

THE Westside Story

MARCH 2006

The monthly newsletter of Westside Unitarian Universalist Church

Now holding services at Angel of Hope Church, 901 Page St. • 11:15 am • www.westsideuu.org

Where's Russell in March?

Russell will be in the pulpit each Sunday in March. He will be doing Joys and Concerns on the 8th and 19th. He will deliver sermons on the 12th and 26th. Office hours for the month of March are as follows:

7th & 9th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

14th & 15th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

21st & 23rd – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

28th & 30th – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Just call him at 817-370-2171 during those times.

Adult Forum (9:45 am – 10:45 am):

March 12th – “Questions and Answers re the Media” – Dr. John Tisdale, Professor of Journalism, TCU. Dr. Tisdale spoke to us on January 29th on the subject of the media reporting of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. He has consented to return this Sunday for further discussion of fairness in media. You are requested to bring written questions with you or to send your questions in advance to Dick Trice at paandmatrice@sbcglobal.net.

March 26th – “William Ellery Channing: Unitarian Christianity” – Rev. Dr. Russell Elleven. Channing was, as one biographer described, “a reluctant radical.” He hesitated to join the Unitarian controversy, but when he did, he became a great leader. Learn why he became one of the three greatest American Unitarian leaders.

Sunday Services

March 5

The Rev. William Pherigo

“WESTAID.... Who needs it?”

William Pherigo is the Executive Director of WestAid. He has managed the emergency assistance programs for over 12 years. WestAid provides emergency food to over 8,000 individuals a year and supplemental food, on a monthly basis, to approximately 90 households. Other help available includes financial aid, school supplies for local schools, bus passes and gas vouchers, and a holiday assistance program in November and December. Westside UU church has been a member of WestAid for over 10 years.

March 12

Dr. Russell Elleven

“Is Religion Really Natural?”

As we all know at Westside, there are many avenues through which we can view religion and the religious. Is this natural? You will hear one viewpoint this Sunday.

March 19

Collaborative Service

“Spring Is In The Air”

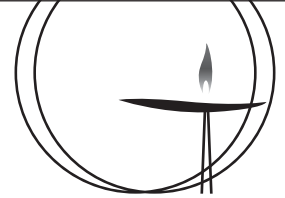
In 2006, the Vernal Equinox occurs March 20th. Religious followers from around the world observe many seasonal days of celebration during March and April. Most are religious holy days and are linked in some way to the spring or vernal equinox. On that day, the daytime and nighttime hours are approximately equal -- each being 12 hours long. Please join us in a celebration of Spring.

March 26

Dr. Russell Elleven

“What is a Religious Experience?”

You have heard about them, you have read about them, others have told you about them... but have you ever had a religious experience? Perhaps it depends upon the definition.



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.

OUR UU COMMUNITY

Call for a U.S. Response to Genocide

Reverend William Sinkford, UUA President & Rob Keithan, Director of the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy (originally published on uua.org).

The humanitarian disaster in Darfur has been going on for three years. Some 400,000 people have died, violence has forced more than two million from their homes, more than three million are starving. Despite evidence linking the Sudanese government to the Janjaweed militias responsible for much of the violence against Darfur's civilian population, that government continues to deny involvement and to allow the Janjaweed free rein.

The U.S. and the international community have done nothing to stop the bloodshed—even after 2004, when our government officially recognized what was happening in Darfur as genocide. The only international force authorized to operate in the region are a small number of troops fielded by the African Union, with neither the mandate nor the resources to stop the killing—only to protect observers assigned to monitor a 2004 ceasefire that failed almost before it was signed. The Bush Administration actually cut U.S. aid to this force, although it has been reinstated in its 2006 budget request.

Can we do something to help end this humanitarian disaster? We can. The Save Darfur Coalition, of which the UUA is a member, has mounted the Million Voices for Darfur campaign. In cooperation with more than 150 faith-based, advocacy and humanitarian aid organizations, the campaign hopes to deliver a million handwritten and electronic postcards to the White House and Congress, demanding a more effective U.S. response. We are asking first, for a restoration of and increase in funding for the small number of African Union forces charged with monitoring the 2004 ceasefire; and second, for the U.S. to support sending in a UN peacekeeping force, large enough and with sufficient authority to stop the killing.

Add your voice to those already calling for action! Go to www.uua.org/news/darfur/congaction.html for more information on the Million Voices for Darfur campaign!

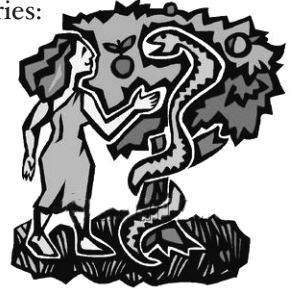
Church Beautification and Work Day!!

Please mark Saturday, April 8th on your calendar. We will be joining with Angel of Hope to beautify the facility at 901 Page St. starting at 9am. Some of the things that will be happening that Saturday are weeding and planting on church grounds, marking of handicap parking spaces, painting and lettering of parking lot sign, painting in sanctuary, cataloging of our stored books, and organizing our storage unit on McCart Avenue. If you can help with any of these activities, please contact Bill Terry by phone (817-249-7341) or email (terrynoer@sbcglobal.net) and let him know what you can do, or just show up at church at 9:00 a.m. on April 8th.

Musings. . . .

Helpmeet Needed in Garden

Adam and Eve, poor navel-less lambs,
were a trial for their single father, whose
rule was, indeed, tyrannical. If only
they'd had a mom to intercede on their behalf,
She would've redrawn the boundaries:
"Goodness sakes, Jehovah!
Not those scratchy fig leaves.
Sin, You say. Sin? Why,
they're hardly dry behind the ears,
can't even spell the word.
So what if they disobeyed?
No kid can resist a talking snake.
"Don't cast them out, Lord.
Eden won't be the same without them.
Try anger management instead, for if
you throw a conniption fit
about every measly apple, soon
they won't come visit Us,
not even on Sundays."



-Marjorie Bixler

Please share your musings with us. Funny, sad, angry. Essay, poem, dialogue. All are welcome. Leading a principled life poses daily challenges, and we love to hear about them. Submit yours to Jane Palmer at Cpalmer263@sbcglobal.net or by mail at 2609 Silver Hill Drive. Fort Worth, TX 76131.

More Hymnals On The Way!!

Have you seen the bookplates in our hymnals? Were you wondering how you could get a bookplate placed in memory or honor of a loved one in a hymnal? Well... the church has recently purchased additional hymnals for our Sunday service. If you are interested in supporting the church and memorializing a friend or relative at the same time, now is the time! Thirty dollars will purchase a hymnal for the church and a bookplate with the wording of your choice. Contact Bill Terry or Mark McMurry for more information. Or place a check in the offertory marked "church hymnal", and we will contact you.

Lunch Bunch

The "Lunch Bunch" will be meeting at Café Express every Sunday for the month of March. We meet at approximately 12:45 p.m. All are welcome. Express offers a wide variety of vegetarian and carnivore entrees. First arrivals can put some tables together.

To get to the Express from church, go north on Hemphill, turn left at Rosedale, take the University Drive exit off of Rosedale, go left on University, and turn right into University Village Shopping Center. Alternatively, you may go north on 35W, west on 30, exit at University, and go south on University Drive to the shopping center.

INSIDE WESTSIDE

Westside's New Director of Religious Education

Brian Dierolf has recently joined Westside Unitarian Universalist Church as the Director of Religious Education. He discovered the opportunity when he visited First Jefferson UU Church to fulfill a requirement for one of his pastoral counseling classes within Brite Divinity, the seminary graduate school of Texas Christian University. Originally from San Antonio, Brian graduated cum laude from the University of North Texas with a major in psychology and a minor in religious studies. He was impressed by the Unitarian faith and community and felt drawn to the Unitarian values.

Although he was raised in the Methodist faith, he began to explore and incorporate aspects of several of the world religions into his life during his college years. He enjoys studying all cultures and religions and appreciates how diversity has enriched his life. Brian's family has taught him to think for himself and to seek meaning in every experience.

Brian's parents were both raised Catholic and decided the Methodist Church was more beneficial to introduce to their two sons. Wallace and Mary Dierolf told their sons that religion was a personal choice and they could go another path just as they had done. Brian continues to search for the community where he can become spiritually enriched and serve to the best of his ability. His brother, Travis, recently embraced the Buddhist faith.

Jazz music provides Brian with a deep spiritual connection and he often uses it to express his feelings. He grew up in a musical household with his father, Wallace, a band director, who is now retired after 30 years. Wallace was once a professional jazz trumpet player and vocalist; Travis is currently a professional trombone player. Brian's mother, Mary, works as a lab technician and is a wonderful cook. She inspired Brian's love for reading.

Brian recently married his college sweetheart, Lauren. She is studying to become an English and reading teacher. Lauren has taught Brian a lot about creating your own philosophy and living a compassionate life.

We at Westside are pleased to have Brian Dierolf as our new RE director. Brian says he looks forward to getting to know everyone within the church and enhancing the educational experience of the children and youth within the RE program.

Brian Dierolf
B.DIEROLF@tcu.edu
2801 Denton Tap Rd., #1331
Lewisville, TX 75067
817-360-8805 (cell)

Committee on Ministry Meets

The new Committee on Ministry had their first meeting on Wednesday, February 15, 2006. In accordance with our by-laws, the members of the committee are the same as were on the Ministerial Search Committee: Reed Bilz, Audrey Weil, John Huffman, Walter McConathy and Beverly Archibald, chair. This committee will meet monthly with Russell Elleven, with a regular agenda for each meeting so that, during the course of a year, each aspect of the ministerial-congregational relationship is reviewed.

The purpose of the committee on Ministry is to strengthen the quality of ministry within the congregation. Such a committee serves as a support group for the minister and as a communication channel between the minister and the congregation.

As delineated by the UUA Department of Ministry, the most important functions of the Committee on Ministry are:

1. To aid the minister in carrying on an effective ministry by being available for counsel.
2. To keep the minister advised of conditions within the congregation as they affect relationships between the minister and members, with the main thrust on strengthening and improving relationships.
3. To continually interpret to the congregation the nature and scope of the work of the minister, including a clarification of role expectations and realistic priorities for ministers and members.
4. To consult with the minister and submit an annual compensation recommendation to the governing board or personnel committee.
5. To work with the minister on his continuing education program, sabbatical planning, or other professional development and to advocate such plans to the governing board and congregation.

Because of the nature of this committee's work, trust, integrity and confidentiality are essential. The members must have the trust of the congregation at large, the board, and the minister. Meetings are conducted as "Executive Sessions". All discussions within the meeting will be held in strict confidence.

Help Wanted: Ushers and Greeters

Would you like to be the first one to meet guests and potential members? Come to the usher/greeter training after church on March 12th for training. For more information, call Bettina Pfeiffenberger at 817-343-8873, or just show up!

RE Fundraiser: Inkjet Cartridge Recycling Program

Thank you to all who have been bringing your old inkjet cartridges to be recycled. We now have enough to send a full box and we hope that it will yield \$20 to \$30 for our religious education program. Keep them coming!

R.E. Classes Tour the World

Wow! Our primary school class has been having a wonderful year, celebrating something every Sunday. We've enjoyed Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot, Ramadan and Dussehra, Advent, Los Posados and Hanukkah! Just recently we've celebrated Huichol Indian Day, Setsubun (Japanese New Year) and Chinese New Year – with a REAL Chinese New Year Dragon - You might have seen it parading about coffee hour! We are so lucky to be able to learn about so many holidays from so many world religions – we always have something to celebrate. So keep a look out for other signs of festivities – Powamu, Mardi Gras, Purim, and Buddha's birthday are yet to come – and feel free to bring your kiddos to join us!

If you have any traditions or artifacts to share, please contact Caroline Nixon at carolinenixon@sbcglobal.net or 817-462-7063 (work).

CALENDAR

MARCH (Texas History Month):

- 1 Ash Wednesday
- 2 Texas Independence Day
- 2 Religious Education Committee
- 3 UU Women's Lunch
- 3 Happy Hour
- 4 Bike & Breakfast
- 5 Bridge Night
- 5 Great Books #1
- 9 Thanksgiving Thursday and Think 'N'Talk
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 17 Newsletter Submissions Due
- 19 After-Church Potluck
- 19 Great Books #2
- 24 Camping Trip Begins
- 26 Contemporary Books
- 31 Cesar Chavez Day

APRIL

- 1 Bike & Breakfast
- 1 Talent Show
- 2 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 2 AIDS Walk
- 2 Bridge Night
- 6 Religious Education Committee
- 7 UU Women's Lunch
- 9 Palm Sunday
- 9 Great Books #1
- 12 Passover Begins
- 14 Good Friday
- 16 Easter
- 16 Great Books #2
- 21 Newsletter Submissions Due
- 23 Contemporary Books

NEW AND FAMILIAR FACES

Our newest members joined Westside on January 22. Here in her own words is our introduction to Ashley Ekola and her daughter Sarah.

"I was born in Pensacola, and grew up living in Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana. My family is in the restaurant business so I grew up cooking, washing dishes and waiting tables. I have always been a math head, though, and I graduated from the University of West Florida in Pensacola with a degree in Computer Science. Shell Oil, in Houston, TX, hired me right out of school, and I spent 10 years working in technical infrastructure for Oil and Gas and Chemical Companies in Houston.

We relocated to Fort Worth two years ago when I went to work for Pier 1 imports, where I am an IT Director - responsible for all of Pier 1's technology infrastructure. I like working at Pier 1 and I love Fort Worth - it was a lucky happenstance that led me to switch industries and locations, and I'm glad for it. I am working very slowly on my MBA at UTA.

My religious involvement has been nonexistent since I graduated from junior college. Very well meaning people sent me to parochial schools through the 12th grade (Baptist and Catholic - what a combination!). I was so utterly put off by the rigidity and the directive not to think or ask questions that I decided I had no use for organized religion. Really, I spent a lot of time in principals' offices for asking difficult questions!

Twenty years later a friend of a friend in Houston, who is UU herself, told me, "Ashley, you are SO UU. You must go check it out." She wouldn't tell me any more, just that I should go see for myself. It so happens that about this same time, my daughter Sarah started asking questions about church. I started reading, found Westside, and I just love it so much.

Did you know that you can be starving to death on the inside and not even know it? I had gotten so used to it that I didn't even know what I was missing! I am so grateful to have found Westside and to have been welcomed so openly by such a wonderful community of people that I actually really identify with. I'm still getting over my amazement!

My daughter, Sarah, turned four in August. How do they grow up so fast? ;-) She is a joy to all who know her. She is such a loving little person. Happy and smart, she is also independent, temperamental and funny. Sarah goes to Montessori Sundance downtown; she knows it's best to think for yourself and not let somebody else tell you everything. She loves swimming, puzzles and reading, and especially our puppy dog Tikko, who is a spoiled rotten but lovable Finnish Spitz.

Away from work my interests are really simple. I love my garden and my plants, and I enjoy cooking and making scrapbooks. We love hiking and camping, the Zoo, and the Botanical Gardens.

Also, I am a Facilitator for Love and Logic parenting classes. I learned about Love and Logic when Sarah was first starting to toddle around, and it has really been great for both of us. She is very most definitely what you would call a strong willed child! I liked it and it so improved our lives that I became a facilitator so I could share it with other parents. Over the past year I have been doing some classes for non-profit organizations.

We are glad that Ashley and Sarah found Westside and welcome them into our fellowship.

Ashley Ekola
3817 Clarke Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76107
817-732-1283

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



Religious Education

Committee – First Thursday of every month at 7:15 p.m.

Snacks and Potlucks – or “eats and greets!” - We enjoy each other’s company so much we never want to leave on Sunday – until we get hungry!

Please help support our Sunday snacks by donating \$1 per person per month (just write “snacks” in the memo line of your check). We also need volunteers to set up the snacks and make sure they are cleaned up afterward. If you would like to be on the “SNACKS” committee, perhaps helping out once a month, please contact Brenda McKeon (817-921-3692) or bamckeon@aol.com. Dolores will surely appreciate our help!!

UU Women – Come meet for food and fellowship every First Friday of the month. Women of all ages are welcome. We will be meeting at noon at the Kimbell Art Museum in the cafeteria. Please call Liz Hutchison (817-726-3999) if you have any questions.

Great Books Group #1 – The next meeting is Sunday, March 5th at the Furbers’ home. The readings are Of Friendship and Of Solitude. The facilitator is Walt McConathy. For information call 817-294-5894.

Great Books Group #2 – Third Sunday of each month from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The next meeting is March 19th. We will be discussing Prometheus Bound. 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 Sunday, March 26th at the church. We will be discussing Somerset Maugham’s Moon and Sixpence. Discussion will coincide with the Gaugin exhibit at the Kimbell. For information, contact Reed Bilz at 817-292-7974 or at rbilz@earthlink.net.

Thanksgiving Thursday/Think and Talk -March 9th, 2006 - Viva Italia! Pasta Lovers and all who enjoy good food and good company, Take note! Mark your calendars now! March 9th at 6:00p.m. Thanksgiving Thursday Dinner! Still dieting? Come at 7:00p.m. for Think and Talk! Dinner reservations – Adult \$5.00 Children \$3.00 On February 9th, 14 Westsiders and friends gathered to enjoy a fabulous feast prepared by three of our incomparable cooks, Myrtle McMahan, Ashley Ekola, and Brenda Baldwin. Think and Talk enjoyed a DVD presentation of Control Room, “a riveting account of how the news is created and packaged by Al Jazeera,” an Arab TV news group that gives a balanced account of the war in Iraq. The program for Thursday evening, March 9th, will be announced later. If you have a particular subject of interest, please contact Dick Trice at paandmatrice@sbcglobal.net or at 817-446-3840.

WestAid 100 K Trinity Trek Bike Ride, April 22 - WestAid will be holding the first 100 K Trinity Trek Bike

ride on April 22 at 8:00 am. We welcome all to participate in the tag team event on the Trinity Trails. All congregations are also welcome to join in the festivities and help at water stations or with the planning. Call the WestAid office for more information (817-737-9338).

Bridge Night – First Sunday of the month from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the church. All levels of players welcome! Please contact Mary Noer at 817-249-7341 or terrynoer@sbcglobal.net for information.

Dinners for Nine – No dinners are currently planned. If anyone is interested in planning one, please contact Mary Noer (817-249-7341 or terrynoer@sbcglobal.net)

Talent Show - Saturday, April 1 - 7 p.m. @ church. What better way to celebrate April Fools’ Day than to gather with members and friends of Westside Church to share our talents? If you would like to perform (sing, dance, etc.) or display your talent (art, collectibles, etc.), please contact Brenda Baldwin (brendabrew@hotmail.com or 817-927-1762). The first half of the show will be limited to acts suitable for an intergenerational audience. After intermission, who knows? Childcare will be available. If you'd like to attend, please do, and bring some friends! This will be our third show ever, and both previous ones have been awesome. We have more talent every day, with new and more adventuresome members and friends. The Social Committee will provide delicious appetizers and drinks, and you are welcome to bring your own beverages.

!! Happiest Hour !! – Don’t miss this great opportunity for connecting with each other in a comfortable and relaxed environment, on March 3rd, Friday, from 6:30 to 8:30pm at church. We will have two delicious “fundos” to share! Bring your favorite appetizer and beverage and come relax! Kiddos are welcome and can enjoy each other’s company! Contact Mary Noer (817-249-7341) or terrynoer@sbcglobal.net for more information.

Church Camping Trip – March 24-26th at Cleburne State Park. We had such a great time last fall at this park we just have to go back! Join us for one or two nights, or just come on down for Saturday evening dinner. We will have activities for children and adults, and great food – maybe even a marshmallow fight using a real marshmallow launcher! Contact Mary Noer (817-249-7341) or terrynoer@sbcglobal.net to reserve your spot. We have reserved three sites that accommodate eight people per site. Cost is generally around \$20 for two nights. First come, first reserved. (Please let Mary know if you need any camping equipment.) A service will be held at the campsite on Sunday.

AIDS WALK – The 2006 Aids Walk will be held on April 2nd at TCU. We would like to get together a team of walkers from Westside and Angel of Hope. Please help out by either walking or sponsoring our walkers monetarily. Contact Mary Noer (817-249-7341) or terrynoer@sbcglobal.net to participate in any way you are able.

After-Church Potluck – March 19th – Please join us for food and conversation.

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church
c/o McMahan's, 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?

Please send your announcements via e-mail to Jane Palmer (cpalmer263@sbcglobal.net) by Thursday for publication in the following Sunday's insert. Any questions, please call Jane at 817-847-9713.

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church *Board of Directors 2005-2006*

President – Bill Terry

Vice-President – Paul McClellan

Secretary – Virginia (Gino) Kennedy

Treasurer – Mark McMurry

Directors –

Andrea Dorgan • Linda Hanratty

Bettina Pfeifferberger • Dick Trice

A **challenge grant** has been offered by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock to benefit the UUA-UUSC **Gulf Coast Relief Fund**. This challenge grant will deliver another \$1 million in aid (in addition to the \$2 million-plus already raised) to this fund. Beginning with contributions dated Oct. 2, 2005, Shelter Rock will match each dollar given to the fund, up to a total of \$500,000.

Checks should be made out to the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund and sent to: Relief, Department of Development, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2800 or they can be put into the collection baskets on Sunday.

Three UU churches in the New Orleans area are badly damaged, and at least one is beyond repair. The Gulf Coast Relief Panel and UUSC's Department of Rights in Humanitarian Crises have committed to providing long-term and effective interventions and solutions, by making intentional, judicious grants in order to make the best use of the funds to provide ongoing assistance to those most in need.

– Deborah J. Weiner, UUA.

SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER

by March 17th! Email them to Jane Palmer at cpalmer263@sbcglobal.net or mail them to 2609 Silver Hill Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76131 or phone them in at 817-847-9713.

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
January 01, 2006	43	4	47
January 08, 2006	71	8	79
January 15, 2006	77	10	87
January 22, 2006	54	10	64
January 29, 2006	54	8	62
Monthly Average	59.8	8	67.8