

Unitarian Fellowship of Houston

FELLOWGRAM

Volume 48, No. 02

January 27, 2006

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Merrily Pilot

Sunday Programs

10:00 a.m.—10:50 a.m.: ADULT FORUM.

Analyzing Our Times. This forum is a formatted discussion of a topic chosen by and known only to the leader for that Sunday. See page 7 for more details. Coordinator: Bert Golding

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION meets from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

11 a.m. SERVICE

Child Care Provided

FEBRUARY 5TH — For the Sake of the Song: Songwriting as a Spiritual Practice.

Speaker: Steve Brooks. For the Sake of the Song: Songwriting as a spiritual path. Where do songwriters get their inspirations? How is songwriting like meditation or prayer? Austin Folksinger and UU Steve Brooks answers these questions and more, while unearthing the hidden link between *Oedipus Rex* and *Mama Tried*. He illustrates his ideas with songs by himself and the patron saint of Texas songwriters, Townes Van Zandt. *Steve will be playing a show at JP Hops House, 2317 South Hwy 6, between I-10 and Westheimer, February 4th. He'll be doing a song circle with Saylor White and Mark Zeus.* Coordinator: Val Harrop

FEBRUARY 12TH — We the Heirs of All the Ages. Speaker: Rev. Leonora Montgomery If ever there was a turning point in American history, affecting the whole world, it was in 1776. The heroes of the time could not foresee the distant impact of their actions. Yet they were united in one vision. Will we lose sight of it? Coordinator: Dodie McKellar

FEBRUARY 19 — An Elusive Prize: Civil Rights, History, and the American Character. Speaker: Dr. Orson Cook. The literature of the Civil Rights Movement, once the province of journalists and activist participants, is now increasingly in the hands of professional historians. The result is that our understanding of the Movement is both richer and more nuanced than ever before. Coordinator: Dodie McKellar

Statement of Purpose



We seek to provide an atmosphere of warm companionship and respect for free and inquiring minds, searching together for finer religious, ethical, and social truths, and we work to apply the best we know in our lives, in the lives of our children, and in the service of our fellow humans.

♥♥♥ CARING ♥♥♥

The Caring Committee is an ad hoc group that gathers as needed to care for whomever, however. We hope you stay well with no serious upsets, but if you need a listener, a friend, or a gargoyle, 'just call our name... we'll be there...' UFH Cares. The Caring Committee: Katy Haberman and Carol Ryman

UU Quiz



What UU credited her marriage with "freeing her from bondage to authority, dogmas and conservative ideas and for making of reformer of her."

Answer on page 5

ANNOUNCEMENTS & JOYS AND CONCERNS

For the Holidays — **Emilie Lemmel** was so happy to have her daughter, **Claire** and grand-daughter, **René** from California, here for the holidays.

Joys and Concerns: 01/15 — **Katy Haberman** lit a candle for sheer pride because her daughter Gwen became a vice president at her advertising firm in New York. **Gary Yokie** was happy to report that not only had he achieved a milestone age, but that celebrants at his party donated 200 lbs of food for charity.

Joys and Concerns: 01/22 — **Val Harrop** lit a candle of concern for **Norma Auchter** who suffered from a dizzy spell and is hospitalized for some testing. **Steve Blyskal** is worried about his mother (84) who is hospitalized with pneumonia. On the other hand, Steve is delighted that he will be returning to work as a geologist this week. **Doug Coleman** was busily working on his mother's house, preparing it for sale, when someone walked in and wanted to buy it immediately. **Sarah Berel-Harrop** was happy with the Houston area UU participation in the MLK parade. She considers it a real milestone.

GALD YOU COULD JOIN US!

Visitors were Karen Barfield, Kris Graham, Megan Craig, Matt Gibbs, Ana VanNess Delamater and Rev. & Mrs. Kyle Nagel. We hope to see you again soon.

From the UUA:

Kennedy Keynotes Greater Boston Martin Luther King Day Living Wage Event

US Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) was the keynote speaker for the greater Boston area's January 16 Martin Luther King Day celebration in support of a living wage. The event, which was part of the "Let Justice Roll" Living Wage Day campaign across the US, was held at United First Parish Church Unitarian in Quincy, Massachusetts. ...

Dr. Charlie Clements spoke on behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the UU Service Committee (which he serves as President). Clements recalled Dr. King's remarkable speech, in which he said:

But there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. There comes a time when people get tired of being plunged across the abyss of exploitation where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair. There comes a time when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life's July and left standing in the piercing chill of an Alpine November.

"The 'New Negro' of the South: Behind the Montgomery Story"

—June, 1956

Clements said, "When people are not paid a living wage [it impacts every part of their life]...when they try to provide for their families on \$5.15 an hour...or \$215 a week, they have two jobs, and if the person has a partner, that person has two jobs. So you work every day, and if your daughter has a fever, you go the emergency room, and you have to take a taxi because you can't get a travel voucher, and then you notice that your son has blisters on his feet because his shoes no longer fit...this is what it is like to not earn a living wage." Clements continued, "a living wage has been shown to improve a worker's credit, to reduce workers' use of social service, temporary assistance to needy families, and Medicaid. It has put money into the pocket of workers that is almost always put back into the economy."

Clements introduced Senator Edward M. Kennedy, observing, "When the history books are written, they will no doubt describe Senator Kennedy as the best and most effective Senator of the last 100 years. You can measure his effectiveness with the regularity that the right attacks

(Continued on page 6)



OUR PROGRAMS

January 15th – Spreading Values Through Social Action. Bill Crosier

Bill Crosier is the co-chair of the Progressive Action Alliance, a group dedicated to organizing and advertising activities which foster social awareness and change. Since this talk took place the day before the Martin Luther King holiday, Bill opened his remarks stressing King's beliefs and his dedication to the power of non-violence. King consistently articulated and stood for his values; he was a great communicator of them. His greatness lay partly in his stress on universal values not just on narrow issues. He always spoke about a just society for all people.

We need now to heed his example and to take the word values back; to let the world know that those who work hard deserve dignity, that we respect the Bill of Rights, and that we have a duty to take care of our homes, our community, and our environment.

Our problem is that many of us know what we believe but we cannot say it clearly and quickly. Therefore, we are unable to respond to remarks in a way that is persuasive and from the heart.

In a political debate three levels exist : Values, Issues, and Policy. Frequently we get bested because we to the policy (or lowest level.) If we base our response to adversarial remarks on the values (the highest level in the manner of King) we can be clear, morally responsible, and, perhaps, find some common ground with our discussant.

Bill used the term "framing" to give examples of how the thrust of a debate can be raised to such a "higher" level. He proposed that we use that old familiar sales technique, Elevator Speeches, to frame our values. We do not start with criticism, therefore, but with "I believe _____."

Examples of Elevator Speeches:

1. "I believe in freedom and liberty, low taxes, less government, traditional values, and a strong defense."
2. "I believe in prosperity and opportunity, strong communities, ethics in government, a great education for everyone, and quality, affordable health care for all."
3. "I believe in fairness and opportunity for all, a strong democracy based on ethics, investing in our future, the rights of individuals & families, and leading the world by example."

Elevator speech #1 has been used by some conservative politicians to express their values and justify their positions on important political issues. Speeches 2 and

3 are ones that progressives might use.

Each of the elevator speeches follow the same structure. Each starts with a clear statement of belief ("We believe in") followed by a statement of the two most prominent core values, followed by four statements that express core values with a mix of issues and metaphor. They are all based on values, and that's what makes them strong.

Here's the formula:

We believe in [value] and [value], [expressed value], [expressed value], [expressed value], and [expressed value].

The congregation then divided into small groups and members were asked to pick two core values (from a list of 16) and build elevator speeches by concluding with metaphors.

Small groups reported on their speeches. It became clear that each of us needs several "Elevator Speeches" to respond to such issues as Taxes, Gays and Lesbians, and War, for example.

January 20th— Clarence Darrow.

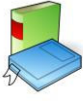

Mr. Darrow and his search for justice came to Houston personified by Gary L. Anderson. Almost 100 people met Mr. Darrow and learned how his vision of freedom and justice shaped his life. The child of liberal parents in a conservative community, Darrow early felt compassion for the less fortunate, those without champion or voice, those deprived of their rights because of their politics, race, gender, ethnic background, or economic status. Ironically, Darrow, who fought for the common man against the big economic interests, spent a number of years working as an attorney for the railroads. Darrow was a complex and flawed man who was, in fact, tried for jury tampering. Nevertheless, he took great pride in never losing a death penalty case (well, his last defendant was sentenced to death but the parole board commuted it to life after Darrow's impassioned pleading). Darrow lived during a time when words were more important than images, and Gary Anderson did a wonderful job bringing him to life for us!

January 22nd — Our Next Fifty Years.

This interactive service asked us to work on defining what the Fellowship now means in our lives and to do some visioning for the future. When asked for the single word that symbolizes the Fellowship, members used words like family, welcoming, inclusive, openness, compassion, and belonging to define their connection. Common answers for the meaning that members found

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February 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		Book Club, 7:30 pm	1 Yoga Class, 7:15-8:30 pm	2 Sunrider Grp, 7-9 pm	3	4
5 For the Sake of the Song	6	7	8 Lynn Philpot BD Yoga	9	10	11 Ch of God, 12-6 pm
12 We the Heirs of All the Ages	13 Peggy Tennyson BD	14 Valentine's Day 	15 Yoga Class, 7:15-	16	17	18
19 Civil Rights & History	20	21	22 Jan LaRocque BD Yoga Class,	23	24	25
26 Bob Tucker	27	28				

Special Scheduled Events

HMTA—February 8th, 9-12 pm

Compassion in Choices—February 12th, 1:30 pm

Piano Recital—February 12th, 4-6 pm

Piano Recital—February 19th, 2:30-5:30 pm

Piano Recital—February 26th, 2-4 pm

Board Meeting— Sunday, February 19th, after the service. All are welcome to attend.

Monthly Scheduled Events

Every Monday Night — The Blue Notes, 7 pm

Every First Tuesday— The Book Club, 7:30 pm

Every Wednesday — RS Society, 6:15 to 7:15 pm

Every Saturday — Art Class, 9:30 to 12:30 pm

Every Saturday — Church of God, 12 to 4:30 pm (extended hours or them not being here, noted on calendar.)

Every Third Saturday — Humanists of Houston, 2:30 to 4:30 pm

Heart and Soul Festival Benefit Luncheon and Concert

Saturday, February 18 at First Presbyterian Church of Houston

5300 Main Street, Houston, TX 77004

Luncheon: Noon, Fellowship Hall, luncheon music by First Presbyterian Church Campanile Bells

Concert: 1 pm., Sanctuary

Concert performers include:

Dr. Rhonda Furr, organist, First Presbyterian Church

Dr. Ann Frohbieter, organist, Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church

Vadim Tunitsky, cantor, Congregation Emanu El

Choral Ensemble led by Robert Simpson, Christ Church Cathedral

Praise Team and Band, St. John's United Methodist Church

Ticket donation \$25 to benefit the Heart and Soul Festival touring Houston's Historic Sacred Places along the Main Street Corridor, May 5. (free tour) For more information, contact Mary Knapp, 713.666.1181.

UU Quiz Answer:

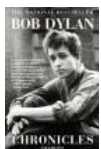
Carolina Maria Seymour Severance (January 18, 1820 – November 10, 1914). Severance and her husband left the Presbyterian Church soon after their marriage. She said, "We could no longer sit conscientiously under a preacher, or in a fellowship, where the golden rule of Christianity was not recognized as applicable to all men, whatever the color of their skin, or crinkle, or non-crinkle of their hair." They formed the Independent Christian Church whose members were antislavery. Their home in Cleveland was a center of the suffrage and anti-slavery movements and was often visited by transcendentalists such as Emerson and Alcott. In 1875, they moved to Los Angeles where Severance championed "Christian Socialism, Progressivism, anti-imperialism and peace." More on this important UU can be found at: <http://www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/carolineseverance.html>.

Other December UU Birthdays:

Roger Nash Baldwin 01/21 Founder of the ACLU
Paul Newman 01/26 American actor

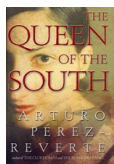
First Tuesday Book Club

Here are the upcoming books to be discussed:



February 7, 2006, "Chronicles Vol. I", Bob Dylan. "I'd come from a long ways off and had started a long ways down. But now destiny was about to manifest itself. I felt like it was looking right at me and nobody else." So writes Bob Dylan in *Chronicles: Volume One*, his remarkable book exploring critical junctures in his life and career. Through Dylan's eyes and open mind, we see Greenwich Village, circa 1961, when he first arrives in Manhattan. Dylan's New York is a magical city of possibilities -- smoky, nightlong parties; literary awakenings; transient loves and unbreakable friendships. Elegiac observations are punctuated by jabs of memories, penetrating and tough. With the book's side trips to New Orleans, Woodstock, Minnesota and points west, *Chronicles: Volume One* is an intimate and intensely personal recollection of extraordinary times.

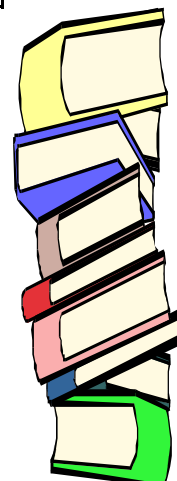
March 7, 2006, "Queen of the South" by Arturo Perez-Reverte. *From Bookmarks Magazine* - Spanish author Arturo Pérez-



Reverte's sixth thriller, modeled after Dantès' story in Alexandre Dumas's *Count of Monte Cristo*, received mixed reviews. For some critics, it's a rip-roaring read that showcases an impressive insight into the international drug trade. In fact, the author draws such vivid, convincing details and "knows so much about drug running it's gotta be illegal" (*Salon.com*). But a few critics disliked the incongruities of the structural set-up. It makes no sense why the first-person narrator, a reporter chronicling Teresa's story, can articulate Teresa's emotions, sexual experiences, and interior dramas, which the novel meticulously mines. Put that quibble aside and the novel is rich, compelling, and, yes, thrilling.

April 4, 2006, "Goodbye to All That" by Robert Graves.

These books should all be available from the library and in paperback from your favorite bookstore. If you have a book to suggest, please let me know and we'll bring it up for a vote at our next meeting. You can reach me at 713.680.1401 or jlarcocque22@hotmail.com *Jan LaRocque*



The Fellowship Book Club meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Fellowship Library and is open to all book lovers.

ADULT FORUM

The Adult Forum meets on Sunday at 10:00 am.

A formatted discussion of a topic chosen by and known only to the leader for that Sunday.

On **January 15th and 22nd**, the Forum group discussed the subjects of Crime and Abortion.

"Where have all the criminals gone?" In the early 1990's just after the children born after Roe vs Wade hit their late teens, crime began to fall. Since 1985, states with high abortion rates have 30% drop in crime relative to low abortion rate states.....

All members and visitors are invited to attend the Forum for an always lively discussion. The topic is not known until the session begins; everyone has a chance to speak out, and new volunteers to bring next week's topic are always sought.

Paul Donoho/Bert Golding

**The Center for the Healing of Racism
In Partnership with The Men inMission
Presents:**

Letters from a Birmingham Jail – Dialogue

Facilitated by

Members of The Men in Mission

Hosted by

The Council on Alcohol and Drugs

Thursday, February 02, 2006

7:00 - 9:00 pm

303 Jackson Hill Street

Houston, TX 77007

North of Memorial Dr off Heights Blvd.

In a workshop setting participants will have an opportunity to visit or re-visit the famous words of Dr. Martin Luther King's Birmingham Jail letters, discuss the impact of those words as share personal experiences or observances of how Dr. King helped to change the world.

THE CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM
Presents a Special Video Screening and Discussion of:
Race - The Power of an Illusion

Race - The Power of an Illusion questions the very idea of race as biology, suggesting that a belief in race is no more sound than believing that the sun revolves around the earth. Yet race still matters. Just because race doesn't exist in biology doesn't mean it isn't very real, helping shape life chances and opportunities. By

asking, What is this thing called 'race'?, a question so basic it is rarely asked, Race - The Power of an Illusion helps set the terms that any further discussion of race must first take into account.

Facilitated discussion after each segment

7:00 pm-9:00 pm

February 9, 16, and 23, 2006

303 Jackson Hill

North of Memorial Drive just off Heights Blvd.

The series will also be presented at:

Unitarian Universalist Church

5200 Fannin Street @ Southmore

February 28, March 7, and March 14, 2006

7:00 pm-9:00 pm

**The session is free and open to the public; registration is required by calling the Center's office at 713-520-8226

THE CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM

P.O.Box 27327

Houston, Texas 77227

(713) 520-8226 or e-mail: cfhr1@juno.com

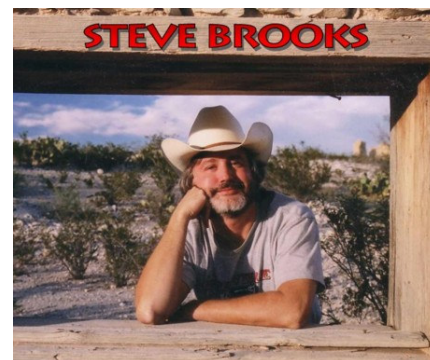
www.centerhealingracism.org

**A Little bit about
our Speaker for
February 5th ~~**

*"Steve is an
extraordinary
Austin songwriter,"
says Cyd Wright of
Quillen's
Coffeehouse. "His*

songs can be hysterically funny or tearfully sad."
Best-known for writing a song-a-week for Jim Hightower's radio show, his work has been recorded by artists like Kevin So, Emily Kaitz and Slaid Cleaves, who calls him, "A great unsung songwriter of Austin." He's had music in two films and appeared in two more, including the 2004 release "**Barbecue: A Texas Love Story.**"

More info at www.stevebrooks.net.



Greater Houston UU's March in MLK Parade

On Monday, January 16, the Greater Houston UU Congregations marched in Houston's MLK Grande Parade. This was great fun. **Sarah Berel-Harrop** represented the Unitarian Fellowship of Houston and carried the UUSC banner. **Sue and Jim Null** brought many PFLAG signs, and most people who didn't themselves bring a sign carried a PFLAG sign. These made an impact. One young lady who was with a nearby high school band came up and thanked **Roger Donley** of PFLAG, who was holding one of the banners. Also **Rainbo** marched, or more properly, danced, with the PFLAG contingent, carrying a sign commemorating Bayard Rustin, a gay man who was instrumental in organizing the 1963 March on Washington. **Rainbo** was a big hit with the crowd; so was the "Bring the Troops Home" banner.



Covenant Church joined the march with its own banner. Pastor **Jeremy Rutledge** and several of his congregants, including two children and a little tiger, were in attendance. **Rev. Paul Beedle** carried Thoreau Congregation's beautiful GA banner. **Irv Smith** also braved the distance from Stafford, and **Jeanne Edmonds**, who has a connection to Northwoods UU, came from the Woodlands in response to PFLAG's call for marchers. **Herbert and Deborah Rothschild** brought a Houston Peace and Justice Center Banner. First UU's **Richard Braastad** carried an earth flag. **Rev. Jose Ballester** memorialized the event in photos, and **Tom Cowan** and **Adam Robinson** led the way with a large banner, which listed all the Houston area UU congregations. **Will Bolin** attended, wearing his **Journey of Hope** t-shirt, and others in attendees included First Church's **Don Cook**, **David Collins**, **Martha Nottingham**, and **Nan Hildreth**.

This event came together very well. **Irv Smith** estimated the length he walked, including time from train station to the parade and back, at four miles, so it's not for everyone. I was sore for a couple days after the parade. However I definitely will participate next year, and I hope many of you will do the same!

We are a justice-seeking people

Connections is a prison pen-pal program organized through First UU Church CIC committee.



Execution Vigils are held from 5:30 – 6:20 the night of each execution in Texas. The site for the vigil changes every two months. In January the site is St. Anne's, Shepard and Westheimer. Upcoming executions this month: Wednesday January 25 and Tuesday January 31.

White Privilege Conference will be held April 26, 2006 – April 29, 2006 in St. Louis, MO. <http://whiteprivilegeconference.com/>

Project R.I.O.T. serves homeless youth in the Montrose area. The holidays are over, but it's still cold outside! We continue to collect items such as gloves, socks, and toiletries in the R.I.O.T. box in the lobby. Also, RIOT serves meals on Thursday nights at Interfaith Ministries. Volunteers may also work directly with the youth or make sandwiches for others to serve.

A box remains in the lobby for **Interfaith Ministries**. Items being collected are listed on the box.

For information about participating in any of the social justice work listed, contact Sarah at sbh930@sbcglobal.net or 281-813-0660.



We are Gay and Straight together

Parents, Family, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) meets the first Sunday of each month at St.

Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 S. Main at Binz, 2 – 4:30 PM. Upcoming meeting topics include:

February 5, 2006, 2-4:30 PM, Can GLBT people find lasting love relationships? Panel of long-term couples talk about their relationships.

March 5, 2006 2-4:30 PM, PFLAG National Executive

(Continued from page 8)

Director Jody Huckaby will address PFLAG Houston.

PFLAG is not just for parents! Straight allies and GLBT persons are most welcome. Hope to see you there!

March 15, 2006, 7:30 PM, The Struggle for Truth: Voices from the Margins. Interfaith Panel discusses marginalization and how theology can lead to more inclusion of GLBT's. Free and open to the public. <http://www.rothkochapel.org/Margins.htm> for more info. This is the third program in a series: Preserving Spiritual Values in the Face of Religious Differences: A Series of Encounters. <http://www.rothkochapel.org/religion.htm>

Would you like to meet people in an emotionally safe, non-threatening environment? There are some people interested in forming a gay-friendly social group in the Houston area. This could take the form of films and discussion, games night, potlucks, etc. Basically it is a way to meet people and have some fun. Contact Sarah at sbh930@sbcglobal.net or 281-813-0660 if you are interested in participating in such a group.

What direction should our social justice program take??? Let's have a retreat to develop a list of priorities and an action plan, now that we've raised some funds and increased our congregation's visibility in the community through the Darrow show. Let's try Saturday February 11, 2006, 10 AM, leaving the ending time open, except that the meeting will go not later than 2 PM.

(Continued from page 6)

windows), Email or Call Coordinator June Godwin at jknight11@haugnet.org. Saturday 18 February 2006 initiates the Family - Dinner for Eight section at the home of Richard & Kristi, Ethan & Griffin Moir! Also planning to attend will be Sarah Berel-Harrop and her two daughters Mary & Fiona.

There could be more - five other families, a potential of 29 (with 10 mostly teen boys & 3 grade school girls) are being invited. This could be a very popular part of Dinner for Eight, which is historically for adults only.

1st Sat. D/8 group will not meet til 6-8 participants can commit. It fell apart for 4Feb.

There will be no D/8 in April. There will instead be a Seder Dinner for all.

3rd Sat - Dinner for Eight got off to a festive start on 21 January with dinner for six at June Godwin's apt. in Spring Branch. Diners were Judy Emerson, Katy & John Haberman, Winona & Lloyd Stewart and June. We had a great time.



*Thoreau's Good for
Somethin' Coffeehouse
Presents
Anne Feeney*



Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 18, for an enjoyable evening with your friends at the Thoreau Coffeehouse with musician Anne Feeney. The Pittsburgh-based Feeney has a bottomless songbag which draws on Irish, bluegrass, traditional, labor, folk and contemporary material. She's as likely to sing a traditional song or an obscure gem by one of her many friends in the singer/songwriter circuit as she is to sing one of her own award-winning songs. Feeney performs music designed to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

The doors open at 7:30 pm; music starts at 8:00 pm. Suggested donation: \$15 adults, \$7 students \$7. Thoreau is located at 3945 Greenbriar in Stafford. Directions can be found at www.tuuc.org.

"I adore Anne Feeney, not only because she's a wonderful songwriter, which she is, but also because she's a person who has lived her songs. Anne is a role model for us." – Peter Yarrow (of Peter Paul and Mary)

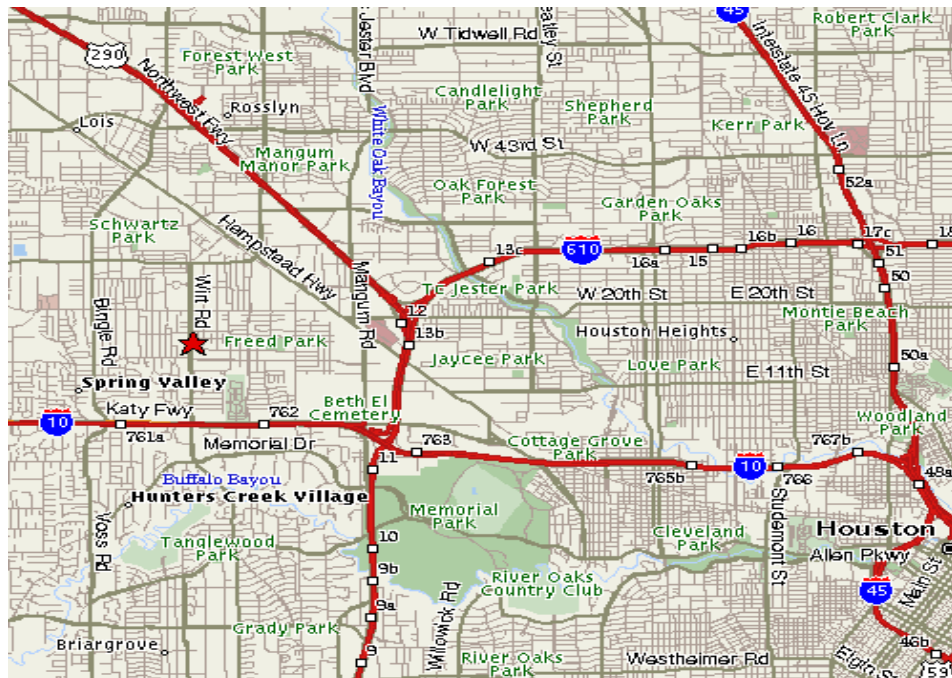
"Congratulations on your fine songwriting, Anne!" – Pete Seeger



Unitarian Fellowship of Houston
A Unitarian Universalist Congregation
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Fax: 713-686-7664
Email: ufhouston@sbcglobal.net

See us on our Website!
www.ufoh.org



Come join with fellow religious liberals as we profess our belief in the inherent worth of everyone and celebrate the interdependent web of life.