

FELLOWGRAM

VOLUME 52, ISSUE 11

MAY 28, 2010

SUNDAY PROGRAMS

JUNE 6 — You Say Tomato, I Say Tomahto. Laura Emerson & John Pepper. Like many of us, John and Laura disagree on many points of theology and other beliefs. Yet they both feel strongly committed as UUs, despite those differences. What is that glue? Why is it so hard for many of us to describe what unites us except in expressions of what we **don't** believe? Can we really be a "welcoming congregation" if we have such difficulty describing what we are welcoming anyone to? If not, what is the prognosis for our denomination?

JUNE 13 — Guilty as Sin: Our Unitarian Universalist values (compassion, respect, justice for all) are easy enough to practice when we encounter victims, but the work is a lot harder when we're faced with a wrongdoer. How can we honor "the inherent worth and dignity" of those in prison, those who have wronged us personally, and those who are trying to make a new start? **Katy Carpman**

JUNE 20 — Fathers and Family Traditions. David Oxman

David will take us on a journey of the roles of fathers through time. What are our traditions and how is the father-child relationship evolving? Bring an open mind and your own remembrances.

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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

Have you ever worked with people who just make life a joy? They're supportive, great team players, and always willing to share their wisdom and resources? I am fortunate enough to do such work with my colleagues - my fellow religious education directors in Houston and beyond.

First Church, Emerson, Northwoods and Bay Area Unitarian Universalist churches all have full-time professional DREs - amazing people who have made a career of this work. Thoreau's DRE Patti Withers has our highest level of credentialing and served on the continental board of our association of liberal religious educators (LREDA). When this group gets around a table - work gets done and worlds get changed!

As we pool our resources, we are able to offer a range of programs that only the biggest church might be able to support! Here's a sampling of what's coming up in the next few months:

Hogwarts Camp at Northwoods - June 14-18th
 Teen Movie nights (through the summer) - First Church and Bay Area
 Spirit Play Training (Montessori-style RE) - August 14th
 Youth Ministry Training - August 14th
 Youth Bridging (entering high school) - August 21st
 Houston Area Teacher Training - August 28th
 OWL (Comprehensive SexEd) Facilitator Training - Sept. 23-26

And that's just Houston! When District programming is included, there are also camps for all school-aged children at U-Bar-U, SWUUSI summer camp for all (August 1-6), and more! Talk to me for more information on any of these programs, or look on the bulletin boards outside the workroom.

Meanwhile, the children and the youth of the Fellowship will have a fun variety of activities throughout the summer -- the RE Committee would like to thank everyone who has signed up to teach a skill or play a game with the children this summer! There are still a few spaces left, especially for the 11 o'clock hour. Keep in mind that we'll have babysitters and a member of the committee to help out, and can get any supplies you need. (You just get to do the fun parts.)

Join with us in creating beloved community each and every Sunday! 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, June 10th in the workroom.

In love and in faith,

Katy Carpman
 Director of Religious Education
ufhdre@comcast.net

UU QUIZ

What Unitarian was a co-founder of the
 Massachusetts Historical Society?

Answer on page 7

COME TO SWUUSI!

Southwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute is a week-long camp for all ages at Western Hills Guest Ranch outside of Tulsa, Oklahoma on August 1st—6th. Classes and parties and swimming and art opportunities, nature and potlucks and more! Choose to stay in the lodge or get a cabin for your family or friends!

See swuuc.org/swuusi for all the details, or grill Katy for more information! The Carpman Twins are already making lists of all the fun they will have!

TUESDAY BOOK CLUB

Here are our upcoming books:

June 1, 2010, "Strange Angel: The Otherworldly Life of Rocket Scientist John Whiteside Parsons" by George Pendle. George Pendle tells Parsons's extraordinary 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, "The Elegance of the Hedgehog" by Muriel Barbery. An enchanting New York Times and

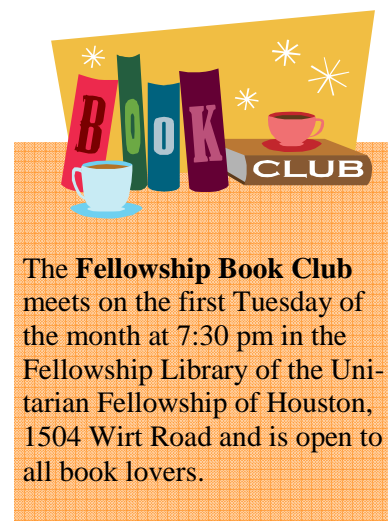
international bestseller about life, art, literature, philosophy, culture, class, privilege, and power, seen through the eyes of a 54-year old French concierge and a precocious but troubled 12-year-old girl. A moving, funny, triumphant novel that exalts the quiet victories of the inconspicuous among us.

August 3, 2010, "A Reliable Wife" by Robert Goolrick

He placed a notice in a Chicago paper, an advertisement for "a reliable wife." She responded, saying that she was "a simple, honest woman." She was, of course, anything but honest, and the only simple thing about her was her single-minded determination to marry this man and then kill him, slowly and carefully, leaving her a wealthy widow, able to take care of the one she truly loved. What Catherine Land did not realize was that the enigmatic and lonely Ralph Truitt

had a plan of his own. And what neither anticipated was that they would fall so completely in love.

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



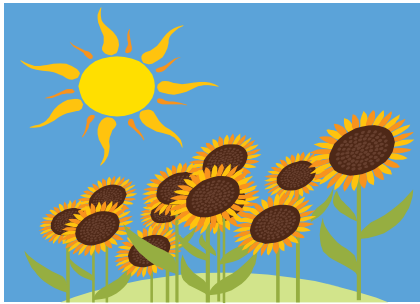
ADULT FORUM



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

May 16th: Ø DEBT AND TAXES: The Greek bailout has been compared to U.S. deficit spending currently projected for one to two decades from now. The short-term debt from Middle East wars, corporate bailouts, economic stimulus and the like, is considered to be manageable, but the long-term debt projected from expanding entitlements is not considered to be manageable, even by liberal economists. The only remedy is to reduce spending and raise taxes on everyone. The U.S. political parties, and the general public, have been unwilling to field candidates who tell it like it is and provide realistic proposals to address these issues. The recent election in Britain was unprecedented. All of the candidates warned voters that cuts were coming. In the U.S., we still have some time, but we have to have realistic proposals by political candidates, if we are to avoid our own Greek tragedy. (*Topic: John Haberman, 11 present*)

We gather in the workroom and ALL ARE WELCOME!



June 2010

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1 Book Club, 7:30 pm National Piano Guild—Judging June 1 thru June 4, 9:30 am to 6:00 (Thurs. ends at 7 PM)	2	3	4	5 RECITAL, 5:00-7:00 pm
6 John Pepper, 11am RECITAL, 1:30-5:30 pm	7	8 <i>Caroline Kline, BD</i>	9	10 <i>Lee Dominey, BD</i>	11	12 <i>Melanie Jagdeo, BD</i>
13 Katy Carpman, 11am	14 <i>Kim Willis, BD</i>	15	16	17	18	19
20 David Oxman, 11am Father's Day	21 <i>John Haberman, BD</i> FLAG DAY	22	23	24		26
27 Rory Jagdeo, 11am Music Program	28 <i>Katrina Lewis, BD</i>	29	30	MONTHLY SCHEDULES Page 5 →		

FOCUS GROUP

We meet each Sunday at 10:00am in the Library. We are starting a new book by David Loy, Money, Sex, War and Karma, reading and discussing a chapter each week. Come give us a try--our discussions are lively and stimulating and inclusive.

JOYS AND CONCERNS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 16th - We lit a single candle to commemorate all the milestones of the day.

May 23rd - **Joseph Carpman** lit a candle for school's summer recess starting Thursday the 27th. **Laura Emerson** congratulated **John Pepper** on his ordination at the Huntsville UU church on June 13th. **Sue Needle** lit a candle of concern for her mother-in-law, a Parkinson's sufferer who is hospitalized due to swallowing difficulties.



Can't go to the [UUA's General Assembly](#) (June 23-27 in Minneapolis) in person? Participating in General Assembly via the web – iGA as I like to call it – is getting easier and more interactive every year. Check out the [GA streaming video schedule](#) and maybe watch with friends! Tweet and Facebook your observations, or put it on your blog! Read the ugrowth blog for more info—

<http://ugrowth.com/2010/05/22/participating-in-general-assembly-via-the-web/>

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

May 16th – *Some Days Are Diamonds, Some Days Are Stone* – Don Levit

Some Days Are Diamonds, Some Days Are Stones is the title of Don's favorite John Denver song. Some days we feel better about ourselves than other days. Feelings seem to ebb and flow between the extremes - some days he feels confident, as if he could handle anything pretty well, and other days he wonders if he can actually make it to dinner in one piece. For Don, these extremes represent a search for significance, a strong desire to find purpose in his life. Conflict, at its root, is growth trying to happen.

We can search for significance either individually or as part of a community. Individually, we take direct responsibility for solving problems, and this can be empowering. As part of a community we seek guidance and work together to grow. Don's Judaic roots emphasize that each person is in a partnership with God, and we must take our role seriously. It is important to love ourselves and treat ourselves as we wish others to treat us. "If I am not for myself, who will be for me?"

But the second part of Rabbi Hillel's famous saying, "If I am only for myself, what am I?" reminds us that we need to reach out to others with care and compassion and not be focused on ourselves. By focusing excessively on ourselves, we can tend to feel more like a what than a who, more like a wooden puppet than a worthwhile human being, more like a stone rather than a diamond. This is why it is important to focus on others, or on various important social justice issues, to get a more balanced view of life.

We must diligently guard our better natures, the better parts of what we have to offer, so that we will be an inspiration to others and to ourselves. This is especially true during our days of stones when we are looking for a quick fix to feel better and can develop bad habits that can affect our core character. When, in Denver's song, "the face that I see in my mirror, which more and more is a stranger to me, and more and more I can see the danger in becoming what I never thought I'd be." We must hold tightly to our cherished values and to remember Dietrich Bonhoeffer's words: "What we are in ourselves and what we owe others, makes us a complete whole."

These are very difficult and confusing times we are living in, and it is important to establish and maintain relationships with those who hold similar values, to form our very own spiritual growth teams. Don has found the values and people in Judaism and Unitarian Universalism to be helpful in encouraging him to continue the process of refining him to be the diamond he was created to be.

Diamonds and stones represent a process that has lasted for a long time, and will outlive all of us - a search for meaning and fulfillment in life, a journey on which we progress, but will never fully achieve. It is the process itself which is significant. Taking part, along with others whose paths Don has crossed, is an opportunity of a lifetime.

May 23rd – *Fearless Fuller* – Laura Emerson

In 1850, when she died in a tragic shipwreck, Margaret Fuller was the most famous woman intellectual in America. Just as she was at the forefront of social justice, so were many other Unitarians. However, just as few people know her name today, few know our denomination. Where is our leadership as social change agents now? Is a sermon about her a cautionary tale or an inspiring one? You tell me.

Margaret was born in 1810, the oldest of six children, to Unitarian parents in the Boston area. Her education was an extremely rare one for a girl, because her father tutored her himself for the Harvard education he had enjoyed (but that wasn't allowed for girls). She was academically gifted, and hoped to translate French and German literature for American readers. However, when her father died without a will, his brothers took over the principal of his estate and doled out a meager allowance to the widow and her children. The uncles refused to put the younger boys through Harvard and

(Continued on page 7)

to send Margaret to Europe, as planned, to start her writing career. Raised as an intellectual equal of men, she realized how unequal she was under the law, and this profoundly influenced the women's rights she advanced later.

Ralph Waldo Emerson found her to be so bright and such a brilliant conversationalist, that he invited her to become the first woman member of the Transcendental Club. There she met Nathaniel Hawthorne, whom she is widely rumored to have inspired for the role of Hester Prynne in the *Scarlet Letter*, and Bronson Alcott, who hired her to teach in his progressive school. With the money she earned as a teacher, she put her little brothers through Harvard herself. She subsequently became the first American woman to do several things. She started "Adult Ed" for women, leading facilitated "Conversations," as a way of teaching women who lacked her academic background. She was the first allowed to use Harvard's library for research (a book she wrote about the mistreatment of Native Americans), the first editor of a publication (Emerson's *The Dial*), the first full time woman journalist (*The New York Tribune*, where her by-line was a *, because she wouldn't use a male pseudonym, as many women had to do) and the author of the first feminist book: *Woman in the 19th Century*. She even became the first woman foreign correspondent, covering the Roman rebellion in 1848, through which she met and maybe married a man 10 years her junior, and by whom she had a baby, at age 38. As a book reviewer, she advanced the careers of many American authors and she wrote impassioned articles advocating prison reform, the abolition of slavery, and, of course women's education, careers, and legal rights. Her writings inspired many, such as Susan B. Anthony, but were reviled by others who found her ideas absolutely revolutionary and disturbing. Returning by ship to America, Margaret and her family drowned, within 100 yards of Fire Island, NY.

Contemporary Unitarians might learn a thing or two from Margaret Fuller. Bright as she was, she realized that she couldn't accomplish her goals alone. She needed to collaborate with others. Our tiny denomination too often worships at the altar of individualism, and thus dilute the power of collective action. If we only talk with each other, smug in the confidence of our rightness, we are a club and not a movement, and that would be a sad legacy for Margaret Fuller. Who are Unitarian leaders now? Potentially, YOU!



UU Quiz Answer: John Eliot. (May 31, 1754 — February 4, 1813) "was born in Boston. He succeeded his father as minister of the New North Church in Boston, where he served until his death. He worked with his close friend Jeremy Belknap to found the Massachusetts Historical Society. His *Biographical Dictionary* (1804) was an important contribution to historical scholarship. He was one of the Harvard overseers who set off the Unitarian Controversy.." (*This Day in Unitarian Universalist History*, Frank Schulman).

More Eliot can be found at:

<http://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org/Heralds/John-Eliot.php>

Other May birthdays:

Margaret Fuller

05/23 Unitarian, Transcendentalist, feminist, critic, writer

Ralph Waldo Emerson

05/25 Unitarian, Transcendentalist, minister, essayist

Joseph Workman

05/26 Canadian merchant and social reformer

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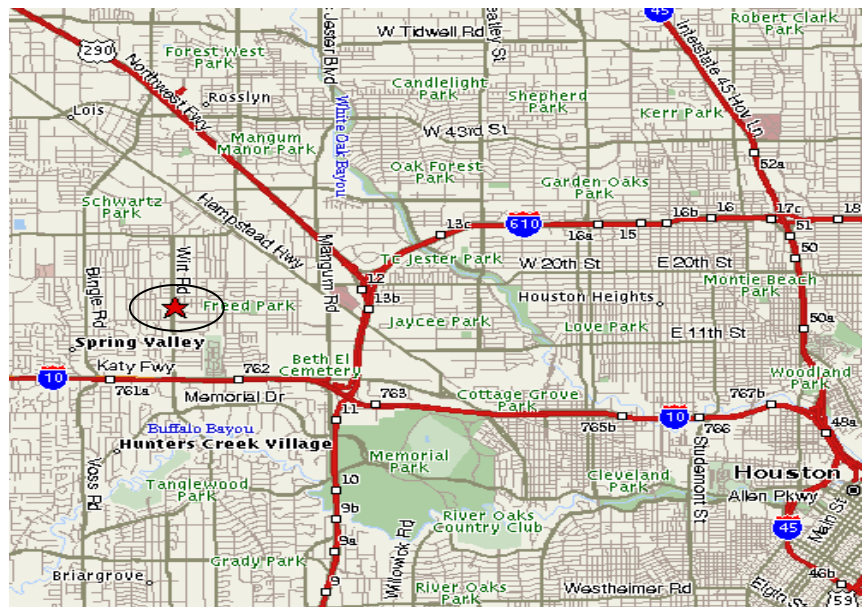


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www.ufoh.org

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.