

THE Westside Story

AUGUST 2006

The monthly newsletter of Westside Unitarian Universalist Church

Now holding services at Angel of Hope Church, 901 Page St. • 11:30 am • www.westsideuu.org

Where's Russell in August?

After traveling around a bit in June and July, Russell's schedule will be getting back to "normal." He should be in church each of the four Sundays in August. On the 13th and 27th he will deliver reflections. Office hours for the month of August are as follows:

Tuesday – August 1st – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Thursday – August 3rd – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday – August 8th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Thursday – August 10th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday – August 15th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Friday – August 18th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday – August 22nd – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Thursday – August 24th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday – August 29th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Thursday – August 31st – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Just call him at 817-370-2171 during those times. If there is no immediate response it means Russell is meeting with another church member at that time and will return your call as soon as possible.

SUNDAY SERVICES

August 6th

Finding My Religion

The Rev. Dr. Don Fielding

Don will share with us the twists and turns of his own spiritual journey. Where has he been and where is he now? Come this Sunday to find out. Don is the minister emeritus of the Denton and Oak Cliff UU churches.

August 13th

Greco-Roman Religions

Dr. Russell Elleven

After spending some time in Rome last month, Russell reflects on the religions of those days so long ago. Come hear some of the ideas of the fascinating belief systems.

August 20th

Oh, Go Ahead: Bring the Horse in the House

In this sermon written by Dr. Davidson Loehr, minister of the First UU Church in Austin, and to be delivered by a

member of Westside, Dr. Loehr asserts there are little

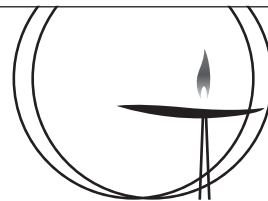
sparks of life around us that we often miss. Little lights are scattered here and there in our lives: people, places, and even things that can awaken our own spirit in ways large and small. These sparks can come through many different doors. This sermon will identify some of the places those lights may come from and challenge us to cherish those sparks we are lucky enough to encounter.

August 27th

Do They Really Believe That?

Dr. Russell Elleven

Folks can believe some pretty amazing things. We UU's have a variety of beliefs and philosophies and sometimes find it interesting to learn why people believe things that may seem a little odd. Russell will give you his take on this topic.



Our Mission Statement:

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church makes a positive difference in the lives of our members, our families, and the world at large through supportive relationships, religious exploration, and social action.

Our Vision Statement:

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church will grow and become a more influential liberal religious presence through active service to our community and the world at large.

Hymnal Sponsorship

Do you ever look at the bookplates on the inside front covers of our hymnals? They represent the lasting love or respect we have for others in our lives, and it is a joy to open a hymnal and read the name of a loved one. Each was sponsored by a member or friend of Westside, and we are again offering this opportunity for the additional new hymnals which have been purchased for our Sunday services.

The bookplates read:

THIS BOOK GIVEN IN HONOR OF _____ BY _____
THIS BOOK GIVEN IN MEMORY OF
_____ BY _____

The cost is \$30 per hymnal. Please be looking for a form in the Order of Service in the coming weeks. For more information, call Linda McConathy 817-294-5894

OUR UU COMMUNITY

UUA Applauds Voting Rights Act Renewal

(originally published at UUA.org)

The United States Senate acted on July 20, 2006 to renew the Voting Rights Act of 1965. By a unanimous vote of 98-0, the Senate extended key provisions of the VRA, which was created to protect minority voting rights, and which has been called one of the most effective pieces of civil rights legislation in history. The House has already approved an identical version of the bill, and President Bush supported the legislation, so the Senate's vote marked the final hurdle. Reacting to the decision, UUA President William G. Sinkford wrote:

"As we rejoice in this victory for democracy, let us also take a moment to honor the courage and sacrifice of those who first fought for the passage of the Voting Rights Act forty years ago."

Unitarian Universalists have a unique historical connection to the Voting Rights Act. Many Unitarians and Universalists fought to advance the cause, including Viola Liuzzo and the Rev. James Reeb, who were killed while working for civil rights in Selma, Alabama, just a few months before the passage of the 1965 Act. In 2005, Rev. Sinkford was presented with New Democracy's James Reeb New Democracy Service Award in a Massachusetts ceremony.

Last year, two UU congregations joined an Atlanta voting rights march commemorating the signing of the original Voting Rights Act. On Sunday, June 11, 2006, the Social Action Committee of Arlington Street Church in Boston co-sponsored a gathering on voting rights with

Massachusetts Citizens for Voting Integrity. Topics included reports on the disenfranchisement of voters in Massachusetts, particularly among communities of color and immigrants, information on the national Voting Rights Act and the need for its renewal, and an examination of how redistricting has affected various groups.

As work on the VRA concluded yesterday, the UUA's Washington Office for Advocacy sent a letter to Congress urging passage of the District of Columbia Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act (the "DC VRA") which would—for the first time ever—grant the District of Columbia a representative in Congress with full voting rights.

That letter stated, in part, "It is particularly appalling that thousands of Congressional employees—people who are serving their country as public servants—must choose between having voting representation in Congress or living in the District of Columbia. Nor is it ethical to disenfranchise the hundreds of thousands of DC residents who, in addition to deserving representation simply as US citizens, are particularly deserving because it is their lives and work that make it possible for Congress to function here.

"Two of the fundamental principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations are respect for the worth and dignity of every person and the use of the democratic process. By denying one of the most basic elements of democratic governance, Congress devalues the worth and dignity of all DC residents. The lack of DC voting representation in Congress is unfair, unethical, and wrong."

You can act in support of voting rights!

Action Alert from the UUA

Washington Office for Advocacy:

The UUA encourages Unitarian Universalists to help support the DC Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act (the "DC VRA"). The UUA General Assembly endorsed full DC voting rights in 1970. DC residents—including the staff of the Washington Office—need you to advocate on our behalf if this legislation is to go forward. We encourage you to read the article by Marion Patten, a DC Voting Rights Activist from River Road Unitarian Church, and take action.

Interested in curing diabetes?

Then help raise needed funds for diabetes research by joining Caroline Nixon's team! We'll ask our friends to sponsor our walking for the JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) and have a lot of fun - we'll come up with a great name and an awesome t-shirt design for the day of the walk, October 21st. Contact Caroline at CarolineNixon@SBCglobal.net or 817-462-7063. Thanks for your support.

Help Rebuild Louisiana and Mississippi

The challenge to start over from the deadly hurricanes of 2005 is overwhelming the Gulf Coast. Hundreds of thousands of homes were damaged or destroyed in Louisiana and Mississippi, causing billions in damages. Jobs were lost, families displaced. The infrastructure is challenged – there are limited services available and housing is difficult to obtain while rebuilding a home.

Members of Westside can make a difference. The Hurricane Relief and Social Justice Project of the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, funded by the UUA/UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund, welcome Westsiders to participate in the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast by volunteering in New Orleans and Biloxi. All interested groups will find information and an application form at www.peacestones.org. For more information, call 225-926-2283 or 225-223-2876 or at uukatrina@bellsouth.net.

Further information on how anyone can help with Gulf Coast relief is available on the UUA website at www.uua.org/news/gulfcoastrelief/

OUR UU COMMUNITY

Parent/Teacher Training Offered

Dr. Tracey Hurd, Children & Families Programs Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association and author of "Nurturing Children and Youth", will offer some helpful answers for parents faced with their kids' questions on religion and other issues. She will be speaking on Friday, August 11th, at the First Unitarian Church of Dallas, 4015 Normandy, Dallas, TX 75205 at 7:00 p.m.; dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. The cost of dinner is \$7 for adults and \$3 for children; the presentation is free of charge. Childcare will be available at no cost if reservations are made in advance by phoning 972-890-4161. Reservations will also be accepted online at programs@dallasuu.org or by phone at 214-599-8508.

Additionally, Dr. Hurd will lead a training session for anyone interested in teaching, or helping teachers, in the Religious Education classes on Saturday, August 12, 2006, at the First Unitarian Church of Dallas, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served. The topic for this session is "Creating Character: Your Role in Encouraging Religious Growth and Learning".

Dr. Hurd is part of the Lifespan Faith Development staff group at the UUA. She holds a PhD. in developmental psychology from Boston College and M.Ed. in child study from Tufts University. Her work, published in various journals and books, focuses on public policy for children and families.

For more information on the teacher training session, contact Caroline Nixon at CarolineNixon-Garcia@texas-health.org or at 817-922-9742.

Oak Cliff Coffee House Welcomes Westsiders

UU Church of Oak Cliff sponsors a monthly coffee house called "The Labyrinth Walk Coffee House" which includes music and other entertainment. The coffee house opens on the fourth Saturday of each month at 3839 W. Kiest Blvd., Dallas TX 75233. Upcoming performances include Danny Britt and Sally Shuffield on September 23rd, "The Texas Gypsies" and Christine LeDoux on October 28th, and Karen Mal, Ken Gaines and Abi Tapia on November 25th. Tickets are \$12.00 at the door and \$10.00 in advance, except for the November performance which is \$3 more. The doors open at 8:00 p.m., but many people come earlier.

This is not a religious service, but members report it has attracted many visitors to the church. For more information, call 214-337-2429.

Lessons in Liberal Lay Leadership Conference

Community Unitarian Universalist Church of Plano is hosting the "Lessons in Liberal Lay Leadership" conference on October 21st from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Members of committees such as Worship, Nominating, Religious Education, Canvassing, Board, etc. are encouraged to attend.

The inspirational keynote speakers will be Reverend Chuck Freeman and Reverend Kathleen Ellis, co-ministers of Live Oak UU Church in Austin, TX. Workshop topics will include pledge drives, leadership skills, strategic planning, adult religious education, membership retention, and church governance.

Brochures and registration forms are now available at uuplano.org. The registration fee is \$25 per person until October 7th and \$30 per person after that. For more information, contact Celeste Kennedy, conference chair, at LeaderConf@uuplano.org.

WestAid School Supply Drive

WestAid is seeking help for the children of west Fort Worth. It's time to start planning the collection of school supplies for the 2006-2007 school year. The following items are needed by the children: pens, pencils, erasers, red marking pencils, notebook paper, folders, construction paper, glue sticks, writing tablets, protractors, compasses, supply boxes and pouches, washable markers, crayons (16 and 24 count), map pencils, spirals, scissors, manila paper, white liquid glue, rulers, and permanent markers.

WestAid will distribute them when school begins on August 14th, so you may deliver donations to Michael Oglesby, our WestAid board member, at the beginning of August. Donations are always welcome for shoe vouchers. To make a monetary donation, make your check payable directly to West Aid and drop it in the plate at church. You may specify "shoe vouchers" or "school supplies" on the memo line if you wish to direct your donation that way. For more information, contact Michael Oglesby at dfwhome@charter.net or at 817-249-1736.

Committee Fair

On Sunday, July 23rd, Westside sponsored a "Committee Fair." Dolores Ruhs coordinated a lovely brunch before church, and members were invited to stay after church to visit the exhibits that had been prepared by the Social Justice committee, the Worship Committee, Religious Education, and others. Many took the opportunity to sign up for committee work during the fair, but all committees welcome anyone to join at any time during the course of the year. For contact information about any committee, call Brenda Baldwin at 817-927-1762 or email her at brendabrew@hotmail.com.

INSIDE WESTSIDE

Myrtle McMahan Reports on General Assembly June 21-25, 2006

Attending General Assembly from Westside U.U. Church were Howard McMahan, delegate, Amy Youngblood, delegate, Myrtle McMahan, alternate delegate and Joyce Beck.

On opening day, the Southwest District had an ingathering where it was announced that our district had 175 persons pre-registered. That evening, Amy, carried our banner in the parade. Opening ceremony is always impressive. Over 4,000 people were in attendance (not always at all things) and when we sang, it really stirred everyone. Pathways Church was welcomed as a new Unitarian Universalist congregation.

First thing Thursday morning, I attended a workshop on the Passover Seder, put on by an organization called UU's for Jewish Awareness. This was followed by its annual meeting where I was elected treasurer. I have been their membership chair the past few years, and the organization was not very active. With the election of a new board, that will change. We are an organization that tries to encourage congregations to celebrate the Jewish holidays and include Jewish heritage as part of our UU curriculum. It has various tools available on its web site to assist in doing so. We had a booth in the exhibit hall, and I worked there on two afternoons. I did buy a Passover Hagadah (the book of ritual for the Passover Seder). It is more current than the one we have used in the past.

Amy spent part of her General Assembly minding the booth of the Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women,

selling chances on the quilt made by our women at the annual women's conference held here last year. Howard spent time minding the booth for the new U.U.A. Health Insurance Program. He sits on a U.U.A. committee that has developed a new health insurance program for staffs of the U.U.A. and its members' congregations.

Howard and Amy attended the plenary sessions. I attended some of them as well. Various people were introduced, various committees made reports, four congregations were recognized as "Breakthrough Congregations". They showed videos on each of these and they were most impressive. Various awards were given. One of the best presentations was on the "Unitarian Universalists and the Gulf Coast". Amendments to the bylaws were presented and debated. Debate on Study Items, and Actions on Immediate Witness were mostly held in mini assemblies throughout the week. The final ironed out items were then presented to the Assembly. Global Warming was adopted as a three-year study item. The final decisions may be found by going to www.uua.org/ga.

We also attended many workshops, choosing from 25 or more being presented all at the same time.

On Thursday night the "Service of the Living Tradition" was held. This is the service that recognizes those ministers going into preliminary fellowship, those going into final fellowship, and those retiring, as well as recognizing those who have died since the last General Assembly.

Update from the Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry (COM) is charged with the responsibility for oversight of the health and well-being of the ministry within the congregation. To that end, the committee meets monthly with Russell to discuss issues which have arisen. The committee will hear, in confidence, any concerns in this regard which are raised by any congregant, and will seek to address them promptly and thoroughly. Similarly, the committee assists and supports the minister in his role. The committee, in addition, informs itself on matters of compensation and makes a recommendation to the Board as appropriate.

A lesser-known function of the COM is to serve in an Ombuds capacity when conflicts arise between members of the congregation, and the presence of a neutral third party may be of assistance. The congregation may expect both confidentiality and sensitivity in these matters.

Please feel free to contact any member of the COM at any time. We welcome criticism, compliments, and suggestions. The members of the committee, selected jointly by the board, minister and congregation, include Reed Bilz, Chair; John Huffman, Walter McConathy, Jane Palmer, and Maria Schmidt.

New Books for Library

Each year when we attend General Assembly, we bring back a few books for the church library. This year we are giving "*The World's Religions*" by Houston Smith, and "*Unitarian Universalism Is a Really Long Name*" by Jennifer Dant. As soon as pockets, cards and cataloguing are complete, they will be ready for check out.

There are a number of other books that will be added to the library. They are: "*Schindler's Legacy*" by Elinor J. Brecher. It is true stories of the list of survivors; "*Ethan Frome*" by Edith Wharton; and "*Judaism - Development and Life*" by Leo Trepp.

Do you know where our library is located? It is behind the sanctuary and can be reached through a door in the front hallway, or from the stage in the sanctuary. Do you have religious type books that you would like to donate? If so, contact Myrtle McMahan.

Choir Practice to Resume

Choir practice will resume on August 20th at 10:00 a.m. Performances will resume in September. All are encouraged to add their voices to the song.

Dwight Brown Leadership Experience

Linda Hanratty and Jane Palmer represented Westside at this year's Dwight Brown Leadership Experience, held at Austin College in Sherman, Texas from July 14th through July 21st. Jane filled in for Beverly Archibald who could not attend because it conflicted with her scheduled knee surgery.

The DBLE is an annual, intensive training camp sponsored by the Southwest Unitarian Universalist Conference and geared for leaders or potential leaders of individual congregations. Participants study the history of Unitarian Universalism, the dynamics of group processes, and the connection between organizational development and UU heritage and ideals. All participants are expected to create and conduct a worship service during the course of the week and to sponsor an evening party. Scheduled classes and activities keep participants on the go from 7:15 a.m. until 11:30 p.m. every day, giving them a chance to build

relationships with the leaders of other congregations throughout the district.

This year's DBLE was the largest ever, with 41 participants and nine faculty and staff members. Congregations were represented from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Oklahoma.

Linda and Jane report that the experience was "eye-opening", "enormously informative", and "exhausting." They encourage Westside to continue sending participants on an annual basis. They will be creating a collaborative report on the highlights that they felt were particularly relevant to this church. The report will be delivered to members of the Board, Committee on Ministry, and others who might share an interest in the information. They thank Westside for sponsoring them this year.

Report from the Board of Directors

The Board, in place as of July 1, is excited about the coming church year. Charles Palmer has filled the position vacated by Dick Trice, and we are eager to receive your input, and encourage you to talk to one of us and to ask questions. We are committed to good communication, but a gentle reminder of something we've overlooked will be appreciated.

The Board has identified three primary areas of focus. Those are community building/maintenance, programs, and space. We will be meeting for a special session before the end of August to discuss ways we can facilitate these. Of particular concern from a planning standpoint is the issue of space. We plan to develop a logical timeline of critical steps leading to Westside having a place to call their own. We also want to insure those things we all love about Westside, the people and the time we share with those people, are nurtured and maintained.

On July 23, the standing committees set up displays of their current work to communicate what is currently happening in our church and to offer the congregation the opportunity to make suggestions and offer assistance. We will repeat this "committee fair" in September. Working together, we can build and maintain our community and programs as we work towards moving to our own space.

Brenda Baldwin, President, on behalf of the Board of Directors

Social Justice Committee News

The Social Justice Committee is planning to meet Sunday, August 6th, after church with a brown bag lunch session. We will be planning activities for the coming year including ways to do more with fewer meetings. All church members and friends are encouraged to attend.

If enough people are interested, we plan to have a picnic/creek clean-up in the Overton Park area in late September. If you are interested in this activity, please contact Linda Hanratty at 817-924-6629 or at llswenson@yahoo.com.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Great Books Group #1 – Second Sunday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will be on Sunday August 13th at the McConathy's home.

The selection is *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen. For information, call 817-294-5894

Great Books Group #2 – Third Sunday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the church. The next meeting will be on August 20th to discuss "An Enemy of the People" by Henrik Ibsen. Discussions are open to all. For information, contact Dick Trice at 817-446-3840 or at paandmatrice@sbcglobal.net.

Contemporary Books – Fourth Sunday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is on August 27th to discuss *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie.

We meet at 6:30 at Reed's house, 6316 Walburn Ct. 817-292-7974, rbilz@earthlink.net

Bridge Night – First Sunday of the month from 6:30 p.m.

to 9:00 p.m. All levels of players welcome! For information and the location, contact Ruth or Harry Van Dam at 817-346-7791 or at harryvandam@sbcglobal.net.

Dinner-Making/Serving – First Saturday of every month from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. You are invited to participate in Angel of Hope service projects: to make/serve dinner at Samaritan House, for residential adults with HIV/AIDS. Contact Kim Haymon, cell: 817-726-6856. Donation accepted in "Turner Projects" (large plastic jug) on the front left platform of the church.

Sandwich-Making – Second Monday of every month from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. You are invited to participate in Angel of Hope service projects: to make sandwiches at the Presbyterian Night Shelter. Contact Kim Haymon, cell: 817-726-6856. Donations accepted in "Turner Projects" (large plastic jug) on the front left platform of the church.

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church
c/o McMahans, 3600 Lawndale Ave.
Fort Worth, TX 76133

Spread the Faith! When you have finished reading your *Westside Story*, leave it at the doctor's office, barber shop, wherever it might be read by a potential UU.

Have an announcement?

Submit announcements for the next monthly newsletter by August 18th. Submit announcements for the weekly Order of Service by the Thursday before you want the announcement to appear. Specify where you want your announcement to appear. All submissions should be made to Jane Palmer at Cpalmer263@sbcglobal.net or at 817-847-9713 or at 2609 Silver Hill Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76131.

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church *Board of Directors 2006-2007*

President – Brenda Baldwin

Vice-President – Linda Hanratty

Secretary – Beverly Archibald

Treasurer – Mark McMurry

Directors –

Jeanette Berggren • Dianne Nixon

Charles Palmer • Audrey Weil

Committee on Ministry:

Reed Bilz, Chair

John Huffmann • Walt McConathy

Jane Palmer • Maria Schmidt

Religious Education

2006-2007

“Peace”

Beginning in September, our children and teenagers will be studying the state of, the freedom associated with, and the harmony created by peace from a global perspective.

All ideas, suggestions, and materials that could be used this curriculum are welcomed. Contact Caroline Nixon at Caroline.Nixon@sbcglobal.net.

The 7 UU Principles:

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

By the Numbers:

Date	Adults	Children	Total
June 04, 2006	51	6	57
June 11, 2006	49	9	58
June 18, 2006	41	6	47
June 25, 2006	33	4	37
Monthly Average	43.5	6.3	49.8

August 2006 *Westside Unitarian Universalist Church*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 • Angel of Hope Dinner-making/ serving (Samaritan House)
• Bridge Night	7	8	9	10	11	• RE Teacher Training
• Great Books #1	13	14 • Angel of Hope Sandwich-making (Presbyterian Night Shelter)	16	17	18 • Newsletter Submissions Deadline	19
• Great Books #2 • After-Church Potluck Lunch • Choir Practice	20	21	23	24	25	26
• Contemporary Books	27	28	30	31		

September 2006

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 • Angel of Hope Dinner-making/ serving (Samaritan House)
3 • Bridge Night • Choir Practice	4 • Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9
10 • Great Books #1	11 • Angel of Hope Sandwich-Making (Presbyterian Night Shelter)	12	13	14	15 • Newsletter Submissions Deadline	16
17 • Great Books #2 • After-Church Potluck Lunch • Choir Practice	18	19	20	21	22 • Rosh Hashanah begins	23 • Autumnal Equinox
24 • Contemporary Books • Ramadan begins	25	26	27	28	29	30