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TO THE GLORY OF LIFE

Dear Friends,

At a recent conversation in Daytimers, the topic was Language of Reverence. Very thoughtful ideas were shared and, I believe, something was learned by just about everyone. But one of the points that seemed to stymie many came out of UUA President Bill Sinkford's sermon where he originally called for us to talk about what we, as individual UUs – stood for. And in talking about what we stood for, asking us to use reverential language that conveyed 'the holy.'

"What does he mean when he says, 'the holy'" some wondered. A number of us speculated. 'Something of ultimate importance,' one person mentioned. Another offered, 'the thing we respect or aspire to more than anything else.' Good suggestions, I thought. But I kept thinking about more than that. 'The great loves of our life,' I thought, 'are what's holy to us. 'Our children.' 'Our partners.' 'For some, even our most fundamental freedoms of dignity, _expression and community.' 'The very things that would leave untenable holes in our lives if they weren't there. And after thinking, it came to me. What I was describing, it seemed, were the things that were both what I considered worth living for and, if necessary, worth dying for. Something that is worth our best effort and time and worthy of 'sacrifice' (which means to 'make sacred.')

That is what 'the holy,' is to me.

Around this same time, I attended an interfaith dialogue dinner at the Atlanta Marriott hosted by the Istanbul Cultural Center. There were over 300 people in attendance representing a myriad of faith traditions. I got a chance to hear a good many definitions of the holy – all of which were somewhat unique, but all of which seemed to still be compatible with my own understanding.

But the one that struck me most came from the Executive Director of the Center – a Muslim himself – who challenged people to be Mujahideens in a Jihad. Now, a Jihad, as I have understood from listening to the media using the word while discussing the 'war on terror,' seems to mean a 'holy war.' It is often used as a reference to a sort of 'crusade.' A militant religious approach to fight the 'unbelievers.' Further, a Mujahideen is a soldier in such a war – specifically a soldier who has been injured in the holy cause and who has suffered for the noble purpose of the jihad. Mujahideens are said to have special dispensation in the eyes of Allah. They are favored.

But all of this seemed to take on an entirely new meaning when I heard the director speak. He referred to a jihad as a 'holy struggle.' He clarified that common emphasis of the word had little to do with an actual physical war and much more to do with an internal wrestling of the soul. A struggle of the heart and mind to find the ultimate goal of 'right relationship.' It was the pursuit of 'right relationship' that made the internal struggle, 'holy.'

Moreover, he stressed that the goal of forging loving, understanding relations with others who were different than us was hard work. Sometimes dangerous. And it is fraught with discomfort and misinterpretation – even conflict and hostility. But for the people who understand that planetary peace is ultimately impossible without such a struggle it becomes a noble cause. For those who see as their call to understand those who are different and are willing to risk their comfort and safety to make it happen – they are the people who embark on a true jihad. They are the people who see peace and understanding as something they are willing to live for as well as something they are willing to die for. And they are the ones who are also sometimes wounded - the Mujahideens.



Happenings

UUMANDRUMS

UUMAN'S Drum Choir meets the first and third Sunday's of each month, from 1:30 for beginners and warm-up, 2:00-3:30 class. Classes are \$15 and are taught by renowned drum teacher Tom Harris, Director of the Excel Drummers and counselor at InnerHarbour. Loaner drums are available. If you are interested in making your own drum, contact Tom for information and to schedule a drum making workshop. For questions or information contact Pamela Reich uumandrums@uuman.org

Happenings

UUMANSINGLES

The singles group meets for a monthly potluck, the second Saturday of every month. E-mail Craig Kaufman or Carolyn Bommarito for more details craigk@uuman.org & carolyn@uuman.org

Happenings

The UUMAN Babysitting Co-op will hold a potluck on Saturday November 12th at the Olsson's house beginning at 4:00 and ending when the kids get tired and cranky. We'll review some functional enhancements that Jennifer Mitchler brings to the group from a former co-op, and mostly we'll socialize and have a great time. Please RSVP to Beth Olsson at betho@uuman.org.

It made me wonder why we – UUs – who believe that the holy is much more than is sometimes narrowly defined – are not much more willing to expand the notion of a jihad and become involved in the internal struggle for greater understanding and peace? Why aren't we helping to re-interpret 'the holy,' and leading the charge of the Mujahideens? Why didn't we outnumber the people at this interfaith dinner (there were actually only 2 UUs out of 300 people present)?

When we begin to see that the holy is seeing all people as inherently worthy as our own children and all people as dignified as our own partners and are willing to retranslate old world terms to meet new world needs – THEN we will rise up and be who the world needs us to be. THEN we will not only know 'the holy' in our hearts, but begin to create it in the world. THEN we will be UU Mujahideens on a Jihad.

To the Glory of Life

Handel's Messiah

THE MESSIAH IS COMING

Yes, on Saturday evening December 3rd, the UUMAN Choir and the Gwinnett Choral Guild will combine to present the Christmas portion of Handel's MESSIAH. The 70 voice choir will be joined by four guest soloists and accompanied by a small professional chamber orchestra. Composed in 1741 in just 24 days (by any measure a phenomenal achievement) Messiah quickly became Handel's most beloved and most often performed oratorio. The Christmas Portion is the first of three sections which reflect on the Birth, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus as told in the Old and New Testaments. Included in the Christmas section are some of the most beautiful and beloved Arias and choruses ever written. Who has never heard "For Unto Us A Child Is Born" or the magnificent "Hallelujah" Chorus?

To offset the cost of presenting this grand work, tickets will be sold at a cost of \$10. There will only be room in our sanctuary for 180 listeners so plan now to purchase your tickets ASAP.

For ticket information, please see a choir member, contact the Church office or call Randy Wilbur at 770-814-8800. Tickets should be available the first week in November.

UUMAN Cohousing Group

Do you want to live in a community where you know your neighbors?

Be part of our cohousing group and help create community. We are working to build a village of 20-40 practical homes with a common house in the northern suburbs of Atlanta. We are looking for a site, developer and more members. If you can recommend a developer or site or would like to join us, contact Kate and Dave Hudson, Kevin and Susan Kleinfelter, Beth and Lars Olsson or Mike and Michelle Liebergesell. To learn more about cohousing, visit www.cohousing.org or meet with us Sundays beginning at 5:30pm.



President's Letter

What were you this past Halloween? A Purple Cow?

Cows, after you've seen one or two or ten, are boring. A Purple Cow, though...now that would be something. Purple Cow describes something phenomenal, something counterintuitive and exciting and flat out unbelievable. Every day, consumers come face-to-face with a lot of boring stuff-a lot of brown cows-but you can bet they won't forget a Purple Cow. ...Purple Cow is inherent. It is built right in or it isn't there. Period.

-excerpt from Purple Cow, by Seth Godin

A Purple Cow would be remarkable!

A friend of mine, Terry Green, will be remembered by many as a remarkable person. She passed away mid-October at the age of 48, after a short, but passionate fight with cancer. Her funeral was outstanding! Stories about Terry were told by people from various chapters of her life. Each had different circumstances as scenery, but the portrayals of Terry were amazingly consistent. Everyone knew Terry as the same person; upbeat, fun seeking, mentor, compassionate, direct, lover of animals, lover of people, lover of life. Each story had everyone in the chapel nodding their head affirmatively as if to say "that is the Terry I know". Almost each had the crowded room laughing. Never before had I seen so much solidarity at a funeral. "Uplifting" describes the funeral service...a reflection of the congruence in Terry's life; a reflection of a remarkable life!

The concept that "life is a mirror" applies to us personally and as a community. Our behaviors are just one part of the mirror and are much like the exposed part of an iceberg. It's the part you can't see, the part that goes deep that provides the foundation for the behavior we expose and see in others. What does it mean when our behaviors are congruent to our professed identity? It means our behaviors are situationally predictable to what we expect

from the identity we've chosen. If we are congruent it means we establish values that support our identity. It means we develop beliefs that reflect our value system. It means we develop skills to physically demonstrate our beliefs. How we apply those skills, as a group or individually, are the behaviors everyone can see.

A group of business owners were recently asked to put the words "I am" at the top of a page and then list out 20 things that they are. The usual answers were there. They reflected what profession people practiced, what their family situation was, what religious or civic groups they affiliated with and what some of their values were. Most couldn't list 20 items. Very, very few said "I am a business owner". Quite a few "duh" moments filled the room as people realized they'd been performing a role they never identified with. How effective are the results of your behaviors if they do not reflect who you really are, what you value, what you believe or what you can do. How does this apply to UUMAN?

As humans and UUMANS, I believe we all dream somewhere for a remarkable life. We have many great things happening in our church community. I'm cognizant, though, of the challenges that we also have and are working to address and I am confident we will handle them in due course. I participate in this community because I want to be part of a remarkable place and I hope you do to. As reflected by Terry's life and the business owners I referenced above, I hope the value of having congruence between behavior and identity and the importance of establishing identity first is recognized. On your "I am" list..."I am remarkable, I am UUMAN, I am a Purple Cow".

To our present and our future,

Kirk Bogue

Happenings

New Pricing for YOGA with Lisa

Buy a class card for the number of classes you'd like to take: 10 for \$100; 5 for \$65; 1 for \$15 or 1 month unlimited \$65. On-going yoga classes in our beautiful sanctuary. Develop strength, flexibility and balance in mind and body. Learn poses, breathing & relaxation techniques & meditation to reduce stress, calm your mind, strengthen your immune system, and find more joy in life! Beginners & intermediates; men, women & teens. Newcomers welcome anytime. Wednesday 10-11:15 a.m., Sunday 4:45-6 p.m. Contact lisa@uuman.org or 770-395-7166

Happenings

Joan's Office Hours

Joan Armstrong (our tireless DRE) is available in the office on Monday, Wednesday (afternoon through evening) and Thursday, but can meet at other times by appointment.



UUMAN Writes

Destiny's Child Grows Up

It might be the rumblings of a mid-life crisis. After all, I do turn 35 later this month. For words like destiny, purpose and identity keep floating through my brain. I find myself trying to retrace my steps all the way back to the womb, wondering how I arrived here. And much like Bugs Bunny, if I should have taken that proverbial right turn at Albuquerque. For this wasn't how I thought I would end up. Or even come to a halt. If you had asked me in my youth what I intended to be; an unemployed, UU housewife wasn't on the menu. I probably would have answered, depending on my mood and the day, that I would be an award winning editorialist for the New York Times; a darling of the literary circuit. Or a witty, uptown novelist with way too many cocktail party anecdotes and single friends. Or a vegan, animal rights activist/ dolphin trainer (never mind the fact that I loathe vegetables and can't swim very well.) I might have even cited a life as a rebellious, punk rock goddess-snarling at the mainstream and making raucous noise that might pass for music in some circles. I even admit to entertaining a stint as a nun in my early girlhood-until I realized it meant you actually had to believe in Catholicism. But I never dreamed I'd end up married, in Woodstock, GA living this fairly pedestrian existence. It just wasn't part of the plan. And neither was the box marked "undecided"-but that is precisely where I find myself these days on the subject of destinies.

Though I cannot pinpoint the actual moment my grand schemes and dreams derailed, I do know that the path I wound up taking was a mixture of circumstance and choice. Certainly, my panic disorder played its part in the shaping of getting to where I am; but so did strength, courage and faith. And I am not unhappy with my lot. I've come to realize in my advancing age that I can still achieve some of the lofty goals I once tossed about (well, punk rock star is doubtful). But if I want to, I can make just about anything happen.

But what this "undecided" has really chosen is not to define herself as a career or lifestyle, but as a person of character. It really doesn't matter whether I'm a dolphin trainer or a novelist; what counts is that I am true to myself and others-that I live with honesty and compassion. Perhaps my destiny is not so much about what I become, but rather who I become. And as any rockin' dolphin-training novelist can tell you; it is all about the journey.

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us."-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Patty@uuman.org

Metro Atlanta Family ReUUnion A Great Success

More than 150 adults and nearly 100 children from six Metro Atlanta Unitarian Universalist congregations made the 4th annual Family Re-UUnion on Labor Day at Wills Park a huge success.

People were engaged by the worship, ongoing singing, softball, Frisbee golf, face painting, food and conversations. This opportunity to witness and experience enthusiasm, fun and commitment across congregational lines was the original reason that area ministers organized and hosted the event for the past four years.

Ministers Joan Armstrong, Lauralyn Bellamy, Paula Gable, David Keyes, Dana Reynolds, Roy Reynolds, Don Southworth and Greg Ward attended the picnic, demonstrating the commitment the Metro Atlanta UU clergy group has to creating opportunities for shared food and fellowship.

The ministers express thanks for congregational support and their hopes that congregational lay leaders will continue this end of summer tradition for years to come. The ministers are choosing to channel their energies into other projects to enhance the growth and health of Unitarian Universalism. To this end, plans are being made for the clergy group to host a UU spiritual renewal gathering in 2006, dates and details to follow. If you are interested in this, or in insuring that the Picnic continues, please contact Greg Ward.



Library Corner

Are you new to Unitarian Universalism? Do you want to know a little more about what others have to say about Unitarian Universalism? The following is a list of some books to be found in the UUMAN Library in Fellowship Hall. In addition, to find other books of interest to UUs, view the complete Beacon Press catalog, at www.uua.org/bookstore.

The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide

Edited by John Buehrens

Dewey # 289.1

This book contains essays on faith, heritage, worship, religious education, ministry and important dates in UU history.

A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism

John Buehrens and Forrest Church

Dewey # 230.9132

This set of essays is an excellent introduction to UU culture and philosophy. The book is organized around the six sources of our faith practice. It provides a collective insight to UU culture and philosophy. Highly recommended.

Care Associates

Who, you may ask, are the Care Associates of UUMAN and what is our mission? You have known us as “The Friends on the Journey.” In accordance with the new governance of UUMAN, we are changing our name to “Care Associates” and we will be a unit of the Care Committee at UUMAN.” The Care Associates began as members of a class that was offered by our minister, Greg Ward, to those congregants who, as an aspect of deepening their spirituality were interested in learning how to administer pastoral care to fellow members of the congregation. Over the course of some 50 plus hours of education, we explored effective ways to be of both spiritual and emotional help to others experiencing a life crisis.

Our education was multifaceted. In addition to much didactic knowledge, our learning experience also included self-examination of which of our personal characteristics might hinder our desire to be of effective service and which of our talents might be expanded. We participated in sessions where we role-played situations where pastoral care was warranted and we learned from each other’s constructive criticism of that enactment.

We are willing, eager and prepared to reach out to members of the congregation when they are in a crisis of any type. This might include things like bereavement, family difficulties, adjustment to the role of parenting, loss of employment, or an illness that interrupts one’s usual lifestyle. It is in times of crisis such as these that our spirituality may be challenged and the Care Associates are here to offer a hand, a compassionate heart, a listening ear, and a shoulder on which to lean. If a congregant’s needs are more than that of crisis intervention, we also have knowledge of services available for more long-term support.

As a group, we are committed to continuing our education and expanding our skills. Therefore, we meet once a month for both didactic and experiential learning. If you or someone you know can benefit from our expertise, we invite you to give one of us a call.

On October 11, 2005, we welcomed Miriam Bellamy to the Care Associates.

Greg Ward 770-754-5848

Toniann Read 770-558-4476

Carole Marra 678-357-6928

Miriam Bellamy 404-932-9320

Challenge of a Liberal Faith

George Marshall

Dewey # 288

A popular introduction and study guide to UUism offers a review of the denominations history and beliefs. Includes chapter guides with study questions, outlines, index and bibliography.

Being Liberal in an Illiberal Age

Jack Mendelsohn

Dewey # 268

A minister for over fifty years, Mendelsohn writes with conviction and eloquence in defense of liberal religion and discusses what draws people to Unitarian Universalism.

Please check out the UUMAN Library for these and other great books for adults and children.

UUMAN Library Committee



Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU)

Global Village Survivors at UUMAN

Yes, we are not talking about a reality TV show, we are talking the Global village @ the Calvin Center a place to increase everyone's knowledge about 3rd world countries by living in a real global village. The Calvin Center has 5 different, "villages," representative of life in Haiti, Nicaragua, Palestine, Kenya and a barrio. The UU adults and youth lived and worked at the Global village with the same limitations others in the world cope with on a daily basis.

On September 30 to October 2, six adult survivors and eleven youth survivors went to the Calvin Center located at 13550 Woolsey Road, Hampton, GA 30228, 770 946 4276, www.calvincenter.org.

The first night the group got to the village they were given numbers of one, two or three and when they got in the food line the number one's were served a full meal such as in the USA, then number two they were served less food, like a 2nd world nation and then a third world food just rice and water and there was NO sharing, so you had the true feeling of what people eat in other countries on a daily basis and some of the group was hungry with those portion sizes!

The UU's were assigned to the Haitian Village which included a walk in the dark on their first night for 2 miles to the camp. The camp looked like a rustic cabin and had a cooking hut. The UU group even had to work like people living in rural Haiti might which included working in a brick factory, farming the fields, bartering for food in a local market and cooking the meals.

Seventh grader, Clarisse Wilkin's said, "the global village was very realistic of how others live and it was a lot of hard work." Clarisse came away with a different attitude about third world people, "I did not really understand someone else's lifestyle until I actually experienced it."

Sixth grader, Robert Gallerstein said, "it was fun for one time experience, I feel it would be quite a challenge to live like this for any length of time."

Youth advisor, Karen Wilkins said, "I would highly recommend this experience to get a true feeling of what it is like to live in a third world. This really got me out of my own world and a reality check about small food portions."

There were also challenges of rebel forces coming and stealing the food from their village kitchen. Luckily they still had some money left over to purchase some plantains from a street vendor.

The second night was spent in the slums where they had to construct a shelter for the night, which they did with great spirits despite being very hungry & tired. They listened to stories about their hosts experiences in Haiti by the campfire and Kelsey led the group in a moving youth worship to end the evening.



As Kim Palmer attested, "The visit to the Global Village was extremely valuable, in that it was an experiential view of a third-world village and slum - - you were left with a sort of visceral understanding of the conditions under which many people live. It is one thing to read or hear that orphans scavenge for food scraps in the local dump; it is quite another to be so hungry that you are grateful for the opportunity to scavenge your dinner from a garbage bag containing another group's lunch scraps. As always, the youth were phenomenal. They worked hard, participated fully, took the hardships in stride, and made both the UUMAN advisors and the Calvin Center hosts proud. I would not have exchanged that weekend for any other."

I bet you can guess where they stopped on the way back to UUMAN on Sunday morning...1 word...'drive-thru'! The UU's adults and UU youth only proved to themselves that UU's are true survivors with whatever challenges they are faced with!



OWL

For over thirty years our association, the Unitarian Universalist Association, has been a leader in providing comprehensive sexuality education for youth and adults. With the publication of Our Whole Lives (OWL) in 2000 we are able to offer comprehensive sexuality education within the context of our religious education program for children. This coming January at UUMAN we will be offering an eight week course for fourth and fifth graders. There will be ample opportunity for parents and others to meet our specially trained OWL facilitators and to review the program materials before the course begins. For additional information on the OWL program please contact Joan Armstrong, Director of Religious Education.

Science and the Sacred: Creating Understanding in a Divided World

November 11 & 12 at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta

Is the sacred compatible with science? A biologist, a biochemist, a physicist, and a minister/Zen practitioner/engineer all say a resounding "Yes!" Dr. Ursula Goodenough, renowned biologist, religious naturalist, and author of the bestselling book, *The Sacred Depths of Nature*, believes life has evolved as Darwin described. Nonetheless her explorations of the natural world have led her to a profound sense of the sacred. Dr. Alexander Escobar, a biochemist and senior lecturer in the Department of Biology at Emory University, asserts that we must incorporate the descriptions of the universe offered by religion and science to truly understand the cosmos. Emory University atomic physicist P.V. Rao finds a striking concordance between his native Hindu faith and quantum physics. Rev. Dr. Paula Gable, Unitarian Universalist minister, practicing Zen Buddhist and "recovering engineer", has found a path to peace and harmony in the wedding of science and religion in both her personal and professional lives. Join all four in a dialogue on the sacred, science, and creating understanding in a divided world.

Friday, November 11, 2005 7:30 - 9 p.m. at UUCA

Keynote Speech: Dr. Ursula Goodenough: Exploring the Concept of Religious Naturalism

Saturday, November 12th, 2005 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Speakers: Dr. Ursula Goodenough, Dr. P.V. Rao, Dr. Alexander Escobar; moderated by Rev. Dr. Paula Gable

BREAK - Coffee and conversation 11 a.m. - Noon

Individual break-out groups: Participants that want to hear more of any of the presentations will join the speakers in smaller groups.

Noon - 1:15 p.m. Catered lunch

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Panel discussion with all speakers and closing summary by Rev. Dr. Paula Gable

BREAK 4 - 5 p.m. Wine and Cheese Book signing. Books by Drs. Goodenough and Escobar will be on sale at UUCA during the event.

For more information or to register:

<http://www.uuca.org/Special/#ScienceAndTheSacred>
or call 404-634-5134.

UUMAN TIMES

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Submissions:

We welcome all types of
newsletter submissions.
Please send us your articles,
editorials, announcements,
poetry, creative writing, or
anything else! Please send an
email to our newsletter
editor, Patty Odom, at
newsletter@uuman.org with
any questions.



UUMANTIMES is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North Congregation.

Ministers Office Hours

Greg wants a chance to speak with everyone at UUMAN. Although he doesn't have specific office hours, he is available to meet with people every day of the week, except Fridays, at a wide variety of times. You are welcome to call him between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. at 770-754-5848 to make an appointment. (In case of emergency, you are encouraged to call (678) 849-4844 any time of day or night).

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.uuman.org

Worship Schedule

November 6th – “Unitarian Universalism for Fun and Prophet”

Speaker: Rev. Greg Ward; Worship Associate: Dave Hudson

Most UUs, when asked, tend to think prophets are: (1) some rather eccentric guys from the ancient scriptures; and (2) extinct. What does that say about Unitarian Universalism as a prophetic community? Do we have something of relevance to say to the larger society? Or are we resigned to be an irrelevant social club?

Children and youth begin in the sanctuary.

November 13th - “UU Fundamentalism and the Leading Edge”

Sermon: Rev. Greg Ward; Worship Associate: Lars Olson

There is a strong reaction – even resistance – to fundamentalism within liberal religion. We don't like their dogmatism, their righteousness, their hypocrisy, and their closed mindedness. And worst of all, we don't like it when we are mistaken for them. Can UUs be fundamentalist?

Children and Youth begin in the sanctuary

November 20th – “Stories From the Thanksgiving Table”

Speakers: UUMAN Worship Associates; Worship Associate: Rev. Greg Ward

Thanksgiving means family and memories. The Worship Associates Share theirs with you as we get ready for this year's feast.

Children and Youth begin in the sanctuary.

November 27th – “Walking the Tightrope”

Speaker: Randy Blasch; Worship Associate: Cliff Brown

UUs come in all shapes, sizes and religions. So how can we turn a ragtag group like that into a functioning community of faith? Or can we? Or do we want to? These questions will likely remain unanswered, but in mean time, maybe, just maybe, we'll find out something about ourselves in the process.

Children and youth begin in the sanctuary.



UUMAN
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Roswell, GA 30075

Get up-to-date information!
Sign up now and
join UUMAN
@ www.uuman.org.

