

FELLOWGRAM

VOLUME 52, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 8, 2010

SUNDAY PROGRAMS

JANUARY 17 — *Embracing Diversity* - Kim Willis

Do we want to tolerate differences or joyously embrace them? Truly understanding the concept of white privilege and recognizing how it oppresses everyone is a big step toward going beyond tolerance.

JANUARY 24 — *Snap Shots: a creative journey* - Julie Wilson. The artistic creative impulse resides in all of us, and whatever form it takes, when we are in its midst, we are in touch with and sharing in the central energy of “Creation.” *Snap Shots*, first CD, is a collection of songs done in two recording sessions, a year apart. Please join me, Mike Wheeler, guitar, and Dennis Dotson, trumpet, as I share my creative process with you.

JANUARY 31— *C.S. Peirce: An Original American Thinker* - Dwight Raulston will discuss the first philosopher to apply “pragmatism” to the problems of philosophy, Peirce applied a scientific perspective to the problems of philosophy, bringing a uniquely American approach to the discipline. In spite of being denied a public position commensurate with his intellect because of university politics, Peirce influenced public thought in America for decades.

FEBRUARY 7 — *You Are Loved!* - Joanna Fontaine Crawford

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Come “Early” for Our 10 AM—10:50 AM OFFERINGS!

Children’s Religious Education *RE wing. Details on page 2.*

ADULT FORUM *Analyzing Our Times—Workroom. Details on page 3.*

Building Your Own Theology Group (BYOT) *Discussion to help participants search for and develop a personal theology—RE Room 1.*

FOCUS GROUP *Book discussion group—Library. Details on page 4.*

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

We know that people search for a religious community for three reasons – for personal spiritual growth, to do good in the world, and to be social. Of course, these reasons still exist once you are a part of the congregation, though we may not always keep them all in mind.

But it is the new year – while you are considering your hopes and goals for the year, think about how this Fellowship can be a part of it all.

Personal Spiritual Growth – Of course, we'll start with the obvious Sunday programming – talk about current events with the Forum, study a book with the Focus group, or discuss your spiritual path with the Building Your Own Theology group. At 11am, scoot into the sanctuary for the rhythms of worship—the peaceful setting, the joyful music, the warmth of being together, and thought-provoking sermons and stories. Consider, as well, programming between Sundays – the Book Club meets the first Tuesday of each month and we'll be starting an adult theology course – What Moves Us in the coming months – an opportunity for each of us to embrace our inner meaning maker!

Doing Good in the world – We continue our partnership with Turning Point Center – making lunch the third Saturday of each month. We also have opportunities to work with other UU churches in the area on Rebuilding Together Houston in April. And of course, keep filling your box for Guest At Your Table – that money does A LOT of good in the world!

And, of course, we come to the Fellowship to have social needs met. For some of us, weekly coffee hour or a brunch at Otillia's is enough. But if you are looking for more, see the programming above, and then look at all the different ways we eat together -- monthly luncheons, dinners for Eight, Second Odd Sunday potlucks...and did you know that there are still some seats open for my Chocolat dinner party on February 27th? Eat a lovely French meal, then enjoy the Johnny Depp- Juliette Binoche film while sampling delectable chocolate treats!

Come to the Fellowship at 10am this (and every!) week and let your spirit be filled! If you would like to learn more about faith development opportunities, come to our circle any Sunday, or speak with Bob Wiener or me! Our next committee meeting will be 7pm, February 11th in the workroom.

Yours in faith,

Katy Carpman
Director of Religious Education
ufhdre@comcast.net

UU QUIZ

Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered a eulogy for which Unitarian minister?

Answer on page 7

Who Are the Special Guests at My Table?

These two women are Laurel Firestone (left) and Susana De Anda, of Community Water Center, in Visalia, Calif. They are UUSC allies in the growing movement for water justice in California. De Anda explains, "We work on the principle that clean drinking water is a basic human right, not a privilege."

Learn more about California's campaign for the human right to water in [Stories of Hope](#).

Remember this year gifts of \$100 or more are matched by the Shelter Rock Congregation!

TUESDAY BOOK CLUB

Here are our upcoming books:

February 2, 2010, “The Wordy Shipmates” by Sarah Vowell (272 pp) Although Puritanism is conflated with modern religious fundamentalism and its disregard for any learning that doesn't come from the Bible, Vowell argues passionately that Puritans were as enamored of wisdom and knowledge as religious virtue. Focusing on the Puritans who settled in 1692 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Vowell laments the image of Puritans as “boring killjoys” when in fact they were “fascinating killjoys” who, aside from their belief that Catholics were going to hell, were much more open to new ideas than we've been led to think. Drawing on letters, essays, and sermons, Vowell offers a penetrating look at the tensions between John Winthrop, John Cotton, Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, and others as they argued about the role of religion in government and everyday life. They saw themselves as God's chosen people, a credo that set the tone for American history and notions of manifest destiny that have led to all manner of imposition on other lands and cultures. But they also vehemently debated separation of church and

state and founded Harvard, even as they pondered the destiny of what Winthrop referred to as the “shining city on the hill.” A book dense with detail, insight, and humor.

March 2, 2010, “Little, Big” by John Crowley. John Crowley's masterful *Little, Big* is the epic story of Smoky Barnable, an anonymous young man who travels by foot from the City to a place called Edgewood—not found on any map—to marry Daily Alice Drinkwater, as was prophesied. It is the story of four generations of a singular family, living in a house that is many houses on the magical border of an otherworld. It is a story of fantastic love and heartrending loss; of impossible things and unshakable destinies; and of the great Tale that envelops us all. It is a wonder.

April 6, 2010, “The Woman Behind the New Deal: The Life and Legacy of Frances Perkins, Social Security, Unemployment Insurance” by Kristin Downey (available in paperback in February, 2010)

Much of the social reform that has made President Franklin D. Roosevelt so beloved—Social Security, fair labor practices, minimum wage—were actually ideas conceived and pushed by his labor secretary, Frances Perkins, the first female cabinet member and a woman constrained by the sexism of the era as well as her personal circumstances. Drawing on extensive archival research, Downey offers a riveting portrait of a determined social reformer who pushed a shrewd politician to make substantive changes in the American workplace.

Our books should all be available at the library and in paperback at your favorite bookstore. You can reach me at ufhlibrary@comcast.net.
Jan

The **Fellowship Book Club** meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Fellowship Library of the Unitarian Fellowship of Houston, 1504 Wirt Road and is open to all book lovers.

ADULT FORUM

We meet Sunday Mornings at 10 AM. Our topics are unannounced. Our discussions are often lively and intense, but remain polite and friendly.

December 22nd: Ø Sid George discussed his 3 months in Kabul, Afghanistan where he hopes to establish elementary schools. (*12 present*)

December 27th: Ø Videos were shown of scenes of Kabul, Afghanistan where Sid has been for three months working to establish an elementary school. (*Topic: Sid George, 11 present*)

January 3rd: Ø The group discussed our presidents from FDR to Obama. Who were our favorites, and what did they do that we liked or disliked? (*Topic by Jimmy Dunne, 11 present*)

We gather in the workroom and ALL ARE WELCOME!

January 2010

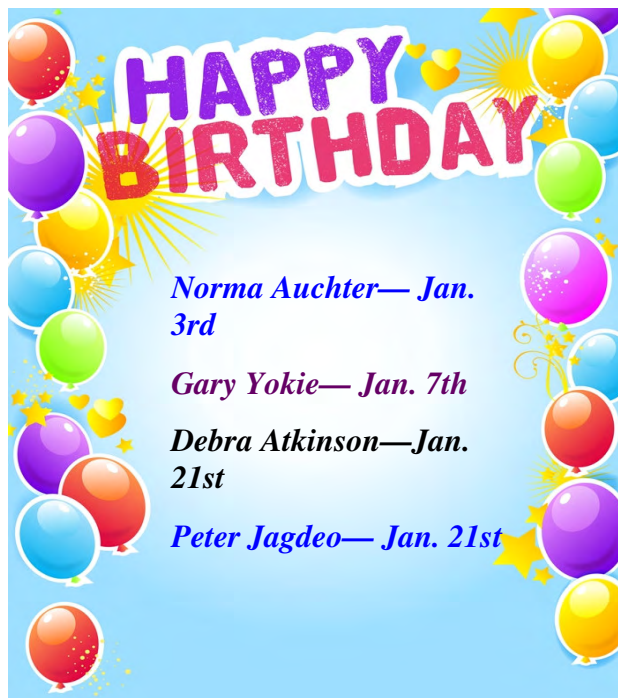
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 John Pepper, 11 am	4	5	6 Book Club, 7:30 pm	7	8	9
10 Wayne Derrick, 11 am	11	12	13 Medical Focus Grp, 7:00 pm	14	15	16
17 Kim Willis, 11 am	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Julie Wilson, 11 am Recital, 1:30-4 pm	25	26	27 Spring Branch Democratic grp, 6-9 pm	28	29 Recital, 6:30-8 pm	30
31 Dwight Raulston, 11 am Recital, 1:30-3 pm						

MONTHLY SCHEDULES ON PAGE 5



FOCUS GROUP

We meet each Sunday at 10:00am in the Library. We are reading and discussing, chapter by chapter, The Thirteen American Arguments: Enduring Debates that Define and Inspire Our Country by Howard Fineman. Come give us a try--our discussions are lively and stimulating and inclusive.



JOYS AND CONCERNS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dec. 27th - **Judy Emerson** was pleased to see son **Gary** in the Islands (warm, that is) and wearing a bathing suit and a Santa cap! **June Godwin** a candle for the life of her cousin, **Peter**, who took his own life. **Sam Philpot** who remembered Ed Case, an announcer and local figure at K-ARTS and the Big Band Show in the 40's. His wife reports he is now in hospice. **Bob Wiener** sadly revealed that his brother Frank's house burned down. Fortunately no one was hurt. **Magdiel Martinez** has hopes that after a difficult 2009, 2010 will be better. **Pat Ballinger** lit a memory candle for her son, who had he lived, would have been 45 on Christmas Day. **Peggy Tennyson's** niece continues to require surgery after a lifetime of such - 50 of them - to treat her rare condition.

Jan. 3rd - **Harold Rud** is finally better and it was good to be back and see everyone. He wished us all a healthy New Year. **Jonathan Needle** is looking forward to the

(Continued on page 7)

MONTHLY SCHEDULED EVENTS

Every First Tuesday: The Book Club, 7:30 pm (Library)

Every First Thursday: Ladies Luncheon, 1 pm (Hunan Chef on I-10, near Home Depot)

Every Second Thursday: RE Committee Meeting, 7:00 pm (Workroom)

Every Second Wednesday of the month: Medical Focus Group, 7:00 to 9:00 pm (workroom)

Every Second Sunday: Offertory goes to benefit lunch for Turning Point

Every Third Saturday: Volunteer to help serve lunch at Turning Point (sign-up sheet is located at the front desk or just ask Dodie or David O.)

Every Saturday: Church of God, 12 to 4:30 pm (ext'ed hours on calendar)

Every Third Thursday: Men's Luncheon, 12:20 pm at Nam's

Every Wednesday: the SSSC (RS) Society, 6:15 pm (Sanctuary)

Monday—Friday: Shining Star Waldorf School, 8:30-3:00 (RE Wing)

OUR PROGRAMS

Christmas Eve Program - December 24th

Under the artful direction of Annette Rybiski with the expert aid of Peggy Tennyson, Katy Haberman and a host of music makers, another Christmas Eve program was enjoyed by all. Included were a selection of traditional hymns, secular music and the ever popular "Twelve Days of Christmas." Solos by Kim Willis and Rory Jagdeo were highlights. A string duet performed by Darcy Ford-James and Jan LaRocque concluded a memorable evening. This year Annette gave us a splendid history lesson from the Reverend Marlin Lavanhar, showing us that Christmas is more a Unitarian holiday than a Christian one, from the trees and gifts to the messages of hope and greater compassion! (Rev. Lavanhar's sermon is available at

<http://www.allsoulschurch.org/Websites/AllSouls/Images/122301Why%20Christmas.pdf>)

December 27th – Kwanzaa – Val Harrop, Julie Wilson, Judy Emerson, Fellowship Youth

Kwanzaa is a six day festival developed in the late sixties by Dr. Maulana Karenga to promote positive self-identity and a positive secular value system for African-Americans. These principles can be helpful to us as well, in our own lives and our congregations. It is a new holiday, but it is patterned after ancient African harvest festivals. Its five main components are gathering, reverence, commemoration, recommitment, and celebration. We gather to evaluate the fruits of the last year's harvest. We gather reverently and with respect for our community. We commemorate the work we all have done, and we make goals for the next year's harvest (recommitment). Finally, we celebrate the gifts we have and the work we have done. I think the harvest analogy is appropriate to our lives – we sow today the seeds that we and our children will reap. There are seven Kwanzaa candles. The black candle is a celebration of being black, of the unique and special qualities each person brings to the whole family or community. It is a candle of the present, of today. The green candles are vision candles—candles of hopes, dreams, and promises for the future. The red candles are struggle candles, past candles, candles the color of blood, candles the color of courage. The candles help African Americans remember a long struggle against injustice, against unfairness, and promise each other that they will continue to work together against injustice. And the seven principles: Unity, Self-determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Co-operative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith, enhance and enrich all of our lives.

January 3rd – Hope for the New Year – John Pepper

John dedicated his sermon to various people who acted from hope.

- Frances Perkins, architect of the New Deal, believed that the life we got was a function of grace, not merit or sin. Therefore a godly society would be a gracious society where the community should graciously guarantee basic provision for its individual members while allowing maximum freedom to make their way in the world.
- John's friend, Darrell Dacus, who, after being diagnosed with AIDS, dedicated himself to giving back to the community through his participation with the American Cancer Society and formed the most successful fundraising arm, Victory, which raises well over a million dollars each year through the Cattle Baron's Ball and the Holiday Shopping Card.
- Ann Walling, a retired Episcopal priest, helped Cambodian women distribute their scarves through a website she created called Bluesilk.org.
- The Supreme Court in Iowa unanimously struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, allowing same-sex marriages to become legal just three weeks later.
- In Denver, Colorado, Rev. Mark Tidd leads a growing evangelical church which welcomes "queer or straight here, there is no hate here." He calls his position not one of lenience, but a matter of justice. It's not that sin is not real, but it's not a sin to be gay or act in accordance with your nature.
- Greg Mortenson builds schools and hope of a new approach beyond the standard drumbeat of war and conquest. His books Three Cups of Tea and Stones into Schools have become required reading for leaders and Special Forces deployed in Afghanistan.
- Michael Bhatia, before losing his life to an IED, worked for change as a part of a military program, the Human Terrain

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MINISTRY WITHOUT HIERARCHY

Clericalism is a model of leadership that disempowers those who are led or served, and turns them into clients and dependents. This is opposed to ministry, in which one uses gifts and powers of leadership to empower others, to teach them, to draw out their capacities, so that one can enter into a relationship of mutuality. ...

This understanding of ministry does not mean that there aren't structures, or that certain people aren't chosen to lead at times; it simply means that the mandate of leadership is to nurture the community into mutual ministry, rather than to disempower the community and make its people into dependents.

The attempt of basic Christian communities to overcome this clericalism is relevant to feminism because what disempowers women in ministry is clericalism, which is built on the patriarchal model of relationships. Women will always be disempowered in ministry as long as ministry is understood in terms of patriarchal clericalism.

The most critical focus for feminism in the church is precisely the liberation of the church itself from patriarchy. Women in the church cannot really rest with a clerical, patriarchal church. They must struggle to convert the church to an understanding of its mission, which will include the full promotions of the humanity of women. The church must come to recognize that patriarchy is fundamentally contrary to the gospel and that the liberation of humanity from patriarchy is in fact an intrinsic aspect of the mission of the church itself. – Rosemary Radford Ruether

In my opinion, UU Fellowships embody this model of ministry along with our cherished democratic principles. Unfortunately, these same concepts are often in direct opposition to patriarchal forms of church governance. Using Ruether's eloquent words once again, our challenge is to use our own personal "gifts and powers of leadership to empower others, to teach them to draw out their capacities, so that (we) can enter into a relationship of mutuality" and that is what belonging to a Fellowship and being in Ministry means to me.

Namaste!

John Pepper, UUA Intern Minister

(Continued from page 6)

System. He helped the military understand the Afghan society and culture, and, through that understanding the military has reduced the fallout from lethal force.

All these people have made a difference by being the difference and their actions have given hope to the hopeless. Their passions, their efforts, their actions speak louder than mere words. As we move forward into this beautiful and hopeful New Year, John prays that our actions, too, will speak louder than our words.

(Continued from page 5)

day that babysitters make themselves known. **Bob Wiener** is concerned for his parents who are both elderly and frail and in the hospital. His father has an infection, and his mother fell and broke her hip. **Winona Stewart** lit a

candle in remembrance of long-time member John Heard who passed away in Minnesota last week. **Adrianna Weathers** lit a candle for a friend who has been diagnosed with a serious and incurable illness. **Doug Coleman** went to Colorado for the holidays and visited a Pueblo Indian Village near Santa Fe on his return. He was very fascinated with the indigenous culture, especially their calendar which marked solstices and equinoxes by simply drilling holes in appropriate places, a marked contrast to Stonehenge.

Note: All who knew Jean & John Heard, please feel free to sign a card we have at the front desk.

ALSO: Anyone who has brought things/items for the kitchen and has not taken them home yet, should look in the boxes in the hallway marked, "Garage Sale Items" before you won't be able to get them back....

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF HOUSTON

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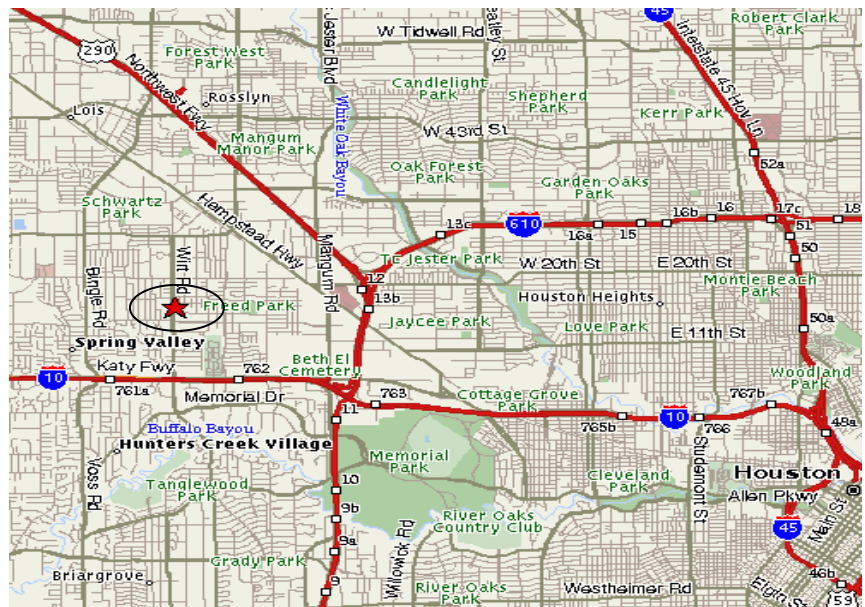


See us on our
Website!
www.ufoh.org

GO GREEN! SAVE A TREE! *If you wish to receive the Fellowshipgram by email or do not want to receive it at all, please send us a message or call and let us know.*

Unitarian Fellowship of Houston 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.



A bunch of Agnostics, Atheists, Buddhists, Christians, Humanists, Jews, Muslims, Pagans, Quakers, Skeptics, spiritual non-religious seekers, and other random people all go to church together on Sunday....And you've been missing out.