



The Covenant Sound

Newsletter of the
All Souls Unitarian Universalist Community

Sunday Services at 11:00 am

- Sunday, April 6 11 am Symbolic Ceremony to inaugurate our Pastoral Care Listeners
- Sunday, April 13 11 am Jean Holz will speak on "Welcoming and Integration"
- Sunday, April 20 11 am Ann Aubuchon will speak on the book "Prayer Chest" by August Gold and Joel Fotinos. It is a novel about receiving all of life's riches. "Nothing is more important than learning the Secret of the Prayer Chest. Using the Secret of the Prayer Chest, every prayer is answered."
- Sunday, April 27 11 am TBA

Religious Education

Religious Education is important in the life of any religious organization. It is the passing on of our beliefs and the exploration of what these beliefs mean to each individual within our community.

All Souls provides religious education for all ages within its community – from childhood through adulthood. We also mark those special milestones within an individual's life such as "coming of age" and "bridging to adulthood" (graduating from high school). The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the local Pacific Northwest District of the UUA provide various curricula based on the 7 Principles of Unitarian Universalism which can be used for this education.

We have been very blessed for the last two years that Eileen Blake and Patti Logan have lead the adult RE without much need of planning on the part of the Religious Education Committee. Jean Holz has been working with various others to lead Children's RE.

The UUA is in the process of publishing A Tapestry of Faith, a unified curriculum for all ages. This curriculum will be available on-line as a free resource for all members of the UUA. It contains lessons with multiple activity choices that are age appropriate. We can download the lessons, choose the activities that suit our purposes, and teach the lesson. With the younger grades we have a "one room schoolhouse" model; we can choose complementary activities from the ages we have present and do the lesson for all at once. At present the whole curriculum is not published; it is expected by this September.

Now is the time for planning next year's RE for all ages. We need to discuss the structure for next year, the curricula to use, the timing of classes, who will be the teachers and helpers, the coordination with worship services, and all the other items that are necessary.

There will be a meeting of the Religious Education Committee on April 20 after the service. Please join us if you would like to be a member of the committee. Since this is expected to be a lengthy meeting, Jean Holz will provide either pizza or sandwiches and some veggies for a working lunch. Those attending the meeting can bring additions to this spread.

Please let Jean know if you are expecting to attend the meeting. You may contact her at 360-459-1251 or pnfrr@comcast.net. If you would like to be involved but cannot attend the meeting, also let Jean know.

April

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p><i>Sermon titles are in italics on the top line(s) on Sundays</i></p>		1	2	3	4	5 12:00 - 4:30 Our Lady of the Sacred Earth coffee
6 12:30 Road Clean Up (see p. 5)	7 7:00 Build Your Own Theology	8 7:00 Member Services Mtg	9	10 6:00 Finance Mtg	11	12
13 <i>Welcome & Integration</i> 12:30 Board Mtg 12:30 YRUU (teens) Meeting	14 7:00 Writer's Group	15 6:45 IW Annual Mtg (see p. 4)	16	17	18	19 Our Lady of the Sacred Earth
20 <i>"Peace Chest"</i> 12:30 Religious Education Mtg (see p. 1) 9:00 pm Newsletter Deadline	21 7:00 Build Your Own Theology	22	23 7:00 Worship Arts Mtg	24	25	26
27 TBA 12:30 New Member Orientation (see p. 5) 12:30 YRUU (teens) Meeting	28 7:00 Writer's Group	29	30			

Is God the Ultimate Morality?

By Christopher Stoeckel

A little while ago and half a world away, I was asked a question by a friend of mine while we discussed comparative theology. We were sitting in a dining facility in Baghdad, Iraq, calmly talking about our different beliefs, when he turned to me and asked me if I believed god was the ultimate morality in the universe. I started to blurt out an answer, but then stopped myself to think for a moment. This was not a question that could be answered by a quick and flippant phrase, nor by spewing out some quote from a theology master somewhere. No, this was a question that I would have to think about before answering.

I realize before all else that my god is not the same as your god nor anyone else's. Indeed, even those in the same religion often have differing views of what god is. But then, he was asking about my belief and my personal theology. In the months that have passed since that conversation, I have continued to give my friend's question thought and weighed my answers in my own mind. I do not argue the existence of god, nor do I argue what incarnation god is, merely whether in my mind god is the ultimate morality to the universe.

To me, all that we can see around us, and all things in the universe, are a reflection of the divine. We are given freedom of choice when we come to this world, freedom to choose right or wrong, good or evil as we wish. We are given guidance in holy books and through teachings of spiritually advanced masters. What it comes down to is we have, each one of us, a moral compass. Some people's are broken or pointing in the wrong direction, where others have a strong moral compass that almost always points them down the right path. What is the difference between the two? Those whose moral compass almost always points in the right direction, whether they know it or not, are listening to the whispers of the spirit. As we are a reflection of god, the divine has the ability to speak to us, and does speak to us constantly. Some call it conscience, some call it divine guidance. Whatever it is called, it is that which tells us what we are doing is either right or wrong, whether what we do will help others, or harm them.

So, to answer the question I was asked months ago and thought about ever since then, do I believe that god is the ultimate morality to the universe? No, I do not believe that. Morality in itself is a slippery slope that can be twisted to suit the user's purpose. Too many times in history have we seen the "Moral" population put down, abuse, and even kill those they do not deem as being the same, and using the justification of "Morality" to do it. I can not believe the divine would submit to being manipulated in that way. Instead, I see the divine as being the source of each person's own moral compass. Guiding with that small, gentle voice in the back of our minds that tells us what we are doing is right or wrong, and leaving the choice up to us whether we want to listen or not. I see god as being the ultimate moral compass, not forcing us to do anything, but showing us the way and hoping we are wise enough to take it.

Drop Box for COMMENTS

A drop box labeled "COMMENTS" has been placed in the foyer under the name-tag board. It is ceramic with an opening in the top. Anyone, member, guest or visitor, may write a signed or unsigned note communicating their ideas, opinions, or concerns. Any slip of paper can be used, or look for the 4" x 5" recycled paper provided. A board member will collect them after each Sunday gathering.

Thoughts, impressions, and recommendations are welcome. An occasional brief evaluation is encouraged. It might include what you especially liked, how you felt, what you didn't understand or were uncomfortable with, or how there could be improvements to our hospitality and worship services or other activities.

We at ASUUC consider ourselves to be members of one family. We want to have our space and our services comfortable for all who enter our doors.

Celebrate 35 Years With Interfaith Works (IW)

We are invited to help celebrate 35 years of Inter-faith Works at the Annual Meeting of the membership! The business portion of this year's meeting should be very short, leaving lots of time for socializing, snacking, and celebrating. There will be some inspiration, some entertainment and lots of door prizes.

Let's have some fun on Tuesday, April 15 at The United Churches (11th and Capitol Way). Visiting and light refreshments begin at 6:45; introductions and brief business at 7:15; celebration and entertainment at 7:45.

Visit <http://www.interfaith-works.org/nwsltr.html> to see the articles from in the March newsletter and to connect to the calendar of events.

Camp Quixote

The Olympian reported that "Camp Quixote, Olympia's year-old tent city, has come full-circle. It is preparing to return to the property of the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, its first church home.

"The congregation agreed to bring the camp back March 27, about a year after it was last there, after the congregation learned no other church was going to play host to the camp, said Melissa Denton, president of the church's board."

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the May newsletter is April 20. Several of you have been very prolific and have sent in articles each month. Everyone at All Souls is invited to do the same. If any of the committees would like to have publicity, please drop Jean a line with the information. If anyone wants to have their thoughts published, write them down and submit to Jean. In other words, contact Jean (360-459-1251 or pnfrr@comcast.net) if you want information passed to the rest of the community.

YRUU

Why are you you? This seems like a silly question, but it is also the name of the UU group for teens. They are Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU). We will begin our first regular meetings this month on the 2nd and 4th Sundays (April 13 and 27) after the services.

This group is for any teens who consider themselves seekers or UUs even if they and their families are not regular attendees of All Souls. We will follow a curriculum that explores our seven principles and we will have a lot of fun.

If you are a teen, bring something to share for lunch and join us on April 13 after the service at about 12:30. For more information, contact Jean Holz at 360-459-1251 or pnfrr@comcast.net.

UU Congregation of Grays Harbor

The UU community in Aberdeen and Grays Harbor is now without a church; the congregation decided to disband their church. It is always sad to lose a UU congregation and we hope they might make the trip to All Souls once in a while.

They were kind enough to think of us as they were considering the hymnals, religious education materials, library books, and some other supplies. These items were delivered to us on Easter Sunday. Jean has already picked up the religious education materials and is looking through them for use at All Souls. Sara will be inventorying the hymnals and books prior to putting them into use.

The items that had everyone oohing and aahing were the Flower Communion Order of Services. Unique origami flowers were adhered to the covers of them. Worship Committee is already contemplating how to use them next year.

This is definitely a time for Joy and Sorrow! Thanks go to the Grays Harbor congregation.

Movie Night

March 29 will be the last movie night at All Souls. We have decided to suspend our showings as the license still does not allow us to advertise the name of the movie and our audiences have been sparse. Patti has a network of other progressive organizations that show movies with a spiritual and/or social activist focus. She will keep her ears and eyes open for upcoming films/DVDs that you might like to watch and we will let you know where and when they will air.

New Member Orientation

The New Member Orientation planned for March 30 has been changed to April 27 due to conflicting scheduling. If you are new to All Souls, would like to know more about Unitarian Universalism or All Souls, and/or would like lean more about becoming a member, please email Patti at patti.anne.logan@gmail.com or contact Arlene Anderson at 362-8734.

We Can Feed the World through CROP Walk

Participating in this year's CROP walk is more important than ever, because every dollar donated will be doubled! That's right, the Thurston County CROP Walk finally has a donor willing to match donations. 25% of the money stays right here in Thurston County, going to Out of the Woods and the Thurston County Food Bank, among others. Your efforts this year will make twice as much of a difference. Please choose at least one of these ways to participate:

- 1) Walk in the 10K Crop Walk at 1pm Sunday, May 4. If you want to stop before you reach the official end of the walk, you can get picked up by designated vans.
- 2) Sponsor someone who is walking. Any contribution is appreciated, and goes to programs locally and around the world.
- 3) Help bake cookies to feed the walkers when they return.
- 4) Come down to cheer on the walkers at 1pm Sunday, May 4. Enjoy the program (including music), carry the All Souls UU Community banner (publicity!), and be part of the fun!
- 5) If you have another idea for participating, let Janice know -- the sky's the limit!
- 6) You can even donate on-line to our All Souls team, or register yourself to get on-line donations: go to www.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=241051, click on "Register" next to the red CROP Walk logo, and click on "All Souls UU Community" on the right side under Team Rank.

When we all work together, it is so much more powerful than working separately. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call Janice at work 357-7224 or home 943-8317 or go to www.Interfaith-Works.org.

Back on Schedule -- Road Clean Up April 6

We will be cleaning our adopted roadway Carpenter Road from Pacific to the church again on April 6. No advance training or expertise needed. We have hard hats, vests, and signs to keep us safe. Please come join the crew. This is a good way to speak about our concern for the environment to the community in a tangible way and beautify the roadside at the same time.

Just for fun

Billie checked out this snopes-approved web site. It's fun, it builds your vocabulary, and it's definitely social justice. Try it out, please.

<http://www.snopes.com/inboxer/charity/freerice.asp>

ALL SOULS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Arlene Anderson
Stephen Billey
Billie Clark
Carlene Cloud

Janice Holz
Patti Logan
Doug Weston

NEWSLETTER

Editors – Jean Holz and Patti Logan

April deadline is April 20 (earlier is great!)

<p>OUR MEETING PLACE 6326 Martin Way E, Suite 103 Lacey WA 98516 (360) 352-8734 (360) 943-8317 www.asuuc.org</p>	<p>Directions: We are located on the NW corner of Martin Way & Carpenter Road (2 story dark green bldg..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § From I-5 take the Martin Way exit (#109) § Head east on Martin Way through 2 traffic lights § Turn left (north) into the parking lot – last driveway before Carpenter Road (third traffic light) § Use the door at the right -- the one with our phoenix chalice on it!
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The mission of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Community is to build a warm, friendly and joyful home from which we respond to the spiritual, intellectual, ecological and social justice needs around us. We embrace diverse ideas and lifestyles as exemplified by Unitarian Universalist principles and stated in our by-laws.



All Souls Unitarian Universalist Community
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