

THE REPORTER

Newsletter of St. John's Unitarian Universalist Church

May 22, 2011

Sunday Community Worship Services

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

May 22nd at 11:00 a.m.

"Living Thankfully"

the Rev. Denise Tracy

Gratitude will be the sermon topic. We will recognize new members and thank the Sunday school teachers.

May 29th at 11:00 a.m.

"Lost Enough To Find Yourself"

Joan Kahn Schneider

We face transitions everyday in our lives and we are facing a transition as a congregation. Transitions are not easy. Joan will talk about the importance of paying attention in these times so we remain connected to ourselves and each other.

June 5th at 11:00 a.m.

"A Sense Sublime: a Meditation on Transylvania"

the Rev. Denise Tracy

Rev Tracy will share her thoughts upon her return from our partner church in Transylvania.

June 12th at 11:00 a.m.,

"Quilting as a Metaphor for Church"

the Rev. Denise Tracy

How do we create something from many smaller pieces?
If you have a quilt, bring it and we'll place it in the sanctuary.

June 19th at 11:00 a.m.

"The Taming of Lucy"

the Rev. Denise Tracy

This sermon on love and connection will be Rev Tracy's last as our interim minister.

Our 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

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

Mon-Fri 7:00am to 2pm

Church Website

www.stjohnsuu.org

e-News Submissions

office@stjohnsuu.org

Newsletter Submissions

reporter@stjohnsuu.org

Newsletter Email List

reportermail@stjohnsuu.org

Next Newsletter Deadline

Thurs June 2 at 5pm

Minister's Musings

from Rev. Denise Tracy

Dear Friends,

How are you at saying hello? and good-bye?

I once went to a workshop where we looked at our styles of entering and leaving places. We were asked if we arrived early, on time or late? We were asked how we made connections - did we arrange to meet someone or take our chances of meeting people when we arrived? We were asked if we circulated and talked to many people, or stayed with one or two people for most of the event? Did we stay until the bitter end?



The workshop leader asked us to think about our style of arriving or leaving as a metaphor for our lives. The leader said that how we enter an event may give us a clue about how we enter jobs, or relationships, or significant passages in our lives. I thought about my habits. (At that time, I liked to arrive early to speak to a few people and then sneak away, quietly) What I decided was that I needed to get better at the whole process of arriving, staying and leaving. I now arrive on time, circulate a lot and then leave when I feel I have met a goodly number of people.

This has helped me look at transitions in my life and has helped me leave a ministry with a purpose, too. When I arrive I attend as many things as possible and then I do the same thing when I leave. I try to talk to as many people as I can, touch people who have touched me, thank people who have had an impact on my life at a church.

Over the next month, I will be attending committees and not taking on tasks but instead, being with you, reflecting on our time together and hopefully thanking you for your role in the church. I will be in Transylvania for two weeks and then I will be here until June 19th. That is my last Sunday. I will be packed and after church and coffee hour I will return home to Illinois. I will have a month between assignments.

The next few weeks we will have time to reflect on this ministry. I have loved being at St John's; there is no finer church anywhere. I will say it again and again: Thank you for the pleasure of your company.

Blessings,

Denise

Your Interim Minister

Rev. Denise Tracy's Schedule and Contact Number

Private line at church 513-961-1994

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

SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

Forums are held at 10-10:45am on Sunday morning, in Krolfifer Hall.

May 29 - Honoring Those Who Served.

Most of us know someone who has served in the Armed Services, or may have served ourselves. We will share stories of these experiences, remembering what happened and how it affected their lives and our lives. This is a day for remembering. Who or what do you remember?

June 5 - Bring Back the Lash: Is flogging more humane than prison? Given the choice between five years in prison and ten brutal lashes, which would you choose? Based on an article in the May Washington Monthly, Nancy Henry and Carol Fencl will conduct this provocative discussion. Copies of the article are available and may be obtained at the May 29 forum.

Thanks and Appreciation: A big thank you to all who provided the delicious bounty for the Teachers Appreciation Breakfast last week and helped to make it such a wonderful relaxing time. We really appreciated you!

Future topics: If you have a topic you would like to discuss in forum, please let me know.

- Ethel Ingalls

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday
May 22,
2011
at 12:30



All members are encouraged to stay after church for the Annual Meeting to be held in Krolfifer. Ballots for the election are available and must be turned in before the start of the meeting. Members should sign in at the table with Carol Fencl and pick up their copy of the Annual Report and budget information. Grab a bagel and some coffee, after settling your children downstairs for child care. We need a quorum of 51 persons for the meeting, so please plan to stay.

- Carol Fencl, Board Secretary

SUMMER WOMANSPiRiT “WOMEN OF STRENGTH” Retreat

August 5th - 7th, 2011

Ronora Lodge and Retreat Center
Watervliet, Michigan

Sponsored by the Women and Religion Committee of the Central Midwest District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Our mission is to support women in their search for the Inner Feminine Divine in an atmosphere of connectedness, safety, and joy.

For more information, contact Jessica Hunsberger at (574) 322-0181 or sws@womenandreligion.org; or check our website at summer.womenandreligion.org/2011.html.

Social Justice/ Social Concerns

Two Upcoming Meetings, Open to All

UU COUNCIL of Greater Cincinnati

Sat, June 4, at 9:30 am
Hopedale Unitarian Universalist
Oxford, OH

MARCC Delegates Council Meeting

Wed, June 8, 2011 at 11:30 am
St. Peter In Chains Church
Downtown Cincinnati

If you are a UU Council Delegate; if you are a Social Justice Chair; if you are interested in Social Justice, if you are interested in Immigration; if you just want to be a part of Unitarian Universalism networking for our area --please come to our next UU Council Meeting.

At our June 4 meeting we will be specifically discussing MARCC's new and very important voice on **immigration** issues. See the article about MARCC on this page. The UUA has immigration as a major part of both our "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign and in our getting ready for our GA 2012 in Arizona which will be a Social Justice GA where immigration will be a major issue.

Other agenda items include plans for an information booth at some of the summer festivals in our area. We will have the opportunity to network about what's happening in our six member congregations.

Come early at 9:00 am for breakfast and conversation.

UU Council Website with information on all our member congregations including directions is at <http://www.cinciuu.org>.

The UU Council is a member of MARCC, and its meetings are open to all UUs. MARCC is an acronym for Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati.

MARCC has two concentrations this year. One is **Homelessness and Affordable Housing**. Many of our Cincinnati area UU Congregations are involved in the ministry of the Interfaith Hospitality Network and other homeless shelter and food bank ministries. Through our membership in MARCC we are also working on this issue at the systemic level because MARCC is participating on a new committee trying to do a better count of families in need and better assess the general needs for homeless families. MARCC has also been involved in the new Jimmy Heath house and several other projects and programs in this area.

MARCC's other concentration is **Immigration**. At the MARCC Delegates Council on May 11 the Judicatories present unanimously agreed to support an Ohio Compact, based loosely on the "Utah Compact", which is a document that sets forth a set of principles for the fair and ethical treatment of immigrants, both documented and undocumented. UU participation has been strong on this issue. Al Gerhardstein, ACLU attorney and member of First Church, was the speaker on May 11 and gave a history of an immigration case he was a part of.

For more information, contact M.J. Pierson at Heritage UU, or call the MARCC office at 513.721.4843.

HELP WANTED

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SUMMER RE

1 or 2 week stints

Our regular classroom teachers need, and deserve, a break! For those of you interested in working with children and/or may be new to RE or just don't have the time for a 9-month commitment, volunteering to teach for a session or two during the summer would be a wonderful gift to our families!!



Our focus for summer RE this year will be on World Travel and Environmental Sustainability—with programming geared to the PreK-4th grade age group. Have you traveled to a foreign country? Do you have an interest in environmental issues? Would you be willing to share your knowledge and adventures with our kids? I hope so!! A “tips sheet” is being developed that will offer recommendations on how to plan a session and additional organizational assistance will be provided.

Contact DRE Elizabeth Wilson at youthre@stjohnsuu.org if interested. A sign-up sheet is now posted on the south wall in Krolfifer.

THE NEWS MUST GO OUT!

Co-editor, The Reporter: With Claire Wagner assuming the post of Board Vice President, she will be giving up her responsibilities as co-editor of the Reporter. Right now, she and Marty Harrington share the Reporter editor duties. This means that each prepares the Reporter content every four weeks; this usually requires 2-3 hours of work on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. If the Reporter is to continue on a regular basis, St. John's needs a volunteer to take over for Claire. This could be your chance to help St. John's! Please contact Claire or Marty to learn more of the details.

Producer, e-News: Also, we are still looking for someone to prepare the e-News each week. Josie is doing this now on an interim basis, but we really need someone to perform the task on a regular basis. The time commitment is minimal. Please contact Josie for the details of the job.

St. John's really needs your help. It is critical to have these communications mechanisms functioning on a regular basis. The Reporter and e-News keep us informed and the church alive. *- Tom Darner, Administrative Council Director*

Ronald McDonald Liaison

We are in need of a family or person who would be willing, when the pop top jar is full to take the pop tops to Ronald McDonald House. If you could or would be willing to once or twice a year run such an errand, see Denise.

From the ffice

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! To the Congregation of St. John's, Members, Friends, Board, Staff, Choir for the wonderful 20 year anniversary celebration you gave to me on Sunday May 15th. The service and proclamation was great, and the special music pieces were beautiful and a big surprise, and the reception was very nice. Thanks to the Religious Exploration Groups (Children's RE and Adult RE) for inviting my family to your breakfast. I wish I could thank every one of you personally. To all the volunteers who over the past 20 years have helped me out - thank you! Too many to mention by name and I don't want to leave anyone out. I would say here's to the next 20, but we (I) know that is not possible. So here's to the next ? and **THANK YOU AGAIN!!!** - *Josie*



I am looking for **volunteer office coverage** for my vacation time for the following days between the hours of 9am-noon to check phone messages and answer phone. **July 5, 6, 12, 13, 14** and **August 10, 11**. If you can help out please call 961-1938 or email office@stjohnsuu.org. I will be glad to show anyone interested the workings of the phone system anytime during my office hours. Just call and let me know you are coming.

Just a reminder that **office Summer Hours** start on Monday June 20th. The office will be closed on Monday and Fridays.

UPDATE FROM THE BOARD ON MINISTRY AT ST. JOHN'S

Rev. Denise will be with us through Sunday, June 19. We will have a coffee hour celebration after the service to send her off to a new challenge. In appreciation for her work with us these past two years, the congregation has contributed to the Partner Church Fund in order to cover expenses for Denise's upcoming trip to Transylvania.

The Worship Arts Committee has lined up a full slate of Sunday speakers throughout the summer.

On May 8 Jack Sherman, Chair of the Settled Search Committee, reported to the congregation that the committee did not have a ministerial candidate to present to us. The same evening we activated our request for an interim minister, which we'd submitted on April 15, the application deadline. The Interim Search is now well underway and we expect to welcome an interim minister in September.

The new Settled Search has just entered its initial planning stage. Our Ministerial Settlement Representative (MSR), The Rev. Barbara Child, will visit with us soon to advise us on how to proceed with this new search process.

Penny Shada, President, Board of Trustees

Update from The Settled Minister Search Committee

Dear Members and Friends of St. John's,

As announced at a recent Sunday service, our search committee has completed its search and has no ministerial candidate to propose. Some may reasonably wonder whether there is something about our church that makes it difficult to attract ministers. The answer is no. We attracted many ministers and chose for pre-candidating those who we thought would be a good fit and would serve St. John's well. Through this experience the committee learned that there are complex circumstances that play into the decisions of candidates over which we have no control and which are unrelated to the desirable qualities of our church. Ministers have many unique reasons for choosing one church and not another.

Throughout this process our committee members came to fully know that we have a great church, with a great history, and we fully believe, a great future. We have no candidate. The search is over. But when one door closes, other doors open. A new search committee will be appointed and, along with the rest of the congregation, our committee will share our experiences, our materials, and give all the support we can.

Thanks to so many of you who helped us during these past two years in so many ways; by completing surveys, and participating in interviews and meetings to help establish priorities for a new minister. Many provided quotes on why they like St. John's, posed for photos, or dug into their stash of photos to help with the packet. Many brought food for our Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop; thank you Men's Group and Choir. Others helped us by providing their special expertise to support our various endeavors. While our appreciation goes out to many, here are some who stand out in our memory:

Josie Arens, Pete Asman, Judy Buxton, Sam Cauffield, Mary and Tom Darner, Krysta December, Carol Fencil, John Fine, LaDonna Fritz, Sandy Geiser, Bill Gordon, Barbara Hadden, Lucas Hergert, Ethel Ingalls, Diane Long, Melanie and Prasanna Malaviya, Melanie Marsh, Jim and Kathryn McDonough, Martha McLeod, Sylvia Mersfelder, Jerry Newfarmer, Rick Prairie, Cathy Roma, Steve Roth, Penny Shada, Karolyn Schalk, Bill Surber, Rev. Joan Schneider, Howard and Nina Tolley, Rev. Denise Tracy, Elizabeth Wilson, and Cynthia and Mauricio Villacis.

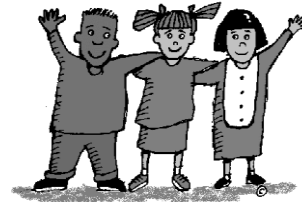
Sincerely,

The Settled Minister Search Committee

Jack Sherman
Jan Hay
Sharon O'Neill
Melissa Orr-Asman
Douglas Striker
Manuel Susarret

RE-flecti☺ns

By Elizabeth Wilson
St. John's Director of Religious Exploration



WOW, it's hard to believe our regular 2010-11 RE programming year is coming to a close! I am truly grateful for the support our program has received from the board and the entire congregation—and particularly from Rev. Tracy, the RE Committee, our awesome RE teachers and classroom helpers, and of course, our kids.

Too often I find myself spending time thinking about what didn't get done instead of celebrating what DID happen. I'm really proud of a number of accomplishments this year—trying out some new and exciting curricula at every age level; the collaboration between YRUU & YADA to renovate and refurbish the Wells room; the service projects each RE class accomplished (truly awesome!!); providing another enriching OWL experience for our 7th-9th graders; improving safety measures (including mandatory RE registration and revised emergency evacuation procedures and signage); another creative and inspiring worship service provided by our YRUU group; and several projects and social activities that created and/or encouraged multigenerational interactions.

At our Teacher Appreciation breakfast on May 15, we not only celebrated the year, but discussed and identified important ways we can improve our RE programs. So we'll keep thinking about how to make things better—tweaking what works, as well as looking for new opportunities!! I welcome and encourage feedback from not only parents, but kids and other congregants as well. Our program will struggle to address deficiencies if we're not clear about what they are.

THANK YOU.S . . .

- to all of the wonderful folks who contributed valuable labor and delicious food to our RE breakfast (your contributions were deeply appreciated and the breakfast was a great success!)—and especially to Beth Molinaro, who served as breakfast coordinator;
- to the 17 amazing adults who provided leadership in our RE classrooms and with childcare throughout the past year; and
- to EVERYONE who provided support to our RE program—in both big and little ways—to make this year a success!!

Upcoming Schedule

May 22: Last Sunday of regular RE year.

May 29: Memorial Day weekend. RE programming, led by Connie Prairie, for grades PreK-4th grade in Rosa Parks.

June 5: Summer RE officially begins. Programming for grades PreK-4th in Rosa Parks (older kids welcome to participate or serve as assistants).

Got suggestions? Send me an email (youthre@stjohnsuu.org) or give me a call (961-1940). My office hours are Tu/Thu from 9:00am-2:00pm.

St. John's Church Calendar

Sunday, May 22

*New Member Sunday – shake someone's hand

10:00am Forum – The Answer to How is Why

11:00am Final Sunday of 2010-11 RE Year

11:00am Sunday service

12:30pm **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Tuesday, May 24

10:00am Yoga

7:00pm LDC Leadership Development Council

Wednesday, May 25

7:00pm Caring Circle

Thursday, May 26

10:00am Meditation

6:00pm Tai Chi

7:00pm No Choir Rehearsal

Friday, May 27

7:00am Office Closed (Josie on vacation)

7:00pm Game Night

Saturday, May 28

10:00am Worship Arts Group

Sunday, May 29

10:00am Forum: Honoring Those Who Served

11:00am Service Time

12:30pm Go Group (Board Game)

Monday, May 30

7:00am Memorial Day - Office Closed

Tuesday, May 31

10:00am Yoga

6:30pm OWL coordinators

Wednesday, June 1

7:00pm Chalice Group Darner

7:00pm Membership

Thursday, June 2

10:00am Meditation

5:00pm **REPORTER DEADLINE**

6:00pm Tai Chi

7:00pm Choir

Sunday, June 5

10:00am Forum: Bring Back the Lash

11:00am Service Time

12:30pm Go Group (Board Game)

12:30pm Music Committee

6:00pm Men's Group

Tuesday, June 7

10:00am Yoga

7:00pm YADA

7:00pm Book Group (Nina)

Wednesday, June 8

10:00am Chalice Group Hadden

7:00pm Chalice Group McDonough

Thursday, June 9

10:00am Meditation

6:00pm Tai Chi

7:00pm Choir

Saturday, June 11

10:30am Chalice Group (Nunn)

6:30pm Taste Event at the Prairie's

Sunday, June 12

10:00am Sunday Morning Forum

11:00am Service Time

12:30pm Go Group (Board Game)

6:00pm MUSE Finance Board

7:30pm Men's Martian Meeting

Monday, June 13

6:00pm MUSE BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, June 14

10:00am Yoga

7:00pm Chalice Group - Strong

Wednesday, June 15

6:30pm Board Meeting

Thursday, June 16

10:00am Meditation

5:00pm **REPORTER DEADLINE**

7:00pm Choir

Friday, June 17

7:00pm Interweave Potluck Movie

Saturday, June 18

10:00am Chalice Group Facilitators

6:00pm Taste Event at the Nichols'

Sunday, June 19

10:00am Sunday Morning Forum

11:00am Service Time

12:15pm Coffee Hour Reception for Denise

12:30pm Go Group (Board Game)

Monday, June 20

7:00am Start Summer Office Hours

(closed Monday & Friday)

Thoughts of the Week

"We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures." ~ *Thornton Wilder*

"Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others." ~ *Cicero*