



The Latitudinarian

The Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Brazos Valley

REFLECTIONS BY REV. ERIC POSA

MARCH 2010

Mark Your Calendars!

- Thurs., March 4, 7:00pm— Social Justice Committee Mtg
- Sat., March 6, 7:00pm— Contradance
- Sun., March 7, 12:00pm— RE Committee Mtg
- Wed., March 10, 7:00pm— UU Drum Circle
- Thurs., March 11, 7:00pm— UUCBV Board Mtg
- Sat., March 13, 12:00pm— Chick Flicks
- Sat., March 13, 6:00pm— Canvass Potluck Dinner
- Sun., March 14, 12:00pm— Worship Committee Mtg
- Thurs., March 18, 7:00pm— Finance Committee Meeting
- Sat., March 20, 9:00am— Spring Cleaning Work Party
- Sat., March 20, 9:30am— Church Pantry
- Sun., March 21, Newcomers' Meeting (following service)
- Sun., March 21, 12:00pm— Canvass Potluck Luncheon
- Sun., March 28, 12:00pm— Canvass Potluck Luncheon

Monthly Theme – March:

We covenant with one another to offer our individual talents and resources, to be honest about what we can and cannot do. (from church covenant statement)

Generosity

Giving is about our values. When we give generously to someone or something, we are expressing the value it has for us. Think of people who have *not* given you gifts (when you expected they would). Were those people who valued you, valued your presence in their lives? Likewise, think of those who surprised you with unexpected gifts – or, with unexpectedly lavish or meaningful gifts – when you did not realize how well they thought of you? Sometimes there are other reasons for these discrepancies, but often, these are signs that the gift-giver felt differently about us than we thought.

Giving to the church should be similar. Our giving to the church is an expression of the value it has for us. It is also a means to help the church live out that value. We also can think about new ways to express that value, new ways to make decisions about our giving. Some are giving all we can; we value those gifts, regardless of their amounts. Some can give more, within their financial means; even more than they realize they can. I'll suggest a possible means for deciding how much to pledge that may surprise you, though it's the criteria I've used for myself since I began pledging here – tithing.

Some of us had bad experiences

with churches that labeled *not* tithing as sinful. This guilt and shaming is NOT our way. But thinking of one-tenth of our income as set aside to give, according to our values – whether or not a tithe is expected – is good, in and of itself. I practice a variation of this ancient tradition with its own, appealing name among church consultants: the “liberal tithe.” Put simply, one gives half of her or his tithe (5% of one’s income) to the church, and the other half (another 5%) is divided among the other charitable giving.

I was not ready at first for this level of giving. But I set the goal of increasing my giving by 1% of my income per year. This coming year, 2010-2011, I will reach that 5% giving to the church, the community which supports me in the greatest number of areas of my life. (In future years here, I will increase my giving to other good causes, whose impact on me is important, but more limited than that of the church.)

I commend to you the value this goal has had for me. I do not expect everyone to pledge 5% of their income this year, but I invite you to reflect on how a goal like this might be achievable for you, in 3 or 4 years. I have felt better about my connection to the church – not just as its minister, but as a member – as my pledge has increased. I hope all of you can explore similar ways of giving, that enrich your spiritual life by expressing your values, this year and in years to come. *See you in church!*

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

- March 7 “Creating a Spiritual Life”
- March 14 “The Limits of Reason” (guest sermon by Kristin Grassel)
- March 21 “How Liberal Theology Can Save the World”
- March 28 “Advancing Economic Justice” (UU Service Committee’s Justice Sunday)

9:30 am Religious Education

10:30am Service · Join Us for Coffee Hour After Service

PRESIDENT'S CORNER BY ROB MCGEACHIN

Once again, it is time for the annual pledge canvass and stewardship drive, which this spring is officially kicked off at the Sunday service on February 28th. If our congregation is going to realize its potential as a beacon of liberal religion in the Brazos Valley, it is imperative that we continue to raise our pledging level. A successful canvass is necessary to maintain a healthy growing congregation and a thriving religious education program, and to continue to spread the good word of liberal religion in the B/CS community.

I have personally found that I derive a great deal of satisfaction from being able to generously give back to our community/nation/world what all together adds up to at least the traditional "tithe". About 5% is donated as a pledge to the UUCBV, and in addition to the pledge, donations to the "Split-the-plate" offerings and to other special funds for the Church amounting to another 2%. Through the State Employee Charitable Campaign (United Way) another 3% as a payroll deduction split among eight local and national charities, including the UUSC. And throughout the year whenever I pass a Salvation Army bell-ringer, Girl Scouts with cookie sales, or Boy Scouts with popcorn, etc. outside a store I always get a kick out of the joyful reaction to just giving

them a \$20 donation. And I also make annual donations to a list far too long to mention of environmental, alumni, and "drinking water and hunger" developmental organizations. So all together I am doing a "liberal tithe" of at least 10% of gross income to charities with a full 5 to 7% to the Church.

I urge you to commit, to the full extent that you are able, your financial support, time and talents to the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Brazos Valley. **Please give until it makes you feel good!**

BOARD BRIEFS BY LISA PETERSON, BOARD SECRETARY

At its regular monthly meeting, the Board of Trustees took the following official actions:

- Voted to sponsor Cindy Harmon-Jones as a candidate for the Music Leadership Credentialing Program and include money in the budget to cover expenses related to the program.

Other business discussed by the Board included:

- The formation of an ad hoc committee to work on the public broadcasting underwriting fund .

MINISTRY NOTES

Adult Religious Education: We continue the *Spirit in Practice* curriculum at our 9:30 AM Sunday Adult RE sessions in the church's Jesse Coon Room. You need not have attended previous sessions to join us. This month we focus on "Soul Practices," which explore the connection between spirituality and creativity:

- Feb. 7: The Story of a Painter; Ways You Are Creative
- Feb. 14: NO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (for children or adults)
- Feb. 21: The Way of the Artist
- Feb. 28: Creativity Stations

Split-the-Plate: On the second Sunday of the month, March 14, we will once again Split the Plate, sharing our offering with a worthy charity in our Brazos Valley community. This month, we will split or plate with the Brazos Animal Shelter. Please come and give generously.

Stewardship Dinners: As always, March is our Stewardship month, when we ask our members to explore their commitment to the church, and make their financial commitment for the upcoming year. We are streamlining the dates later in the month, and moving these dinners to the church, to accommodate as many people as possible:

- Sat., March 13 (evening - supper)
- Sun., March 21 (after worship - lunch)
- Sun., March 28 (after worship - lunch)

We invite members to sign up for a canvass dinner; if you have not yet signed up for a dinner, please do so after worship on Sunday, March 7, or contact one of our finance co-chairs.

Exploring Leadership re-scheduled: The workshop on Exploring Leadership, originally scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 27, was postponed to accommodate the re-scheduled Conversations on Religious Education. The Leadership event will take place on Saturday, April 10, 10 AM – Noon. All church leaders, prospective leaders, and interested members & friends are welcome; contact Rev. Eric Posa for more information.

Newcomers Meeting: Are you ready to become a member of our church? Or are you thinking about becoming a member, but you have questions? Or perhaps you're a new visitor or "friend" to our church, and simply want to learn more about us? We strongly encourage you to attend our Newcomers' meeting on Sunday, March 21, following worship. There will also be a stewardship dinner at that time; the organizers have graciously invited us to join them for lunch, before we begin our discussion in another room. We will provide childcare if you RSVP your need for it by March 14. Hope to see you there!

BOARD LEADERSHIP

Board of Trustees:

Rob McGeachin (rmcgeach@lib-gw.tamu.edu) President
Harriet Smith (harriet@deancode.com).....President-elect
John Ivy (johnivy@tamu.edu)..... Past President
Lisa Peterson (lisaspeterson@gmail.com) Secretary
Gaye Webb (angels@hal-pc.org) Treasurer

At-Large Trustees:

- Martha Scott (mlrscott@aol.com) • Steve Wikse (bonniewikse@verizon.net)
- David Pate (tamuaviator@msn.com) • Pat Childress (pachildress@verizon.net)

CELEBRATIONS AND MEMORIALS BY GAYE WEBB

Many thanks to the following people for their generous contributions:

- Ken and Kathy Appelt in celebration of their wedding anniversary.
- The Witherspoons, also celebrating their wedding.
- Sonja Allbritton, in honor of her birthday celebration.

A special "thank you" goes out to all members and friends of our congregation who have contributed to other charitable organizations through our "Split the Plate" Sunday offerings and other special collections. Since September 2009, the congregation has made donations to the following organizations as a result of your generosity in living out our Mission of Making Meaning, Making Connections, and Making a Difference:

Through our "Split the Plate" Sunday Offerings:

- Twin City Missions = \$218.00
- Planned Parenthood = \$250.50
- Phoebe's Home = \$311.50
- Habitat for Humanity = \$599*
- Brazos Church Pantry = \$192.50
- Brazos Valley African—American Museum = \$142.00

Through other efforts:

- UNICEF = \$701.28
- Guest at Your Table (UU Services Committee): \$166.45
- Haiti Relief = \$258

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Habitat for Humanity was the first organization to receive Split the Plate funds; the contributed amount includes a generous matching donation from the Social Justice committee.

THANK YOU!

Gaye Webb, Treasurer.

Congratulations to you all on achieving these important milestones, and thank you for including your church in your recognition of these very special occasions

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Mary Ellen Pate (mepatenp@hotmail.com)Chair, Caring Committee
Kathi Appelt (kcappelt@verizon.net)Chair, Finance Committee
Kathy Wheeler (khmwdvm@aol.com)Chair, Finance Committee
Katie Womack (kwomack@tamu.edu)Chair, Membership Committee
Sue Bloomfield (sbloom52@gmail.com)Chair, Committee on Ministry
Ken Appelt (klappelt@verizon.net).....Chair, Property Committee
Lisa Cairns (lcairns@alumni.uchicago.edu).....Chair, Religious Education Committee
Mark Abel (mabel97@yahoo.com)Chair, Social Justice Committee
Carolyn Clark (cclark@tamu.edu)Chair, Worship Committee
Martha Scott (mlrscott@aol.com)President, UU Women's Federation

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS BY THE CARING COMMITTEE

February is almost over, and it's just about time to prune and plant again. The Caring Committee wishes all of you the best as winter begins to wane and spring is in the air (some days more than others, perhaps....)

Here are some of the joys of February:

The Witherspoons celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary.

Lauralee Phillips has retired after 26 years with Texas A&M University.

Sally and Robert Koestler are pleased with their son's recovery from brain surgery a year ago.

Linda Causey completed the Miracle Match Marathon—to support potential bone marrow matching—in Waco in 4 hours and 41 min. She finished 4th in her age category.

Some concerns for February:

Nancy Granovsky had appendicitis, which joyfully was cured with antibiotics.

Lenni Lissberger's son and wife were injured in a serious auto accident.

Sue Bloomfield's nephew Allen Lee is still in the midst of his cancer recovery.

Judy McCoy's mother passed away.

If we've forgotten anyone, please know that we are always thinking of all of you. Let us know if you need anything.

The Caring Committee asks that you please take the time this month to up-

date your "In Case of Emergency" form if necessary. We would like to be sure we have the most current information for every family.

The forms can be found at the church entrance on the big table.

The Caring Committee
By Pat Childress

The Caring Committee:

Mary Ellen Pate (Chair), 696-6142

Rev. Eric Posa, 209-4019

Pat Childress, 690-8613

Carolyn Clark, 823-0676

Judy Hart, 764-7866

Sonja Allbritton, 693-7584

Lauralee Phillips, 220-5645

Joe Castiglioni, 690-0640

Carole Johnson, 690-6561

Social Justice Committee by Mark Abel

The Social Justice Committee would like to thank everyone involved in the Second Annual Harmony Peace Concert: performers, planners and those able to be there. The event was a superlative experience. There were 275 people in attendance, enjoying food, music and the shared value of the desire for peace held by the world's diverse faiths and cultures. We are especially grateful to the Hindu Society of the Brazos Valley who graciously hosted the event at their beautiful facilities at the Shri Omkarnath Temple. Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

We'd also like to thank Harriet Smith for bringing to our attention Texas A&M's Social Justice Week during the first week of February. Films and lectures ranged in topic from race, citizenship, diversity and volunteerism ending with a food and clothing drive.

We hope you were also able to see the February community screening of "Call+Response", a documentary on human trafficking and modern day slavery.

Again, we are proud and grateful to those who volunteered at the Church Pantry. The Social Justice Committee is glad to provide this volunteering opportunity to everyone in the congregation every third Saturday of each month. I find it a privilege to help feed those members of our community that would otherwise go without food.

Every Spring Break, Habitat for Humanity organizes an "Alternative Spring Break". Thousands of high schoolers and undergraduates are invited to spend their break volunteering at Habitat sites. Each year, the Social Justice Committee puts together "Welcome Baskets" using funds from its "Change for Change" Fund, generously provided by the members of the church.

Facing rising shipping costs, we have voted to raise prices for the Equal Exchange products we sell every Sunday during Coffee Hour. This was done in order to continue helping the mission and pursuits of the Social Justice Committee. Tea prices will remain the same while chocolate will go up to five dollars per bar and coffee will go up to twelve dollars a bag. We look forward to your continued support of fair trade and sustainable agriculture.

While the church missed out on hearing Lenni Lissberger in February, due to a family emergency, our thoughts and prayers have been with her. We do look forward to having her speak at the church as a soon as possible; sharing on her ministry to the spiritual need of the local homeless population. The Social Justice Committee is also setting up another volunteer opportunity via Lenni's ministry to allow members to put their faith and values into action.

Yes, I made the Social Justice Committee, in January, come up with New Years Resolutions—a bit silly, I know. But, I'm pleased to announce that, not even having reached the second quarter of the year, that we've met one of our resolutions. The Social Justice Committee has new members! While it was purely coincidental with Sue Bloomfield and the Worship committee holding a service on ministry, Social Justice would like to thank them for helping us achieve one of our goals! The committee would also especially like to thank these new members: Richard Bassett, Lisa Cairns and Jerry Wagnon. Welcome aboard!

Social Justice would also like to announce that the committee voted to have an official UUSC Coordinator. We thank Jerry Wagnon for offering his service in this position and look forward to his enhancing of our engagement in UUSC activities and initiatives. One such item will be this month as Jerry collaborates with Reverend Eric in having a Sunday service themed around the UUSC's "Justice Sunday". It will be something to look forward to.

The Social Justice Committee also has plans, in the upcoming future, for bringing our faith into action by having more activity with and commitment to the local GLBT community, the Brazos Valley Coalition for the Homeless, and the U-U Ministry for the Earth. We invite everyone interested in Social Justice to attend our monthly meetings held in the Jess Coon Room at seven p.m. on the first Thursday every month.

I'd like to give thanks, again, to the wonderful people of this church as you support and participate, along with the Social Justice Committee, in "making a difference" not only in our local community but also across the world. Namaste!

SPRING BREAK WORK PARTY

Mark Your Calendars!

Saturday, **March 20th** is the **First Day of Spring!**

Please come join the Property Committee in a spirit of celebration and stewardship for our Spring Cleaning Work Party. This year, we are planning to concentrate on *interior* cleaning of our buildings. It is time to clean, de-clutter, and organize closets and rooms; cleaning windows to let that Spring sunshine in; dusting off the birds in the sanctuary. Those with organizing skills will be highly valued, with less emphasis on brute strength. Drop in any time between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. and lend a hand.

This year the Aggies will be doing the outside leaf raking and trimming the next weekend on March 27th for the **BIG** Event.

Ken Appelt
Program Manager

MEMBER'S DOG NEEDS LOVING HOME

I need a new home for my dog, Widget as I am moving. She is a medium sized brown dog (around 60 lbs), spayed, housebroken, short hair, mostly Lab with some Sharpei, about 5 years old. OK with cats.

She'd be great with gentle older children, as she has an arthritic hip from possibly being thrown out of a car.

She was treated badly previously, and is afraid of most men, so would need patience to make friends. She'd really appreciate a fenced yard.

Please email me for more information: Thank you, Sybil Jones sybilhj@aol.com

**UU CHURCH
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY FORM**

Name _____
Address _____ City/State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone: _____ e-mail address: _____
Blood Type: _____ Allergies: _____

Family Contacts:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Address: _____ City/State: _____ Zip _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Address: _____ City/State: _____ Zip Code _____

Friends or neighbors who can assist

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ City: _____
_____ Zip _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone _____

Person Who Has a Key to Your House:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Does this person have your permission to check house and send items you need to you? Yes ___ No ___

In what ways can the members of the Fellowship assist? (Please check)

- Arrange for care of pets ___
- Provide updates to friends on your condition ___
- Visit at hospital or home ___
- Provide transportation for you or members of your family ___
- Other: _____

You are welcome to share confidential information that will assist in case of emergency (such as illness-related information or advance directives) with the minister.

If you have advance directives and a will, who may access them and how are they accessed?

Please return in a sealed envelope to:

Rev. Eric Posa
Unitarian Universalist Church
305 Wellborn Road
College Station, TX 77840

Phone: 979 696 5285

2/21/2010

MARCH 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 7:00pm-BBA Meditation, Reading and Chanting	2 10:00am-Bagel Break	3 12:15pm-BBA Noon Medita- tion 5:30pm-Adult Choir Practice 7:30pm-Book Club	4 7:00pm-Social Justice Meeting	5	6 7:00pm-Contradance
7 9:30am-Religious Education 10:30am-Service 12:00pm-RE Com Mtg 3:30pm-BBA 4:30-BBA Book Club	8 7:00pm-BBA Meditation, Reading and Chanting	9 10:00am-Bagel Break	10 12:15pm-BBA Noon Medita- tion 5:30pm-Adult Choir Practice 7:00pm-UU Drum Circle	11 7:00pm-UUCBV Board Meeting	12	13 12:00pm-Chick Flicks 6:00pm—Canvass Potluck Dinner
14 9:30am-Religious Education 10:30am - Service 12:00pm-Worship Com Mtg 3:30pm-BBA 4:30-BBA Book Club	15 7:00pm-BBA- Meditation, Reading and Chanting	16 10:00am-Bagel Break	17 12:15pm-BBA Noon Medita- tion 5:30pm-Adult Choir Practice 7:30pm-Book Club	18 7:00pm-Finance Com- mittee Meeting	19	20 9:00am-Spring Break Work Party 9:30am-Church Pantry
21 9:30am-Religious Education 10:30am - Service (followed by Newcomers' Meeting) 12:00pm—Canvass Potluck Luncheon 3:30pm—BBA 4:30-BBA Book Club	22 7:00pm-BBA- Meditation, Reading and Chanting	23 10:00am-Bagel Break	24 12:15pm-BBA Noon Medita- tion 5:30pm-Adult Choir Practice	25	26	27
28 9:30am-Religious Education 10:30am - Service 12:00pm—Canvass Potluck Luncheon 3:30pm—BBA	29 7:00pm-BBA- Meditation, Reading and Chanting	30 10:00am-Bagel Break	31 12:15pm-BBA Noon Medita- tion 5:30pm-Adult Choir Practice			

**The Monthly Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of
the Brazos Valley**

305 Wellborn Rd.,
College Station, TX 77840
(979) 696-5285/brazosuu@verizon.net

UUCBV Office Hours:
Tuesday 9:30am-1:30pm
Wednesday & Thursday 12:00pm-4:00pm

Minister's Office Hours: Tuesday 10am - 2pm
and Thursday 2pm - 6pm
A&M Campus Hours: Monday 12pm - 4pm



Address Service Requested

UUCBV Covenant

We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Brazos Valley, covenant with one another to:

- ...affirm and promote an open, safe, and respectful environment in which to come together for worship and fellowship,
- ...encourage spiritual and intellectual growth in our children, youth, and adults,
- ...respect one another's viewpoints and experiences,
- ...offer our individual talents and resources, to be honest about what we can and cannot do, and celebrate our connections to one another and the sacred circle of life.

Spring Break Work Party

Saturday, March 20, 2010
9:00 AM-3:00

Please come join the Property Committee in a spirit of celebration and stewardship for our Spring Cleaning Work Party. This year, we are planning to concentrate on interior cleaning of our buildings.

This year the Aggies will be doing the outside leaf raking and trimming the next weekend on March 27th for the BIG Event.