

CUUCSA ON-LINE NEWSLETTER/ VOL. 32, July, 2006

Editor: Steven Botts, stbotts@texas.net

Web site: <http://www.cuucsa.org/>

Nosotros, las congregaciones miembros de la Asociación UU, convenimos en afirmar y formentar el valor y la dignidad propia de cada persona.

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2. Announcements and articles
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#1

Schedule of Events

July 23: "Kris Kristofferson - Country Music and Liberation Theology" - Margaret Batschelet

July 23: Men's Group, 6:30 pm

July 24: Women's Group, 7 pm

July 27: Worship Committee Retreat, 6:30 pm

July 30: "Do it Anyway" Phil Schulman

Aug 06: Storytellers/UU Principles - Mary Grace Ketner

Aug 06: Brown Bag Socrates Cafe 12:15 pm

Aug 13: "Peace Day: Human Destructive Power" - Phil Schulman

Aug 13: Men's Group, 6:30 pm

Aug 14: Women's Group, 7 pm

Aug 20: Accumulating Values: A personal reflection through story-telling" - Patton White

Aug 20: Social Justice Committee, 9:30 am

Aug 20: Remarkable film Group "Notorious"

Aug 27: Ingathering and Water Communion - Phil Schulman

Aug 27: Men's Group, 6:30 pm

Aug 28: Women's Group, 7 pm

Sep 03: "The Rabbi's Gift: Reflections on the Nature of Lay-led Worship - Peter Van Dusen

Sep 17: "Who were the Gnostic Christians?" - Dr. Dorothea Haecker

Sep 17: Remarkable film Group "The Trouble with Harry"

Sep 10: The Work of the Theosophical Society - Richard Jenkins

#2

Announcements and Articles

Socrates Cafe
Marilyn DeKing

The Brown Bag Socrates Cafe will meet at 12:15 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month at Community Unitarian Universalist Church beginning July 2, 2006. It will be moderated by Marilyn DeKing (210-299-4005). Bring your lunch and join us for a satisfying philosophical session.

At the beginning of each session, participants submit and vote on the question to be discussed. Resolution is not the goal of the discussion. We usually end with more questions than we began with.

Everyone is welcome to participate in Socrates Cafe or to visit and see what it is about.

The Remarkable Film Group
Clem Chow

The Remarkable Film Group is trying something new for the month of August only. In order to contribute to a more enjoyable Sunday experience for everyone, the group is changing its date and time of showing of its next film to Sunday, August 13 at 2:00 PM. This is to follow a Dutch treat lunch after our Sunday service. The film selected for August 13 is Alfred Hitchcock's "Notorious" starring Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant originally released in 1946. So, if you have been unable to attend previous screenings because it is in the evening, try this afternoon screening and join us for lunch as well.

Worship Committee.
Peter Van Dusen

The worship committee will hold a worship retreat on Thursday, July 27, 2006, 6:00--9:00pm (fireplace room). Food will be provided, and all interested church members are invited. We will implement a new system for evaluating the overall quality of our

services, and brainstorm other ideas for improving our worship experience on Sunday mornings.

Care Committee
Joan Bradshaw

I have been asked about how the Care Committee functions for CUUC. As the current organizer and recent recipient of it's services I am probably the one who should do so. Our committee is loosely organized with about 4 committed volunteers and we include any and all of our members who wish to act in this capacity. Usually, we receive notification from our members about persons who are hospitalized, have had a death or birth in the family or who just want to talk with someone and would like to be contacted. Someone is designated to do visitations, send cards or e-mails, make phone calls or possibly deliver food, according to the members' wishes.

What I have learned from my own recent recuperation was that it was especially nice to know that others are thinking of you and wishing you well and knowing that you are not alone.

Should you desire to be someone who makes contacts, please join me by signing up or "re-upping" with Member Services under the Care Committee for 2006-07.

Women's Group
Jean Halff

The Woman's Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at the church. These are the following dates:
July 24 August 14 August 28

Punch and Pie - YRUU Parents Orientation
Daron Sachs

Are the parent of a high school freshman? Or do you have an older high school youth but just missed the orientation last year? This event is for you. YRUU (which stands for Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) is a youth group for high school aged youth. Our youth group is a shared program between First Church and Community Church. We are going to hold 2 YRUU parent orientation meetings -- you can choose the date that works best for your schedule. Please join us on either Thursday, August 3 at 7pm or on Sunday, August 6 at 9:30 am. There will be food as any good youth event includes food! Both meetings will be held at First Church in the Wade Richmond room (the YRUU

meeting room) and will last about an hour. Also, be sure and catch the the article about YRUU activities by Anna Chatillon-Reed, one of the YRUU youth, in this newsletter.

Membership Growth Task Force
Peter Van Dusen

An invitation from the Membership Growth Task Force (MGTF)--

If you knew that there were two simple things you could do, with virtually no additional effort, that BY THEMSELVES could dramatically reverse the growth trend of the church, would you do them? Here they are: (1) Come to church every Sunday. (2) Come to church 30 minutes early. Imagine the following two scenarios:

A. A visitor arrives at 10:15 to make sure they're on time for the start of the service. They don't see many people or cars, so they guess which door to come in. When they get inside, they see one person making coffee, and another running from one room to another putting out hymnals and making photocopies. One or two other people are there, and since no one else is around, they come over and make an obligatory greeting. But they're busy working on something of their own, or doing some business with another member who happens to have arrived early, so they show the visitor where the sanctuary is and tell them the order of service is on its way. (Does this sound too familiar?)

B. A visitor arrives at 10:15, and the flow of people and cars tells them where to park and where the entrance is. Someone recognizing that they're new says hello and introduces themselves even before they get in the door. Once inside, there are people standing around sipping coffee, munching on coffee cake, laughing with their mouths full, talking about last night's show or movie, and obviously glad to be in each other's company. Several of them turn towards the visitors almost as if they've been expecting them. Folks are enjoying themselves so much, someone has to ring the bell several times to get them moving towards the sanctuary. The visitor is naturally carried along with the crowd as it moves from coffee room to sanctuary and sits down next to someone who's already gotten into conversation with them. (Does this sound sort of familiar, but not familiar enough?)

There isn't much question which of these scenarios the visitor would prefer, or which would make them want to come back the next week and the week after that, no? You can make this happen with no more effort than you are currently expending in your life, and probably with a lot more fun. See (1) and (2) above.

About YRUU
Anna Chatillon-Reed.

Hi, everyone! My name is Anna Chatillon-Reed. I'm sixteen, and I'm going into my junior year at the International School of the Americas. I'm an active member of YRUU from First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio, and in my free time I enjoy reading, dancing, and hanging out with friends.

In most Unitarian Universalist churches, there is a youth group opportunity for children ages fourteen to nineteen. Although the common name for this network is YRUU- and some of you may have heard this acronym tossed around quite a bit- the full title is Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. Here in San Antonio we have one of the more active groups in the district. We have a combination of youth from First Unitarian Church and Community Church, and we meet weekly at one of these churches.

Five times a year, all of the YRUU groups in the Southwest District (made up of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas and parts of Mexico) meet together for a weekend lock-in, hosted and sponsored by one of the major cities in the district. We call these gatherings "rallies", and they are much anticipated by youth and advisors alike.

YRUU is supported by and focuses on six pillars: Worship, Social Action, Youth/Adult Relations, Learning, Leadership, and Community. Every year in August, the YRUU group here in San Antonio goes on a retreat to regroup and prepare for the coming year.

At this annual retreat, we take a weekend out of our often hectic schedules to welcome newcomers to the group, hold elections for officers, and re-examine our devotion of time and energy to the six pillars mentioned above. Generally, this comes in the form of a group discussion and creation of two pie charts. The first chart is a realistic division of focus, documenting the past year. The second chart shows how we would like to change our focus for the coming year. Although in the past it has been tradition to rent a house in Port Aransas for the weekend, we're branching out a bit this year with a cottage on the Frio River. Our "Port A" retreat for 2006 is scheduled for August 18, 19, and 20.

Also upcoming on the YRUU calendar is an event that may be familiar to others outside of YRUU- SWUUSI. The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute is a week-long camp for children, youth, young adults, and adults alike, often attracting entire families. Held in Ardmore, Oklahoma, this summer camp has a separate area of camp for YRUU. This provides the perfect opportunity for youth to create bonds that will last throughout high school, and often much longer (rallies achieve much the same goal; however, they are only two days). This year, SWUUSI will be held from July 23 through July 28.

As is obvious, YRUU travels a great deal. We are always looking for fundraising ideas, and are currently selling coupon books for the Wash Tub. Priced at ten dollars, these

handy little books contain coupons for the following: a free full service wash (\$12.95 value), three coupons for \$5 off any package wash, and a coupon for 25% off any purchase.

#3
Upcoming Services

July 23
Margaret Batchelet
"Kris Kristofferson: Country Music and Liberation Theology"

Margaret Batschelet is a member of the Communication Department at UTSA, specializing in Web Design and other topics related to new media. She serves as CUUCSA's Webmaster.

July 30
Rev. Phil Schulman
"Do it Anyway"

America loves the Vince Lombardi philosop[hy "Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing." Sorry, Vince, but all the great wisdom traditions teach otherwise. We all like to have out way, but inability to cooperate is ruining it for everyone. This sunday we will consider a different philosophy, the Universalist notion that good works are their own reward.

Phil Schulman, the consulting minister at CUUC, has been a lifelong advocate of ecological awareness and social justice. At age 11, he first petitioned the citizens of his town to save the forest behind his home. Since then there he's written editorials, served as a board member of a national human rights organization, participated in myriad campaigns for peace, ecology and social justice., spoken at rallies, vigils and demonstrations, walked on peace pilgrimages across the US, France and Palestine. He says he's delighted to share his passion with us all.

August 6: Storytellers/UU Principles - Mary Grace Ketner

Mary Grace Ketner is president of our congregation for this year, 2005-2006. She is a storyteller and an Educational Specialist at the Institute of Texan Cultures.

August 13: "Peace Day: Human Destructive Power" - Rev. Phil Schulman

Human power to intervene or interrupt natural patterns grows by leaps and bounds. There have been some great advances, but also enormously destructive consequences. How shall we respond individually and collectively, to human destructive power?

August 20: Accumulating Values: A personal reflection through story-telling" - Patton White

D. Patton White has lived in Atlanta, GA, since 1979. He graduated from Emory University with degrees in Psychology and Philosophy, and has worked in a variety of fields ever since. He has dressed mannequins, decorated Christmas Trees, ironed clothes, styled advertising photography, danced, choreographed, administrated and taught.

He currently dances with Atlanta and Houston based Core Performance Company, directs Beacon Dance, and teaches at his alma-mater, Emory University. He has been a member of Alternate ROOTS, an artist service organization, since 1998. Patton believes passionately in the transformative power of the arts, and uses the artistic process as a means of social transformation towards a more just world.

August 27: Ingathering and Water Communion - Rev. Phil Schulman

Bring water from where you've been this summer and share stories about your experiences. If you forgot to collect water from your travels, San Antonio tap water makes a good substitute. Samples are not subject to analysis.

#4
FROM OUR PASTOR
Rev. Phil Schulman

Good News: Success is Simple.

Last spring I returned from our district's spring conference encouraged. At that conference there were several congregations represented that had reversed trends of dwindling membership. The confidence instilled in me at that conference has been multiplied ten fold as a result of attending our nation "General Assembly."

I was moved by the diverse ways we give life to our covenant, the principles and purposes of the UUA. From early in the morning to late at night there were workshops, worship services, and presentations showcasing the ordinary and extraordinary expressions of our faith. I experienced as integrated, many aspects of our movement

that have sometimes seemed disparate. The use of the democratic process, science, reason, musical and artistic expression of our spirituality, were woven together and demonstrated the richness of our religious life together

As I witnessed the showcasing of many thriving congregations, I was encouraged by the consistent patterns they shared. All of these began as small churches. Many of them faced dwindling census at one time. Hearing their reports I became certain that if we followed the established patterns of success, then growing to our perfect size will be SIMPLE!

Most important is to establish a common sense of purpose. This doesn't mean putting all plans on hold until a mission statement has been created. We can build upon what we know, and allow a common sense of purpose to develop over time. Some congregations said that the process of reaching consensus on a mission statement was the key to their moving forward. Every "breakthrough congregation" has demonstrated an ability to articulate the covenant that unites them.

We do not have to imitate or become a large church to be successful. Family size churches can be jewels! We can fulfill our mission by choosing a limited number of tasks and doing them well. By keeping things simple, doing the basics well, and not overextending ourselves, it becomes easier to succeed.

What are the essentials? Most, if not all, thriving congregations have quality worship services and RE. They have a pastoral care system in place. There are opportunities for socializing that enable people to experience a connection to a community of purpose. Many thriving groups focus on one social action project per year rather than scatter their efforts.

We can have faith in the power of the presence of our religious liberal community. Success isn't dependent on the number of programs. Our congregations provide fellowship for people who strive to live out UU values, principles and purposes. As we experience quality of community in our religious life together, people will be drawn to us. However, that will be a byproduct of the fact that we already achieved success.

Consider ways that CUUC has helped you to remember and act on your highest values. Appreciate the contributions CUUC has made to the quality of your life, and you will discover our success

#5
RE NEWS
Glenna Jones-Kachtik

RE has been pretty fluid for the month of July.

The first week, the class made all the decor for the 4th of July Picnic and Patty Gullick discussed with them about the flag and some Independence Day facts. The kids taped, and painted and viola' - there were decorations - & they were pronounced good. Then the kids swam in the pool with Von Kachtik watching them.

The second week, we talked about Right and Wrong - What was right, what was wrong and who chose? Most of the children thought that taking drugs not prescribed for you by a Dr.; drinking, cheating, lying, stealing and killing were wrong. Some of them thought smoking should be against the law. Most of them said that the ideas they had about right and wrong came from TV. Individual choice about smoking was not an option in their view. We will re-visit this topic this coming fall or spring.

The fourth week, we will be talking about Heroes specifically in the persona of Hercules and Odysseus as opposed to Spiderman and Superman and the comic book heroes of today. What makes a hero? Are they squeaky clean? Do they have faults? Can anyone be one?

The last week, we will be going into some song lyrics and what they mean - IE: One Tin Soldier, You've Got to Be Taught, etc. Both of these songs explore greed and hate. I think that music, poetry and literature can be powerful teachers. Even movies and TV - even bad movies and bad TV have the power to evoke conversation. It seems to me that one of the reasons that some children are in trouble today is because of the lack of dialog with their parents. Keeping the lines of communication open, letting your children know that they can come to you and discuss ANYTHING is the key. They are more likely to come to you with honest discourse if they know that you will not put anything on the off limits to discuss list.

I always try to have some sort of discussion guide to send home for lessons. I hope that in this vein that I can foster conversations between you and your children. If you have an idea or a topic that interests you that you would like for the children to talk about or hear about, let me know. I will be glad to oblige you. We will be doing some crafty type things this month - hopefully, your children will have a good times and enjoy coming to RE.

#6

Congregational Response to "Church Music" Editorial

Below are some responses from members of the CUUC congregation. Everyone responding has some thoughts well worth considering. It seems that on the whole we are doing a good job of presenting the kind of Sunday-morning music that most people like to hear, but it's also possible that there's more to be said on the subject. So, rather than posting another editorial this month, I'm leaving the subject of church music open

for further discussion. Anyone who wishes to comment on the letters below or to make additional comments should send them to stbotts@texas.net.

Steve

From Peter Van Dusen

I'm happy to provide music whenever I'm asked. It's a pleasure to play, and it gives me further pleasure to know that others enjoy it, too. I think service providers and coordinators should make it a point of including music in each of their services, even if it is recorded music. We usually enjoy live music more than recorded music, but recorded music is better than no music at all. Perhaps the worship committee should start its own CD collection of music appropriate for use on Sunday mornings--and perhaps keep the collection in a designated place near where the hymnals are stored.

From Glenna Jones-Kachtik

I agree that there is sometimes nothing like a good old-fashioned hymn. However, there are times that I am just as uplifted by a wonderful instrumental piece - One of those "aha" type pieces that touch a chord in your soul and reverberates there for a while.

(I will admit that sometimes I miss the organ pieces that Bill Ross plays at 1st UU and the wonderful oboe by Mark Akerman and the choir pieces sung.) I know these are not traditional things that CUUC does; but I wonder how many other "displaced Methodists, Baptists & Lutherans etc" miss those elements of the service?

I always try to choose music that goes with my services. I do not always choose just hymns - as you recall. I just try to find pieces that go with what my topics are. They have ranged from Annie Lennox (Into the West from Lord of the Rings) to Country & Western (Tim McGraw - Live Like You Were Dying) to rock (Styx) to the Eagles to Yanni. There are just some pieces that make you feel sacred and spiritual. That is the point of music in a service. That way, it becomes more than just what are we doing for this part and that part - but is truly integrated!

I guess that I feel that music is such an integral part of a service that it should be chosen with care - if I am going to use Stephanie, I will get with her at the beginning of the week and ask her what she would recommend using as far as hymns and let her know how many. It is not just something that should be left until the last minute and just "Oh, I don't know how about #35 ... everyone likes to sing that one, and while we're thinking about it, lets do #148" I think hymns and music should contribute and tie into the whole service and topic.

Bach gave us God's word. Mozart gave us God's laughter. Beethoven gave us God's fire. God gave us music that we might pray without words."
(Quote found outside an Old Opera House)

From Jean Halff

I enjoy hearing all kinds of music at church. I also like to sing hymns.

From Allen Lawrence

Having been brought up on the decorum and reserve of the Episcopal Church, I favor the music of dead white men, usually of the 18th-19th centuries. The 1940 hymnal was the standard. The few times I have visited in recent years, I noticed that there is a more recent edition, with many hymns I didn't recognize, and didn't much like. A few numbers in the Unitarian book resemble some old ones from Episcopal and Lutheran traditions, and/or are the same, with different words.

Many seem to have tonal progressions that seem unexpected, so I like Peter's idea of running through a number instrumentally first.

Of course a choir is a good idea in any church, because congregations often include few people who actually sing.

#7
Affinity Groups

Women's Support Group
Jean Halff (210-493-7501, jeanhalff@earthlink.net)

The Women's Support Group is open to CUUC women and female friends of the church. We meet every 2 weeks, on a Monday night at the church, starting at 7 p.m. and usually finishing before 9 p.m. Each woman usually talks for about 10 minutes about anything she wishes. However, you don't have to talk if you would rather not. What is divulged is kept confidential unless otherwise stated. It is a great way to get to know the women in the church on a more personal level in a safe environment. We invite you to come and join us and let us get to know you. 7/24 6/26, 8/14, and 8/28 are meeting times for the current period.

Men's Group
Steven Botts (210-522-0981, stbotts@texas.net)

The CUUC men's group meets every second and fourth Sunday from 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.
All CUUC men or visitors are welcome to join us.

Group leadership rotates from meeting to meeting. The leader for each meeting is also the host, and he is responsible for furnishing snacks and drinks.

We usually start off meetings with a clearing, in which each member is allowed to talk about recent events in his life, if he wishes to, for as long as he sees fit. Next, the facilitator introduces the topic for the evening. This may involve a short reading - a poem, an article or other text. The subject could be just about anything that the facilitator would like the group to address: What's going on at CUUC, religion, economics science, health, family, friendship, etc.

Around 8:30, we wind things up by deciding who is going to facilitate the next meeting, declare this one finished, clean up, and leave.

Remarkable Film Group
Clem Chow (210-495-1798, ccima8@swbell.net)

The Remarkable Film Group consists of members and friends of CUUC who gather each month to view one feature film and discuss it afterward. Everyone is welcome to attend. The films are usually shown at church at 6 PM on the third Sunday of each month. Films are shown in a series. The attendees select the theme and content of each series normally compose of four films of a common theme, directed by the same person or featuring a specific actor or actress. Past film series have carried such themes as Women Messiahs or include films directed by John Sayles or those featuring Peter Sellers. Current leaders of the group are Clem and Joyce Chow. Any questions about this group may be directed to Clem or Joyce.

Directory

Officers

President - Mary Grace Ketner, 210-278-0612, mgteller@yahoo.com

Secretary - Vicki Lee Mattern, 210-690-1032, vmattern@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer - Nancy White, 210-650-4785, nancyemerson@gmail.com

Trustee - Daron Sachs, 210-699-0798, daron.sachs@sbcglobal.net

Trustee - Peter Van Dusen, 210-724-1614, flosfr399bc@yahoo.com

Programs Committee - Henry Halff, 210-493-7501, henry@quiensabe.com; Patty Gullick, 210-490-1349, pattygullick@hotmail.com

Member Services Committee - Clem Chow, 210-495-1798, CCIMA8@swbell.net; Jeff Ketner, 210-278-0612, jeffket@sbcglobal.net

Operations Committee - John Bradshaw, 210-341-8506, JandJBradshaw@webtv.net; Allen Lawrence, 210-344-0730, volvonut2002@yahoo.com

Staff

Minister - Phil Schulman, 210-614-2014, schulman@satx.rr.com

Director of Religious Education, Glenna Jones-Kachtik, 210-525-0416, gjkbear@earthlink.net

Email Addresses

Messages to the Board of Trustees may be sent to cuuc-board@yahoogroups.com.

Calendar additions and changes should be submitted to Diane Wilson, calendar@cuucsa.org.

Suggestions for and comments on the worship program may be sent to cuuc-worship@yahoogroups.com.

Requests for special assistance and pastoral care may be sent to cuuc-cares@yahoogroups.com.

Requests for use of the church facility and reports of maintenance problems may be sent to cuuc-ops@yahoogroups.com.

Changes of address, other membership information, and newsletter subscription or unsubscription requests may be sent to cuuc-members@yahoogroups.com.

Material for and questions about the newsletter may be sent to the editor, Steve Botts, stbotts@texas.net.

CUUC Announce is an electronic mailing list for announcements, information, and questions about church programs and activities. All friends and members of the church are urged to join this list by sending an email to cuuc-announce-subscribe@yahoo-groups.com

CUUC Justice is an electronic mailing list devoted to church and denominational programs in the areas of social action, social justice, and social responsibility. Those interested in these programs can join the list by sending an email to cuuc-justice-subscribe@yahoo-groups.com.

CUUC Discuss is a mailing list for exchange of information on any matter of interest to church members and friends. You can join the list by sending an email to cuuc-discuss-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

CUUC Men is the secret mailing list of the CUUC Men's Group. Men who join the list will get in on discussions of Men's Group Activities and the occasional tasteless joke. To subscribe, send an email to cuuc-men-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.