



FELLOWGRAM

VOLUME 52, ISSUE 8

April 16, 2010

SUNDAY PROGRAMS

APRIL 25 — *Belief and Truth.* David Garver

Sometimes we believe things that are untrue. Sometimes we disbelieve things that are true. How do we get to that sweet spot where belief and truth overlap to become knowledge, and why is it important to understand and recognize the differences between what we believe and what we know?

MAY 2— *This I Believe* – John Pepper

National Public Radio has a program called *This I Believe*. It is often inspiring and hopefully we can be equally inspiring. We are really good at articulating what we don't believe, and this will be an opportunity for a few of our members to stake out their positions on what they do believe. Please join us as several of our courageous members step up to the podium and take on this very personal task.

MAY 9— *Don't Let Your Kitties (and Doggies) Grow up to be Mamas* – Lisa Gilchrist & Kim Willis

We will forego the traditional Mother's Day type service this year and focus on the issue of pet overpopulation and the resulting outcomes. We will discuss the movement to No Kill sheltering and how the seeming paradox of too many and decreasing euthanasia can be successfully addressed. (*The Children & Youth of the fellowship will offer a tea party for the caregivers of their families & congregation following the service.*)

MAY 16 — *Inspiration.* Don Levit

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PRESIDENT

Harold Rud

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Wiener

TREASURER

Val Harrop

BOARD SECRETARY

Victoria Chin

TRUSTEES

Wayne Derrick

David Garver

Dodie McKellar

David Oxman

Peggy Tennyson

STAFF

ADMINISTRATOR

Doranne Solomon

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Katy Carpmán

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



“Miss Katy!” pleads one of our Fellowship kids. “When can we bring in our guinea pigs again?” He isn’t the only one who’s asking. The good news for all of them? Summer programming starts in less than two months!

That’s right – when schoolbooks and uniforms and lunchboxes get put away, we switch up Sunday school as well. Of course, there is no way that we would let their brains and spirits shrivel over the long, hot summer – instead, we have new and exciting opportunities for fun learning every week between June 27th and September 12th. Obviously, we will have a kid-led lesson on how to feed and nurture guinea pigs. Another child asks to do a lesson on origami, because he is really good at that.

What are YOU really good at? What makes you happy to wake up in the morning – what special skill can you share? Each of us is gloriously unique and gifted with something – summer program is a great time to share your gift.

We’ll start sign-ups on May 2nd, so I’m giving you a bit of time to come up with an idea of three. Or if you want to flip through the resources and ready-made resources we already have, just let me know!

In the meantime, we’re keeping busy with weekly stories and activities in our Moral Tales curriculum, participating in services, and planning special celebrations for the caregivers in our lives – we’ll sponsor our traditional tea party on Mother’s Day (May 9th) and we’re looking for some sweet ideas for Father’s Day as well!

Come to the Fellowship at 10 AM this (and every!) week to learn, to find joy, and to celebrate. To learn more about faith development opportunities, join our circle any Sunday, or speak with Bob Wiener or me! Our next committee meeting will be 7 PM, Thursday, May 13th in the workroom.

In faith,

Katy Carpman

Director of Religious Education

ufhdre@comcast.net

UU QUIZ

Who may have been the first minister to preach Unitarianism under that name in the United States?

Answer on page 7

Spring UU Music Festival ~ Saturday, May 1 – 3:00 to 9:00 PM

Will take place rain or shine at the Unitarian Fellowship of Houston, 1504 Wirt Road

MUSIC & FIRE SPINNERS ~ BELLY DANCERS & FOOD ~ UU VENDORS,
ARTS & CRAFTS



TIE DYE STUFF & HULA HOOP

FREE!!

FREE!!

Bring a picnic, blanket, cooler, lawn chairs, hand drums, Hula Hoops & Large Smile.

KID FRIENDLY!

Info: www.uuhouston.org

Quality UU Fun!!



TUESDAY BOOK CLUB

Here are our upcoming books:

May 4, 2010, “The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo” by Stieg Larsson, Reg Keeland

Combine the chilly Swedish backdrop and moody psychodrama of a Bergman movie with the grisly pyrotechnics of a serial-killer thriller, then add an angry punk heroine and a down-on-his-luck investigative journalist, and you have the ingredients of Stieg Larsson's first novel... It's Mr. Larsson's two protagonists—Carl Mikael Blomkvist, a reporter filling the role of detective, and his sidekick, Lisbeth Salander, aka the girl with the dragon tattoo—who make this novel more than your run-of-the-mill mystery: they're both compelling, conflicted, complicated people, idiosyncratic in the extreme

June 1, 2010, “Strange Angel: The Otherworldly Life of Rocket Scientist John Whiteside Parsons” by George Pendle

George Pendle tells Parsons's ex-

traordinary life story for the first time. Fueled from childhood by dreams of space flight, Parsons was a crucial innovator during rocketry's birth. But his visionary imagination also led him into the occult community thriving in 1930s Los Angeles, and when fantasy's pull became stronger than reality, he lost both his work and his wife. Parsons was just emerging from his personal underworld when he died at age thirty-seven. In *Strange Angel*, Pendle recovers a fascinating life and explores the unruly consequences of genius.

July 6, 2010, “Elegance of the Hedgehog” by Muriel Barbary (translated from French to English by Alison Anderson) from amazon.com

In a bourgeois apartment building in Paris, we encounter Renée, an intelligent, philosophical, and cultured concierge who masks herself as the stereotypical uneducated “super” to avoid suspicion from the building's pretentious inhabitants.

Also living in the building is Paloma, the adolescent daughter of a parliamentarian, who has decided to commit suicide on her thirteenth birthday because she cannot bear to live among the rich. Although they are passing strangers, it is through Renée's observations and Paloma's journal entries that *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* reveals the absurd lives of the wealthy. That is until a Japanese businessman moves into the building and brings the two characters together.

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.

April 4: Ø Entitlements vs Independence. We had a vigorous discussion about what government should control in our lives, but a lot of discussion was about banks, health care insurance companies, the FDA, etc. (*Topic: John Haberman, 14 present*)

April 11: Ø Should Executives of major corporations and financial institutions be sent to jail for crimes perpetrated under their supervision? We discussed the coal mine accident in West Virginia and Pfizer's drug Bextra. (*Topic: David Oxman, 12 present*)

ALL ARE WELCOME!

April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Seder Dinner, 6 pm	2	3
4 Patti Henry, 11 am	5	6 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm Book Club, 7:30 pm	7	8 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	9	10 Garage Sale... DONE!
11 John Pepper, 11 am	12	13 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	14 Medical Focus Grp, 7-9 pm	15 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	16	17 Grounds Workday, 9am-noon
18 John Haberman, 11 am Bd Meeting	19	20 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	21	22 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	23	24 Recital, 6:30-9 pm
25 David Garver, 11 am Two Recitals, 1-6 pm	26	27 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	28 SBDC, 6:30 pm	29 Cookn Cls, 2-4 pm	30 M & N Wedding, 4-10 pm	

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

Joys and Concerns: 04/04 – Vickie Chin lit a candle for Easter. Steve Blyskal lit a candle for his mom who has been undergoing treatment for lymphoma and has decided to stop chemo. Janet Goh-Wiener lit a candle in silence. David Oxman thanked everyone who helped put together the very successful Seder Dinner. Patricia Ballinger expressed joy that her granddaughter is in Ft. Benning visiting with her husband this week and that he will be going into Military Intelligence Training in Arizona (this was his first choice). Winona Stewart is back from a wonderful visit with her daughter. Peggy Tennyson is glad that her niece is finally responding to a treatment for her very rare condition – an interesting side effect is that it is turning her hair red like Peggy’s. Gretchen Pinsonneault lit candles to commemorate our newest members, Laura Banfield and Dan Kirkpatrick.

Joys and Concerns: 04/11 – June Godwin greatly enjoyed her daughter’s visit. Katy Haberman is joyful that the cedar waxwings are back, but she is very concerned about her family in Florida and will be traveling there this week to work out management for her brother’s cancer treatment and the care of her elderly father. David Oxman is glad that all three of his children will be together for his grandson’s graduation from law school in Washington D.C. Annette announced that her son, Paul, is now an Australian citizen as well as an American citizen.

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

April 4th – Resurrection Sunday – Patti Henry

Patti was inspired to preach about Resurrection Sunday by a Baptist client who told her: “Oh, we don’t have an Easter service... We have a Resurrection Sunday.” Well Patti thought that everybody should have one of those. We all need a little resurrecting sometimes! There are two ways to look at Easter – one with and one without Jesus.

Easter comes from the German word Ostern or Ost, meaning East – the direction of the dawn where the morning is broken into a new day. Ishtar was the Babylonian goddess of spring, and she was identified with Venus which rises before the sun and sets after it appearing to love the light. Easter was a pre-Christian pagan festival that celebrated the spring equinox. The bunny was the most fertile animal known and soon the egg – again representing new life – joined the lore. One of the most important things to remember is celebrate the magic and not miss the good stuff that is everywhere around us. Another lesson to learn is the importance of resurrection – the return to life. Can we learn from the Resurrection Plant. It appears dead when dry but thrives when moist. Are our lives dry? Do we need some water?

When we take the time to identify something we want in our lives, we can begin to moisten the conditions of our lives so that we can expand and grow.

Patti comes from a Baptist background and went to a Quaker college so she has been steeped in the Christian Easter story. The crucifixion and resurrection meant that God loved us. Patti did not question the logistics of this, but as she got older she began to look around and see that there was still plenty of sin. Older still, Patti began to think that she missed something. She began to look for the lessons of the Easter story. The first lesson is Love. In the story God sent his son to help. From this we should learn the importance of helping those who need it. Intervene! Act! Stick your neck out for someone else! We can also learn the importance of sacrifice. Our relationships are more important than our agendas and our stuff.

It’s ok to go back into your cave to heal and begin again. So really both stories are full of magic and miracles, love and life. It’s all Easter!

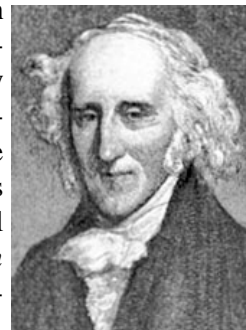
April 11th – Universalism – *Alive and Well in the 21st Century*– John Pepper

In his book, *The Gospel of Inclusion*, Carlton Pearson assures us that “Christ Consciousness is each person’s understanding of the truth that Christ has already achieved what He set out to achieve: total salvation. Nothing else is needed. Our mission in ministry is to awaken people to the extraordinary love and hope of that truth – to become not necessarily Christian but Christ-like in bringing humankind together as one in spiritual consciousness.” Pearson further notes that “We do not need to be saved from God; we need to be saved from religion...from perceptions of God that portray Him as an angry deity with a customized torture chamber called hell, managed by a malcontent called the devil, where we may be forever consigned because we didn’t believe, didn’t believe correctly, or didn’t obey.” Pearson also notes that “Christianity seeks to resolve a presumed conflict between a hostile God and His disobedient creation. *The Gospel of Inclusion* says that the conflict no longer exists, and never really did. Religion manufactured it.”

In our children’s story we talked about a big fib. Religion also has a big fib – that Satan exists and that all our troubles are due to him. Even though we UUs do not believe in original sin or Satan, we surely live in a society that can’t get beyond that belief. Elaine Pagels (*The Origin of Satan*) tells us that “Satan never appears as Western Christendom has come to know him in the Hebrew Bible.” He is a messenger or an angel. Later Hebrew writers attributed division and differences to Satan, and the Essenes placed themselves at the center of a battle between heaven and hell. As Christianity evolved, this fear of difference and division became the insistence that the true church is unanimous and those who did not believe in group unity were heretics. Nevertheless Christianity developed countless theologies to account for who is saved and how they came to be saved. Rules must be followed or hell follows.

(Continued on page 7)

UU Quiz Answer: James Freeman. (April 22, 1759 — November 14, 1835) “was born in Charlestown, Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard University at age 18 and became minister of King’s chapel in Boston after the congregation agreed to remove references to the Trinity from the *Book of Common Prayer*. Freeman may have been the first minister to preach Unitarianism under that name in the newly formed United States, though others before him preached the theology. He was also a leader in the community of newly independent Boston throughout his service to King’s chapel, from which he retired in 182 due to failing health. King’s Chapel still uses the Prayer Book with only slight changes from Freeman’s text...” (*This Day in Unitarian Universalist History*, Frank Schulman). King’s Chapel is Unitarian/Christian in theology, Anglican in liturgy, Congregational in polity and is a member of the UUA.



More on Freeman can be found at:

<http://www25.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/jamesfreeman.html>

More on King’s Chapel can be found at:

<http://www.kings-chapel.org/worship.html>

Other April birthdays:

Emily Taft Douglas

04/19 Political activist and AUA moderator

Adin Ballou

04/23 Universalist Minister

COME JOIN IN THE FUN AT THE UU

MUSIC FESTIVAL!!

MAY1, 2010, 3:00 TO 9:00 PM — HOSTED BY
THE UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF HOUSTON,
1504 WIRT ROAD



(Continued from page 6)

Hosea Ballou lived from 1771 until 1852 and he was one of our Universalist forefathers. In 1805 he wrote a *Treatise on Atonement* and in 1851 his *Doctrine of Universal Salvation*. He could not believe in a petty God who would design his creatures to be unhappy. He believed in the God of love. The problem is that if salvation is Universal, they all the theology relating to Jesus becomes pointless. But it is hard to give up the big lie although Carlton Pearson did. Pearson was a black Pentecostal bishop who led a mega-church in Tulsa. But he began to have a crisis of faith during 1996 with the reports of the genocide in Rwanda. He believes that God helped him find his *Theology of Inclusion* which is very similar to Ballou’s Universalism. Pearson was defrocked, but he took 200 of his followers to the All Souls Church (UU) in Tulsa.

Pearson found a home with us – we UUs don’t believe in the Big Fib.

We closed our service with our Flower Communion. In it, we celebrate our sacredness to one another. We are as different as the flowers we bring to share, yet we come together in true Fellowship to form our Beloved Community.

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF HOUSTON

1504 Wirt Road
Houston, Texas 77055

Phone: 713.686.5876
Fax: 713.686.7664
E-mail: ufhouston@comcast.net

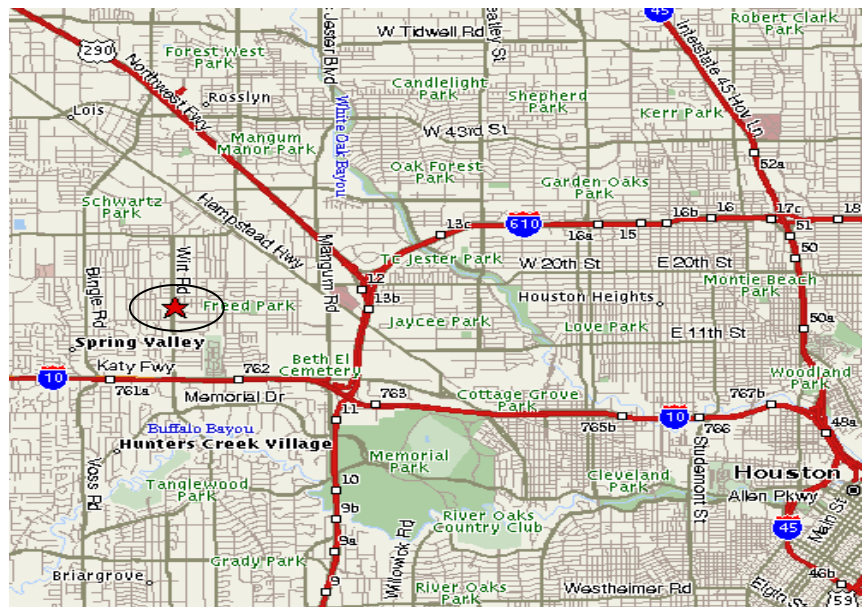


See us on our
Website!
www.ufoh.org

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.