



The Latitudinarian

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

REFLECTIONS BY REV. ERIC POSA

MAY 2010

Mark Your Calendars!

- Sat., May 1, 7:00pm—Contradance
- Sun., May 2, 7:00pm—RE Committee Mtg
- Thurs., May 6, 7:00pm—UUCBV Board Meeting
- Thurs., May 6, 7:00pm—Social Justice Committee Mtg
- Sat., May 8, 12:00pm—Chick Flicks
- Sun., May 9, 12:00pm—Worship Committee Mtg
- Wed., May 12, 7:00pm—UU Drum Circle
- Sat., May 15, 9:30am—Church Pantry
- Sun., May 16, 12:00pm—UUWF Meeting/Potluck Luncheon
- Sun., May 23, 12:00pm—Annual Congregational Meeting
- Thurs., May 27, 7:00pm—Finance Committee Meeting

Monthly Theme - May:

We, as a community of faith, seek to: Make Connections within our congregation, across generations, and out to the wider community, across differences of all kinds.

Relatedness

Buddhist scripture tells the story of the great God Indra and his jeweled net. It is written that the God cast a great net into the heavens that filled the entire universe. At each node, each connection point on the net, a jewel was placed. In each jewel could be seen the reflection of every other jewel in the universe. And every jewel was tied to all the other jewels by the cords of the net.

Fast forward many centuries now, and come to the other side of the world. The 19th century American naturalist John Muir, founding member of the Sierra club, probably was not a scholar of Buddhism and Buddhist scripture. Yet it is striking how similar to this story, was his quote, "When we try to pick out anything by itself we find that it is bound fast by a thousand invisible cords that cannot be broken, to everything in the universe." Muir later re-wrote this quote into its more famous form, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe."

In the 21st century, we know the truth of these words through our increased knowledge of ecology and the environment. The wisdom of early naturalists

like Muir and Henry David Thoreau, as well as the man who inspired them both, Unitarian minister Ralph Waldo Emerson, ring true for us today as much as they did 150 years ago. Yet these words are as true for us in the human community, as they are for the natural world. When Lakota Sioux people say, "Mitakuye oyasin" - "We are all related" - they are speaking a profound truth about us, human beings, as well as the entire world in which we find ourselves. It's the same truth spoken by the poet John Donne, in the 1600s, when he said, "No man is an island." Our lives are bound up with one another. We are hitched not only to this earth, but also to each other as individuals, and to the communities of which we are a part.

This month, on May 23, our church will hold its annual congregational meeting. It seems a wise time to reflect on the ways we are hitched to each other within the church, to one another individually, and to the wider universe in which we find ourselves. Please join us as we explore what it means for us to be hitched to everything else, to reflect within ourselves all that is around us.

See you in church!

MAY WORSHIP SERVICES

- May 2 "Thou (Not It)"
- May 9 "A Sacred Connection" (guest sermon by Christian Schmidt)
- May 16 "Plain Members and Citizens"
- May 23 "Pouring Out the Spirit of the Church" (followed by Annual Congregational Meeting)
- May 30 "Hymn Sing"

9:30 am Religious Education
10:30am Service · Join Us for Coffee Hour After Service

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

In the last few months I have been made the apex of a type of communication called “triangulation” (at least by the UU jargon I learned at the Dwight Brown Leadership Experience) in which a person with a concern about another member of the congregation comes to me with the concern instead of speaking directly to the person about it. I urge everyone to take their concerns directly to the other person and not try to relay it through the President or any one else. This is a part of the Behavioral Covenant that the Congregation approved in May of 2008. Quoting the relevant part of it, “We will speak directly to the person with whom we differ rather than to some third person.” If there are concerns that you want me to know about as President by all means please come talk to me about them after you have been talking to the other person, but please don't ignore the other person and expect me to intercede for you because I will just ask you to go talk directly to them.

Wow, where did this year go? It doesn't seem like it has already been almost that long. But to coin a phrase, “time goes by fast when you are having fun”. We have the Annual Congregational Meeting coming up on Sunday May 23rd after the service at noon. There is a great slate of new officer nominations to vote on and the next year's proposed budget to consider. So I hope to see you all at the Congregational Meeting on the 23rd.

READER'S THEATER

Coming Friday, June 11:

5x5: Five Texas Authors, Five New Books

Be sure to mark your calendars for a Reader's Theater featuring five children's authors reading from their new books. Authors include Kathi Appelt and Janet Fox from College Station, Varian Johnson and April Lurie from Austin, and Jenny Moss from Houston.

Books will be available for purchase and signing. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Suggested donation is \$10 for adults/\$5 for students.

For more information, go to: fivetexasauthors.com

See you there!

MINISTRY NOTES

Adult Religious Education: We conclude the *Spirit in Practice* curriculum this month 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 "Justice Practices," which explore the spiritual qualities present in social justice activities:

- May 2: The Story of the Siddhartha's Awakening
- May 9: 21 Thoughts on Justice
- May 16: Justice Work as Spiritual Practice
- May 23: Justice Practices at UUCBV
- May 30: NO RE (Adults or Children)

Split-the-Plate: On the second Sunday of the month, May 9, 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 Hospice Brazos Valley. Please come and give generously.

New & Prospective Members: Are you ready to become a member of this church? Our church has begun its new practice of welcoming new members during worship on the first Sunday of each month (that is, each month in which one or more prospective members are ready to join). Five new members joined us on April 4 – Easter Sunday – and at least four others are planning to join on May 2. If you are interested in joining the church, contact Rev. Eric Posa, or Membership Committee Chair, Katie Womack, at least 72 hours before the monthly Signing Ceremony.

DRE Search: The DRE Search Committee is hard at work searching for our next Director of Religious Education. Things are in process right now, we remain hopeful that we can select our next DRE by our Congregational Meeting (following worship on May 23), for a June 1 start date. Please contact me if you have any questions about this process.

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 person for her generous contribution:

- Carolyn Clark in honor of her birthday to the Capital Fund

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

BOARD BRIEFS BY LISA PETERSON, BOARD SECRETARY

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

- Asked Rev. Posa to determine advertising rates so that the Board could approve spending for the Director of Religious Education search
- Approved a rental application for May 22nd
- Approved Gaye Webb as a delegate to the SWUUC district conference
- Authorized the Public Broadcasting Ad Hoc Committee to purchase underwriting using donated money

Other business discussed by the Board included:

- Planning for the annual congregational meeting
- Identifying participants for Dwight Brown Leadership Experience in July.

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Mary Ellen Pate (mepatenp@hotmail.com)Chair, Caring Committee
Kathi Appelt (kcappelt@verizon.net)Chair, Finance Committee
Kathy Wheeler (khwmdvm@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 (mrabel97@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

April brought new leaves, wildflowers and also, a preview of the humidity ahead for our hot Texas summer. This month, as the weather changes, lives change too, so we celebrate and mourn together.

Joys include:

Linda and Eric Isakeit bought a new house. Congratulations to them on their new digs!

Mary Ellen and David Pate's son, David Jr. has been accepted to graduate school at Sam Houston State University in Sociology.

Clint Phillips celebrated his 85th in style with a party on April 11th at church. Thank you so much to those who attended and made his day so special.

Christian Schmidt is engaged - his fiancée is Kristin Grassel, Intern Minister at Houston's Bay Area UU Church, who guest preached at our church on March 14.

Ken and Kathi Appelt's son, Jacob, had his Graduation Recital at the University of North Texas. Along with Grandma Pat Childress, they could not be prouder!

Some sorrows and concerns for April:

Katie Womack's Mom passed away, and we send our love to Katie and Kaliska for the loss of their loved one. Also, we have concern for Katie's brother who is ill and needs her care. We send Katie our warmest thoughts of comfort and wishes for her safety as she drives back and forth to Athens to care for him.

Gaye Webb lost her mother-in-law, and we send our sincere sympathy to Gaye and her husband, Marlin.

Eric Isakeit lost his "Opa" (grandfather) and we send our heartfelt sympathy to him and his family. Linda Isakeit cut her hand and had to rush to the ER, but thankfully, is OK now.

Melissa Collins had a fender bender and reported that her car was a casualty. We are thankful that she is OK.

A loss for the entire community of B/CS - Bill Osborne died April 11, 2010 after a long illness. He was preceded in death by his wife Gardner Osborne who was instrumental in starting and working in The Prenatal Clinic. Bill and Gardner were both active in community events, including sponsoring the Texas A&M Men's Rugby team from 1973 to 1975 and were chosen Aggie Parents of the Year in 1983.

If we've forgotten anyone, please let us know, and remember that we are here for all of you. As always, let us know if you need anything.

A friendly reminder:

The Caring Committee asks that anytime you have a change in personal information; please take a few minutes to update your "In Case of Emergency" forms, found on the rainbow table.

A big hug to you all from the Caring Committee

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 JUDY MCCOY

Social Justice Committee thanks everyone who helped with our two main projects this month. Thanks to everyone who participated in the Church Pantry on Saturday, April 17th. The RE Middle School class has decided they want to help with that work. We now have permission forms available for parents to sign for children who want to participate. Bonnie Wikse is coordinating that part of the project, and you can call her to get permission forms and to ask questions you may have. Her number is 695-1631.

We thank Lenni Lessenberger for coming to make a presentation concerning her mission to provide worship service to the homeless and others who, for whatever reason, are unable or uncomfortable to attend a traditional worship service in a conventional church. Rev. Eric led the service in the park that morning, and Suzi Posa and Judy McCoy brought breakfast food and beverages. We have a goal to provide breakfast on a regular schedule, every four or six weeks, to be determined at a future meeting. We hope this will be an opportunity that members of our congregation would like to participate in, as we are continually seeking ways to provide opportunities for our members to engage in social justice activities.

Be sure to come by the Social Justice table Sundays after worship, during coffee hour, to buy fair trade chocolate, tea and coffee. This is a fund raiser to help fund social justice projects. Also, we are continually adding new material to our table, informing our congregation about other organizations engaged in providing goods and services to enhance the spiritual and physical lives of members of our community. We also have

informational sheets from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee concerning social justice projects and activities at the denominational level.

Note that this year's NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet will be held Saturday evening, June 5th. Social Justice Committee will again sponsor a table, and we hope that we will again have a full table. I think tickets will cost a little less than they did last year. We'll have more information about this event next month. Best wishes to everyone, and thank you for your support of and participation in our committee's activities and projects.

Also, we are proud to announce the winner of the first-ever Easter Egg Hunt collaboration between RE and the Social Justice Committee! The two committees look at this as an opportunity to encourage in our children a spirit of giving and a sense that they can have a positive impact towards social justice in the world around them. That young person had the opportunity to choose a local charity to which one-hundred dollars from "Change for Change" would be donated in their name. Congratulations this year goes to Leon Harmon-Jones. He picked the Brazos Animal Shelter as the recipient of this year's Easter Egg Hunt donation. Good job and a great charity!

MAY 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 9:30am-Religious Education 10:30am-Service 12:00pm—RE Committee Mtg. 3:30pm—BBA meditation 4:30-BBA Book Club	3 7:00pm-BBA Meditation, Reading and Chanting	4 10:00am-Bagel Break	5 12:15pm-BBA Noon Medita- tion 5:30pm-Adult Choir Practice 7:00pm—Book Club	6 7:00pm-UUCBV Board Meeting 7:00pm—Social Justice Committee Mtg	7	1 7:00pm-Contradance
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Unitarian Universalist Church of
the Brazos Valley**

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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.

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, May 23
Following worship

Lunch will be provided