

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

*The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Salem, Oregon
February 7, 2007*



In this Issue

UUCS Finances & Coming Canvass	1
Reverential Ramblings	2
Religious Education News	3
Thoughts From the Board Chair	4
PNWD, Certification, Chamber Music and UUCS Finances	5
Retreat, Donations, Addiction Minis- try, Readers Forum, Community	6
Calendar	7
Sermon topics	8

UUCS Finances and the Coming Canvass

The main reason to have an annual canvass is obviously to raise money for the UUCS Operating Fund to keep our beloved church running. Stewardship moments in our Sunday services and other newsletter articles focus on inspiration and on the spiritual benefits to each of us of being generous to our church. I believe in those quite strongly, and ask you to open *your* hearts to them. But my assignment in this newsletter article is to present some of the financial facts.

The church's Operating Fund pays the operating expenses of the church; duh! These include salaries, utilities, dues to the UUA and its Pacific Northwest

District, supplies, and smaller expenses. This year the budget for those expenses is \$257,497. Some of that comes from the plate collection, rental income, and investment income. But \$224,312 must come from our payments on the pledges we made last spring. Because some people don't fulfill their pledges, that's the amount we estimate we will actually realize from our pledges of \$249,000.

The pledge income for the current year had to be substantially larger than for the previous year, because this year the Operating Fund has to make our mortgage payments. Until last summer, the mortgage payments for Hanneman Hall were made from the capital fund – separate pledges toward that project. The capital campaign that fed the capital fund ended in June 2006. It wasn't easy for us to increase our annual pledges to cover those mortgage payments, but in response to a challenge from Elsa and me, you *did* raise another \$20,000 which we matched with our own \$5000 to reach an operating budget that met our responsibilities.

Covering the mortgage payments was not a one-time event! We must continue them another nine years or so until the mortgage is paid off. So the amount raised by the challenge pledges must be continued in the pledges for the coming year. Elsa and I have included our \$5000 challenge match in our pledge for the coming year; the church needs the rest of us to do the same!

(Continued on page 5)

This issue was edited by Lois Nodland. NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 11:30 a.m., February 18, 2007. Send news to loisnod@comcast.net AND gstruble@willamette.edu, put it in workroom newsletter "mailbox," or mail it (marked "newsletter") to church.

Reverential Ramblings

Early in the 19th century the first American Unitarians courageously went where their honest convictions led them, even though this meant going beyond sanctioned theological boundaries into the forbidden region known as “HERESY.”

Many in this first generation of Unitarians naively thought that they could stake out a comfortable corner of this new theological region which was still relatively close to conventional religious faith, and that everyone would live happily ever after. Soon, however, advancing biblical scholarship, scientific discoveries, fresh currents of philosophical thought from Europe, and ancient religious teachings from Asia enticed the next generation of Unitarians to wander much deeper into the region of heresy.

Now the old guard Unitarians were mightily vexed by these developments and accused the younger generation of indulging in dangerous heresies. Those hurling these accusations surely must have been troubled by the irony of this situation, since they had once borne the brunt of such barbs themselves. Fortunately, the Old Guard did not utterly condemn the New Guard, and a schism was avoided.

Yet through much of the 19th Century, Unitarians were often engaged in heated internal theological debates about such questions as whether Unitarianism was a Christian religion or a Universal religion or even a religion at all. They argued because, as everyone knew, a religious movement had to have a common creed, a unifying belief system upon which everyone could agree.

No matter how passionately they argued, they could never get to that promised land of a common creed. Indeed, the longer they debated, the more it receded from view. Finally, it dawned upon them: they never would achieve theological consensus. Typically in the history of religious movements when there is such an impasse, the next step is to split into smaller sects. But in 1894 at their National Conference the Unitarians decided instead to become a movement unified not by a creed but by “spirit and practical aims.” Once again, a schism was avoided. Over the years various statements have expressed our common spirit and practical aims. In 1986 we ratified our current version of our Principles and Purposes (printed on every Order of Service). It’s not a creed, but a covenantal affirmation of the values we share and a naming of the sources of our faith. They are a marvelous piece of work, collectively crafted through a participatory process involving thousands.

Now, according to the bylaws of our Association, the time has come to discuss possible changes to this covenant.

Personally, I think that some new insights and developments in the world call for modest changes in this covenant. Some examples: Our congregation has championed the inclusion of “Art” as a seventh source of our faith. Our fifth principle speaks of western style democracy as though this should be universally embraced, yet in light of recent developments, some think we should find a way to affirm the value of consensual governance without such a cultural bias. My good friend and colleague, the Rev. Craig Moro, believes that the wording of the fourth source – “Jewish and Christian teachings” – should be named “Abrahamic faiths” to include the Islamic tradition.

Who knows where we will end up with all of this? I don’t know. Once you start such a journey as our forbears did so long ago, there is no telling exactly where it will lead, but I do have faith it will lead to a place of deeper wisdom and understanding.

Love, Rick

PS. – Look for an announcement about this in our next newsletter.



LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem

February 7, 2007

Lise's Letter

The first thing I want to do is thank our Associate DRE, Mark Babson, and our fabulous RE Team, Beth Malouf, Christine Deblock, Vicki Cunningham and Micky Logan for doing such a great job while I was gone. Thank you, too, to all of those who helped them--it was nice to be able to study worry-free while I was in Chicago last month.

While in Chicago, one of the things I did was attend a presentation about the UU *Sankofa Project Archives* (uusankofa.org). The word *Sankofa* is a West African Akan concept, which means going back to reclaim one's past in order to better understand how we became who we are today. The project does this by researching, collecting, and documenting information about UU ministers and lay leaders of color. During the presentation we saw a slide show with mini-bios of many of our current lay and ministerial leaders of color. I was quite excited about this project because one of my goals for this spring is for our congregation to rename two of our RE classrooms after people of color in our movement. In recent decades, we have been much better about acknowledging women in our movement, now thanks to efforts like the *Sankofa Project* we can more easily highlight and commend other rich aspects of our diversity. What follows below is information provided by the *Sankofa Project Archives*.

Marcella Walker McGee was one of three children of George Walker, Sr. and Maud Bush Walker, a comfortable African-American family. Marcella was born July 23, 1904. Walker was christened at the Congregational Church and attended Sunday School at the Ethical Culture Society where her parents were members. Marcella later married Lewis Allen McGee, an African Methodist Episcopal minister, in 1945. Lewis completed his studies at Meadville Theological School, but was informed he would have to form his own church since no white Unitarian church would call an African American minister. So Lewis, Marcella and a friend formed an interracial group in South Chicago, and named it the Free Religious Fellowship. Within the year the congregation had greatly grown and they received the full support and funding of the American Unitarian Association and Unitarians in Chicago. Much of the Fellowship's success was due to Marcella. She created numerous groups and activities, including a choir, study groups and of course a women's group. In 1960 Marcella was elected to the continental board of the joint Alliance of Unitarian Women and the Association of Universalist Women. She was instrumental in bringing the two women's groups together for consolidation in 1961. The two groups merged and became the UUWF [UU Women's Federation] in 1962. Marcella died on May 28, 1997.

Religious Education Dates To Note

Adult Thurs. Feb. 8 – Feldenkreis class starts, a body-mind movement course. Contact Mark Babson for more information.

Youth Mon. Feb. 12 – High school youth group 7-9 p.m., meets every Monday. For info. call advisor Todd Logan or Ben Nicholson-Nelson.

Older Child/Adult Thurs. Feb. 15 – Dances of Universal Peace, third Thurs. of the month. See Sunday Bulletin or talk to Pam Pritchard for more information.

Child/Youth Sun. Feb. 25 – As part of Inspiration Sunday, RE classes will focus on what's important and how to be good stewards to our congregation and community.

Director of Religious Education: Lise Adams Sherry

Office Hours: Mon. 2:00-6:00 PM, Wed. 9:30-1:30 PM
503/364-0932

Associate Director of Religious Education: Mark Babson

Thoughts from the Board Chair

Gratitude

One January Sunday we arrived at church at about 10:25, to find a full parking lot. I was surprised, and glad that we still had time to park across the street and then make it to our seats by 10:30. I was pleased to see so many people at church. I like coming to church on Sundays, and I'm glad that others do as well.

We found our seats in time to enjoy the last few minutes of the prelude. As it was the first Sunday of the Month, the children were present. Mark Babson, our Associate Director of Religious Education, called the children forward and reflected on the signs of winter that he had been noticing. He spoke of raccoons and fluffed up birds and tiny plants that poke up out of the ground to assess whether it is time to come up yet. His words reminded the adults that periodically we too go inward, which allows us to tend to our deepest selves. I found myself feeling grateful for the images that Mark provided.

Chuck Howard was the celebrant that day, and he also shared words that I found inspirational. The reading that he chose spoke of wind and kites and string. The imagery addressed the challenges that we encounter in life, over which we often don't have much control. Yet we can embrace the uncertainty with confidence if we maintain our connections with others. I felt a deep sense of gratitude that I have this community, UUCS, which helps me dare to take risks, but also keeps me grounded and connected.

I almost always find Rick's sermons to be at least interesting and informational, and usually I find them to be inspiring. That Sunday I found myself looking around for visitors, because this was a sermon that I wanted to be heard. It was GREAT. Rick spoke of "faith" in a very broad way. He helped us to recognize that we all have "faith" in something. There are values and principles that each of us adhere to, that shape our lives. He also challenged us, through a lovely little Sufi story, not only to do our spiritual seeking in ways that are comfortable, but also to push ourselves. To take risks. I was thankful for the nudge, and found myself sharing the Sufi story with a dear friend the following Tuesday. I felt truly blessed by Rick's ability to find ways to draw us together and inspire us to be willing and courageous seekers.

While listening to the choir during the offertory I found myself looking out the windows that frame our stained glass. If you sit in the right part of the sanctuary there is a tall fir tree that seems to pass right through the stack of windows to the right. Often the tree is gently swaying in the wind. I'm pretty sure that this building was not so carefully placed on the lot as to make that particular tree line up perfectly, but I do know that this building was designed so that the beauty of the natural world would be a part of our Sunday morning services. I always find myself breathing more deeply, and feeling more relaxed when I take a few moments to notice the swaying branches in the tops of those trees. For that I am grateful.

During the candles of celebration and concern, Kristen and Bruce Hunt stood to share some good news, and I noticed that they were both wearing clothes made of lovely golden, brown fabrics. In my head I thought, "Hey, they match!" Down the row, Jill Baker said it out loud (quietly of course). I looked over at her and we laughed. I delight in the affection and humor among the folks that I encounter at church each week.

How can I not want to be a good steward of UUCS? I am moved by a profound sense of gratitude to contribute of my time, my energy and my resources.

With Thanks,
Diana

(Note: This article, based on Diana's Stewardship Moment, had to be postponed from the last issue)

PNWD Annual Meeting

Leaving soon for the annual District meeting in Boise February 16-18 will be delegates Rick Davis, Ellen and Chuck Howard, Roger Gillette, and Phil Carver (not Phil Cogswell, as was stated in the last issue).

Fabulous!

Every PNWD congregation has certified their membership with the UUA. This means every one of our congregations is entitled to full delegate representation at June's UUA General Assembly in Portland. What a treat it would be to have representatives from all sixty of our congregations at this major UU gathering!

On behalf of the district staff, board and UUA trustee, thank you for taking the time to

complete the UUA's annual online certification process.

*Diane Brinstone, District Administrator
Pacific Northwest District (PNWD), UUA*

Chamber Music Concert

Mark your calendar! Great Music for a Great Cause. On **Sunday, March 11 at 3:00 p.m.** our congregation is sponsoring our Second Annual Chamber Music Concert to support the musical educations of gifted youth from financially challenged families. Our own Loraine Stuart will play Chopin and Noah Seitz and Sara Greenleaf Seitz will play Brahms. You can also hear the Oregon Trio, play Ravel and the Waller String Quartet, Schubert. The Women's Alliance will host a reception and the winner of the Classical Music Trivia Quiz will take home a special CD. Suggested donation: \$10.00.

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(Continued from page 1) UUCS Finances and the Coming Canvass

At the end of the canvass, the UUCS Budget Committee will develop a budget for the Operating Fund for 2007-2008. The budget they draft will be presented to the Board of Directors and then to the Congregation for approval.

What kind of budget might we have? If the pledges reach about \$240,000 (that's *lower* than this year's total but still higher than the total without challenge pledges), we can have a "hang on by our fingernails" budget that could squeak through the year. It would be depressing, but we could do it if we had to. With about \$254,000 in pledges, we could operate about as we have been, meeting our responsibilities and recognizing our staff's good work with a cost-of-living increase. Another \$20,000 would give us opportunities to fund some new initiatives; imagine the possibilities!

UUCS has about 240 pledging households and the average 2006-2007 pledge is about \$1000. Some can't afford that; I believe all of us have been in that situation sometime. Therefore we must count on those who *can* pay more to do so. Our pledges range from around \$100 (that's the minimum to cover out-of-pocket costs: UUA and PNWD dues + newsletter; a pledge less than \$100 is a net loss!) to \$15,000. Think about where *you* belong in this range! You will soon receive the UUA "Fair Share Giving Guide" to consider in making your pledge.

Clear as mud? I hope this introduction is better than that; if for you it isn't, ask more questions of Board members or those involved in the finances – especially including me after my return from New Zealand!

And then make your pledge for the coming year large enough to give you the satisfaction of knowing you are doing what *you* can to keep our Congregation an exciting, vibrant community!

George Struble

Women's Retreat

Registration forms for the 2007 Women's Retreat are available in the Fellowship Hall. Registration closes March 4. The retreat will take place **March 16-18** at The Cedars which is near Oregon City. If you would like to help plan the theme and structure for some activities at this event, please contact Christine Deblock.

Annual Contribution Report

Thanks very much for your generous donations. As the chart below indicates, HOAP received an increase in contributions of major proportions, while the food and cash categories remain about the same, with minor decreases.

Year	2005	2006	% change
Food	2,152 lb.	2,012 lb.	6.9% (-)
Cash	\$802.00	\$761.00	5.3% (-)
HOAP*	\$314.00	\$760.00	242% (+)

*(Toiletries & clothes = cash equivalent)

*Dick Boyle,
Social Action Team*

Ongoing UUCS Events

Addiction Recovery Ministry

This group, a follow-up to Rick's December 3 sermon, plans to meet first and third Monday evenings. Contact John Roy Wilson for information.

Readers Forum

Our **Sunday** morning book discussion group, the Reader's Forum, continues to be at **9:15 a.m.** Please join us before church in Hanne-man Fellowship Hall for coffee and conversation. The new book being discussed beginning February 18 is Donald Rothberg's *The Engaged Spiritual Life: A Buddhist Approach to Transforming Ourselves and the World*, a Beacon Press Book.

Our book *Global Values 101: A Short Course* has one more discussion on **February 11: Distance and Proximity**.

Don Wolf

UUCS Community News

Thanks to a grant from the Children's Theater Foundation, **Nicholas Brownson, son of Cherie Ulmer** and a freshman at South Salem High School, was hired to assist with an original play, 'The Dance,' produced recently at Judson Middle School. Nicholas composed techno-computerized music for the production and video-taped a professional quality DVD that the students and others can order.

Miles Brownson played music with other artists last week at Lefty's Pizza, with all proceeds benefiting AIDS research.

Congratulations to **Dennis Ehrp**, appointed to the new position of Director of Parts and Service Logistics at Power Yamaha in Sublimity!

Noah Seitz has just moved to full-time professional music, teaching cello students from beginners to advanced. His pianist wife, **Sarah Greenleaf Seitz**, also has a teaching studio in their Salem home.

Christi Olsen is trying to help Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary, which supports abused and neglected farm animals, raise money to buy a larger farm.

Former UUCS members **Wilson and Barbara Wyant** relocated last year to Bothell, WA, motivated by its proximity to their family, especially their grandson Collin. They are finding the Bothell area "a veritable Mecca for old folks, with an impressive senior center and services" and feel that they fit nicely in the suburb which has "consciously decided to go geriatric!"

UUCS member **Lee Coyne** has addressed the Salem Human Rights and Relations Commission on the subject of size discrimination in employment and educational opportunities, citing laws in other states protecting its citizens. His position is that where such discrimination exists it must be resisted, based upon our UU principles on human dignity.

Diana Fowlds is recuperating from hip replacement surgery.

Some UUCS members seeking respite from the cold of winter are en route south.

George Struble will travel outside the hemisphere for three weeks, hiking on the Coromandel Peninsula and the Tongaririo Crossing on New Zealand's North Island as well as the Copland, Routeburn, and Caples tracks on the South Island. He will be accompanied by son Andy and several local Che-meketans (Salem's popular hiking group).

Marge and Dick French and **Pam and Ernie Williams** will spend three weeks in central Mexico in Guadalajara State, the Lake Chapala region where UUCS member **Donna Canning** typically spends her winters. After recuperating from major surgery she was sufficiently healthy to leave Salem last week, with plans to return once again next spring.

Ken and I left Sunday night for a several days' stay in Ciudad Mexico to visit its spectacular pyramids and the major anthropological museum housing the most significant artifacts from historic sites throughout the country and then on to Oaxaca, continuing our interest in the country's phenomenal historic past. Time and energy permitting we'll continue westward to the coast and its warm waters, returning home on the 16th.

News to share? Please send me e-mail for the next newsletter or contact Elsa Struble, who will be editing that issue.

Sharing and caring for one another is an essential element in our community.

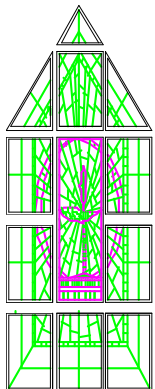
Joan Erickson

JustWorks Camp, Clinton, OK

On **March 18-24**, the UU Service Committee JustWorks Camp will be in Clinton, OK. Join 15 adults (18 and older) for a work camp at the first burial site being completed for "unidentified" Native American ancestral remains. This project is part of a national effort by "Return to the Earth" to repatriate (return) and honorably bury those remains from museum and other institutions that have no records that identify them by tribe or location.

Participants at camp will be planting native plants, painting fences and buildings, building trails, and doing data entry. There is a strong educational component to this week, with presentations by tribal leaders on the history and culture of the Cheyenne people, and the repatriation efforts of tribes nationally. It will include field trips and evening sessions with artists and native plant specialists. Go to www.uusc.org for application forms.

Bellingham, WA Unitarian Fellowship initiated this work camp. Contact Beth Brownfield bethbrownf@aol.com for a weekly schedule



UUCS Calendar

Wednesday, Feb 7

Introduction to Meditation, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, Feb 8

Chat 'n' Craft, 7:00 p.m. Info: Kate Walker

Adult RE Class, Feldenkrais Intro, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, Feb 10

Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m. (Everyone welcome)

Confluence Choir Auction and Concert, 3:00 – 9 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 11

Work party, 10 a.m. - noon

Readers' Forum, 9:15 a.m. (every Sunday)

Team Council, 12:15 after service

Monday, Feb 12

YRUU Meeting, 7 - 9 p.m. (every Monday)

Wednesday, Feb 14

UUCS Meditation, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, Feb 15

Dances of Universal Peace, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Feb 17

Landscape Work Party

Wednesday, Feb 21

Chat 'n' Craft, 7:00 p.m.

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THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

February 7, 2007

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Associate DRE: Mark Babson

Board Chair: Diana Nicholson-Nelson

Office Administrator: Rose Drake

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Website: www.uusalem.org

SUNDAY SERVICE AND CHURCH SCHOOL

10:30 a.m. (Child Care Available)

February 11

“Little Rock”

The Reverend Kate Rohde

In honor of Black History Month, Rev. Rohde will present an account of the human cost of this historical event that changed our country and will reflect on its message for us today. Rev. Rohde grew up in the UU congregation in Corvallis and has served UU congregations in Georgia, British Columbia, Pennsylvania, Florida and, currently, California.

February 18

“Role of Faith in Our Black Community”

Sheryl Dash

Sheryl is president of the Salem Chapter, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). February is black history month.

February 25

"Pass It On"

Kate Lore, Intern Minister

The Reverend Richard Davis

Have you ever benefited from a random act of kindness or generosity? These simple gestures can have a profound impact on us, especially when we make the commitment to "pass it on." In this way, kindness and generosity become acts of resistance in a world that exalts individualism and greed.

We welcome Kate back to the pulpit on Inspiration Sunday. Plan to stay for dessert!