pm

Minister's Musings

from Rev. Denise Tracy



Dear Friends,

I had someone tell me recently that my theology has fuzzy edges. It does. I am open to change, since I have had many surprises in my life that have turned what I have believed upside down and back again. As a result, I allow for this change to constantly happen, so I would say that I am not so much fuzzy but instead I would say that I am theologically inexact.

In addition to this inexactness, I am constantly touched by what I would call schmaltz. When I see something that is beautiful or touches me deeply, tears often come to my eyes. I am overcome. I feel a tenderness. I take a deep breath and it is in these moments that I allow for both the wonder and the possibility that God may just exist. I am not sure of this but I do allow for it. I have an atheistic friend who says I am hedging my bets. My hopeful belief is my insurance policy, in case there is an after life, she would say. And perhaps she is right. I am always hopeful that life will turn out better than I think, so will, perhaps, after life. These are my fuzzy/inexact theological edges speaking.

May and June are months filled with weddings, graduations, rites of passage of all types. As we sit and watch our children become members of the church, graduate, walk down the aisle, it is at once we remember when we first held them and breathed in their scent and their fullness of life. The awkward teenager and the beautiful bride or handsome groom...all have within them the child whose knees we bandaged, whose fears we calmed and whose hopes we nourished. These passages give a sense of life moving from one stage to another. Another stage of life, accomplished or passing.

The first time I held my child, the first time I held my grandchild, all brought me to think that once my parents held me and my grandparents. I was stunned to think that I was taking my place in the grander miracle of life...I could feel the stream of life moving around me. I was part of it and saw quite clearly those who had gone before and those who will come after. Mother's day and Father's day also give us the opportunity to remember our parents and if they are no longer with us, we get to see life passing in another way, ending and away from us.

I hope as you attend ceremonies of any kind this season that you will step back and allow a larger sense of life to surround you. To know that you are part of a thrumming heartbeat that includes your own as well as those of your ancestors and your heirs. We are all part of a bigger, grander sense of creation.

Blessings,

Denise

Your Interim Minister

Rev. Denise Tracy's Schedule and Contact Numbers

cell 847-431-8282, private line at church 513-961-1994, home 513-376-6775 (in case of emergency)

Office Hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9:00am to noon, or by appointment

Opportunities & Invitations

Summer Potlucks

We hope to continue our tradition of having summer potlucks for all members and friends of our congregation. LaDonna Fritz is coordinating these events and is looking for volunteers to host one. The plan is to hold the dinner on Tuesday evenings throughout the summer at 6:30pm in a home, community park or community room. Usually the host provides drinks, service ware, napkins, etc and everyone else brings a yummy dish to share. If you are interested in hosting a dinner, please contact LaDonna Fritz.

The first potluck of the season will be on Tuesday June 15 at the Colerain Township Park. The picnic shelter is handicap accessible, has restrooms nearby, plus, a playground for the children. More information will follow soon.

-LaDonna Fritz

Sunday Morning Adult Forums

June 6- The Power of Forgiveness: We will have the concluding discussion of the ideas presented on this DVD. It is evident that forgiveness is possible even in the most tragic and horrible situations. What can we learn from those who, in spite of their pain, are able to forgive?

June 13- Modern War and Each of Us: After presenting the results of her study of the effects of the Vietnam War on American artists, Joan Robinson will lead a discussion of personal experiences, reflections, and conclusions about war. Adult Forums will continue through June 27. A meeting will be held on June 8 to discuss the Adult RE program and forum presentations as part of the whole program. If you are interested in contributing ideas for the program or forums in particular, please call me. You are welcome to join us.

-Ethel Ingalls

Bring Some Flowers for the Flower Communion on June 6

Flower communion celebrates our interdependence as creatures of the earth and community. Please bring flowers from your garden or favorite flower stand and add them to the communal bouquet at the start of worship. After the sermon there will be time for the congregation to receive from the beauty that is this community and take a flower home. In preparation for the Flower Communion on June 6, Cassie Howe is looking for people who have access to large amounts of flowers. While the intent is that everyone contributes their own flowers to the Great Bouquet, we want extras for visitors and members with no access to flowers. If you can commit to providing extra flowers for this ritual, please contact Cassie Howe by June 1.

-Cassie Howe

Men's Group

The St. John's Men's Group will meet next on Sunday June 6. Following the regular 6pm monthly dinner in Krohlfifer, Bruce Beisner will speak about preparing for UU Ministry based on his experience as a Meadville Lombard student, field training, summer internship and beyond. Men's group monthly pot lucks this summer begin on July 11 at the home of Jack Nagerman.

-Howard Tolley

LAFS (Lively After 50) Dinner

For our June event, we're trying a new, highly recommended restaurant. Queen Mary's Family Restaurant is at 4050 North Bend Road near the intersection at Westwood Northern Blvd. We'll meet at Queen Mary's on Friday June 11 at 6:30pm. Reservations are required by Thursday June 10. Please contact Jan Hay. All St. Johners and friends over 50 are invited.

-Jan Hay

Among ourselves

Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday June 6

Mark your calendar to attend this year's Annual Meeting after church on Sunday June 6. Childcare will be available, as well as a few extra goodies at coffee hour to help tide you through the meeting. We'll have the election with voting before the meeting and results announced by the Nominating Committee. (See separate article from that group.) We also will vote to approve the Annual Church Budget for our fiscal year, July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011. Written reports will be available so you can have more details on what has been accomplished for the past year.

-The Board of Trustees

Congregational Election and Absentee Ballots

Eligible voters are members of St. John's who have signed the Membership Book at least 90 days prior to the Congregational meeting of June 6, 2010. For those unable to attend, absentee ballots must be returned in a sealed envelope to the Nominating Committee mailbox in the church office before noon Sunday June 6. Paper absentee ballots can be found in that mailbox, can be requested by mail or email attachment from Josie, or downloaded in PDF form at <http://www.stjohnsuu.org/forms/2010JuneAbsenteeBallot.PDF>

-The Nominating Committee

New Newsletter Email

Please send future articles and announcements for The Reporter to reporter@stjohnsuu.org. In the coming months we will be transitioning to a new newsletter editor, so please start getting in the habit of using this new email address. Thanks.

-Bruce Beisner

Church Work Day a Success!

How the church sparkles and what a lot of hard work 41 adults and 5 children and youth can accomplish when they get busy. It was a fun day, filled with joy and good spirits as Frances May Brooks' Chalice Group led the organization of the day and Bill Luerssen's Chalice Group tackled the kitchen, aided by lots of volunteers. Every single one of the sanctuary chairs was cleaned, as well as window wells, light switches, outside yard work and the lower level room windows, inside and out. The preschoolers have a repaired coat rack, and the back entrance glows. Denise told us she'd thought the kitchen windows were opaque before May 15. Thanks to all who pitched in.

-Carol Fencl

Planning for Next Year's Adult Religious Exploration

All those interested in helping to plan for Adult RE classes for the coming church year are asked to contact Carol Fencl at adultre@stjohnsuu.org. We plan to meet at 7:30 on Tuesday night June 8 in the Clifton area to review the past year and plan for the next. A special focus will be the future of our pre-church Forums. If you'd like to be involved but can't come that night, let Carol know.

-The Adult RE Committee

In the Haehnle Gallery...

Our display from June 6 to July 25 will feature works by artist Jan Connelly. The exhibit, *The Art of Healing*, explores her emotional catharsis following a breast cancer diagnosis and mastectomy. Works include a realistic self-portrait titled *Post Operative Disclosures*, and *Mastectomy before a Mirror*, an appropriated work based on Picasso's painting *Girl Before a Mirror*. Jan says this work has been personally gratifying and has the added benefit of creating healing, understanding and activism. We are pleased and honored to display her work.

-Sandy Geiser

Friends of Szentlaszlo Announces Plans for Trip to Transylvania

At its year end picnic, the Friends of Szentlaszlo, St. John's Partner Church Committee, announced plans for a trip to Romania and our partner church in the spring of next year. The trip of up to 14 days will include an extended time visiting our partner church and its surrounding areas. For first time travelers, an optional side trip to key Transylvania historic, scenic and UU sights will be offered. More details will be available next fall. If you are interested in learning more about this trip, please contact Tom or Mary Darner, Co-chairs of our Partner Church Committee.

-The Friends of Szentlaszlo

Updating The Library

Did you know that St. Johns has a Library? If you have attended a meeting in the downstairs room designated as the Library, have you ever thumbed through the books shelved there?

In light of our efforts to “freshen up” the face that St. Johns presents to newcomers and to our new minister, we are updating the library contents.

We are assessing what we have (a list of the books in the library has already been compiled) and over the next few weeks we will be removing those that are outdated or in poor condition. The books being culled will be available for you to browse through on a table in Krolfifer for several Sundays in case you wish to keep one for yourself. After we have removed books we will have space for new books. We will publish a list of the books that we need in case you wish to donate specific books. If you have questions about the Library or the guidelines we are using to cull and replace books, please contact me.

-Ethel Ingalls



The Caring Circle

The mission of the Caring Circle at St. John's is to support a culture of caring within the church community. The Circle offers support to members and friends in need, such as transportation, meals, phone calls, notes and cards, and other acts of caring on a short-term basis. If you are aware of someone who may benefit from these services, or would like to offer your services occasionally, please contact Kathryn McDonough or Nina Tolley or Josie Arens in the church office.

-Kathryn McDonough

Last Chance for Raffle Tickets

Last chance to buy a raffle ticket for the Murphin Ridge Inn and/or the Lake Michigan Retreat! Look for the display the next two Sundays in Krolfifer.

Drawings will be held at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday June 6.

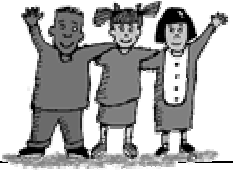
-Penny Shada

Summer Religious Exploration Volunteers Needed

In order for our preK-fourth grade Summer RE programming model to work, we need volunteers! One adult leader and 1-2 adult helpers are needed for most Sundays in June, July, and August. Do you have a special skill or interest you are willing to share with our kids (ages 3-10)—yoga, writing poetry, traveling, etc.? I'd be glad to help you turn an offer of help and an idea into an Activity Plan! Or I can simply provide you with a packaged plan ready for delivery!! This is a great opportunity to support our kids—and give our regular teachers a much-deserved break—and fits nicely for those unable to make a lengthy commitment during the school year! Please contact Elizabeth Wilson for more information.

-Elizabeth Wilson

RE-flections



By Elizabeth Wilson

Acting Director of Religious Exploration

Coming of Age Wrap Up:

Wow. . . I hope everyone enjoyed the Coming of Age presentations as much as I did! By the sounds of some of the feedback I received, I think you did! I received a lot of positive comments regarding spreading out the presentations over multiple Sundays. You can be assured that is feedback that will be listened to. . . I think it worked remarkably well. Thanks again, too, to Rachel Kramer for her suggestion to incorporate music. It added a particularly meaningful element to the presentations and many positive comments were received about that too.

I'd like to give a huge "shout out" to the adults who served as COA mentors this year—Debbie Combs, Tim Dewald, Barbara Hadden, Edie Holder, Cassie Howe, Kari Olson, and David Wilson. What a great bunch of dedicated folks they were! They not only provided guidance and support to our youth, but gave significant portions of their time—including attending a 3-hour opening workshop, followed by numerous one-on-one sessions. And of course the efforts of our thoughtful and talented youth must be recognized too—David Connell, Sophia Dewald, Daniel Holder, Erin Long, and Jo Ellen Pellman. . . you guys were awesome!!

Summer RE Schedule Reminder:

Sunday June 6 will be the last day of "regular RE." There will be class parties. Be sure to bring your kids so they can celebrate the year with their friends and teachers!!

Even though our Summer RE schedule begins on Sunday June 13, church will still have a start time of 11:00am. We will move to an earlier start time of 10:30am on Sunday July 4.

Important Upcoming Events:

Mark these important upcoming events on your calendar

June 6: Last day of 2009-10 RE year—Class parties!

June 13: First day of Summer RE programming.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You...

to all the folks willing to offer their assistance for Sunday programming on May 30—Melanie Malaviya, Bev Harbaum, Rebecca Crone, and Krysta December; and to the Hoge family for allowing YRUU to celebrate their year by having a campout on the Hoge farm in Kentucky!

It's so great to work with your kids! Always feel free to share your thoughts/ideas on how we can improve the experience for them. You can contact me at 513-961-1938. My office hours are Tues/Wed/Thurs 9am-2pm.

Thanks from the Poor People's Economic Rights Campaign

The Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign wishes to thank the members of St. John's for their support. The program on Friday May 21 was a great success, with wonderful food and friendship coming from St John's to the marchers. It is even more remarkable considering that there was so little time to prepare; we asked for help at the last minute and you responded like true UU's. This was a real community event, bringing together diverse elements to show support for those in need and to attempt to make our democratic system function as it can and should. We cannot thank Bo Wachendorf and Greg Terhune enough for allowing us to "piggy back" off their Food for Thought Program. So many of you came forth with food, help with set up and clean up, and financial donations. Donations on Sunday at the "leftover lunch" were \$173.00, which will go to the marchers. Once again, we recognize why we love St. John's; we are a family who support each other and work to make the world a better place.

-Cassandra Barham and Judy Cirillo

St. John's Church Calendar

Sunday May 30

11:00am: Community Worship Service
6:00pm: Settled Minister Search Committee

Monday May 31

Memorial Day (Church Office Closed)

Tuesday June 1

10:00am: Yoga
7:00pm: Book Discussion Group
7:00pm: Young Adults Discussion & Action

Wednesday June 2

10:00am: Chalice Group (Hadden)
5:00pm: eNews Deadline
7:00pm: Chalice Group (Prairie)
7:00pm: Membership Committee

Tuesday June 1

10:00am: Yoga
7:00pm: Book Discussion Group
7:00pm: YADA

Wednesday June 2

10:00am: Chalice Group (Hadden)
5:00pm: eNews Deadline
7:00pm: Chalice Group (Prairie)
7:00pm: Membership Committee

Thursday June 3

10:00am: Meditation
6:00pm: Music Committee Meeting
6:00pm: Tai Chi
7:00pm: Choir Rehearsal

Sunday June 6

9:30am: Choir Rehearsal
11:00am: Worship Service
12:15pm: GA Children's Choir Rehearsal
12:45pm: Annual Congregational Meeting
6:00pm: Men's Group
6:00pm: Settled Minister Search Committee

Tuesday June 8

10:00am: Yoga
7:00pm: Praxis Committee for Bruce Beisner

Wednesday June 9

5:00pm: eNews Deadline
6:30pm: Executive Board Meeting
7:00pm: Chalice Group (Strong)

Thursday June 10

10:00am: Meditation
5:00pm: Reporter Deadline
6:00pm: Tai Chi
7:00pm: Choir Rehearsal
7:00pm: Chalice Group (Brooks)

Saturday June 12

9:00am: RE Visioning

Sunday June 13

9:30am: Choir Rehearsal
11:00am: Worship Service
12:15pm: GA Children's Choir Rehearsal
12:30pm: Young Adult Group
6:00pm: Settled Minister Search Committee

From the office

*By Josie Arens
St. John's Office Administrator*

Last chance to schedule events on the wall calendar in Krolfifer is Monday May 31. All events to be scheduled after that will need to come thru the office. You will need to fill out a green calendar request form. They can be found in the office in the file folder hanging on the office supply door (by Josie's desk).

Summer office hours begin the week of June 21. The office will be closed Mondays and Fridays. (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays office hours will be 7:30am-2pm.) Josie will be out of the office the weeks of July 5, July 12 and August 9.

There will be office coverage from 9-noon on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays of those weeks. Deadline for written announcements for the Order of Service on July 27 will be Tuesday June 22 at 10:00am. Deadline for announcements for the Orders of Service on July 4, 11 and 18 will be Tuesday June 29 at 10:00am.

Thought of the Week

“It is better to ask some of the questions
than to know all the answers.”

-JAMES THURBER