



Winter 2006

Heartline

Newsletter of the Heartland Unitarian Universalist District

The District & You *by Lisa Presley, HUUD Interim District Executive*

Here we are, at the beginning of another New Year by the calendar, and a good distance into our interim year together by Heartland's calendar. I don't know how the time has flown by, but fly it has! One-third of the way through this interim year some things have become clear:

- There are many people who are working hard to keep Heartland vital and alive with Unitarian Universalism. In this list, I include the Heartland Board, the Heartland staff, the various Committees in the Program Council, our Youth and Young Adults, the Congregational Consultants, and the professionals who serve our congregations. I know that there are more people, too, whom I haven't had the pleasure of meeting this fall, and I want to acknowledge you, too.
- The Heartland District is still facing growing pains. When created, Heartland was an amazing dream—creating a new district with the best from both the predecessors. It included the ability to be and do more together through working groups helping deliver services, not just the District Executive. Yet over the past few years, the number of people involved in these working groups has decreased, primarily due to life changes. The Heartland needs more volunteers—people who are committed to this larger picture and this larger dream.
- Finances in the Heartland are hard—not only for the District itself, but also for several congregations. The economic challenges of the past five years seem to have hit home, and congregations are being forced to make tough decisions about funding and spending. The delegates at last year's District Annual Meeting passed a budget with a deficit, and as this has been adjusted over the year, that deficit has grown. Not exactly what was forecast and what was desired, but a realistic assessment of income and expenses have necessitated an increased deficit. The Board and I are wrestling with this, trying to figure out how best to take the Heartland dreams into the future with your new District Executive. Stay tuned for more information.

(continued on Page 2)...

“Sharing the Ministry, Sharing the Dream”

*Keynote Speaker:
Angela Merkert*

Congregational Consultant

2006 Heartland District Annual Meeting & Spring Conference

April 7-9, 2006
Embassy Suites Hotel
Indianapolis, Indiana

Credit card registration available online
at www.heartlanduu.org beginning
January 15th.

Registration brochures available at HUUD
member congregations, or by request at the
district office also on January 15th.

To request exhibitor and workshop forms,
contact the district office at 888-948-
4883, or email office@heartlanduu.org.

The District & You ...(continued from Page 1)

- We, in the Heartland, are capable of great things, and we are, together, much stronger than we can be alone. While watching the ideas click with the participants in the Fall Training Institute, I was made aware that when we come together to learn, laugh, worship and seek, we are invigorated and strengthened by each other's presence. I am sure that the Heartland can move forward through this transition time and come out stronger and healthier.
- We need more volunteers to step up and help the work get done. I know you've all heard this in your congregations, I urge you to consider service on the District level. You get to share your best practices with more people and congregations, you get to learn more

from other UUs around the District, and you have a chance to make us even better and healthier. If you're interested in serving on a committee: Leadership Development, Annual Meeting, Communications, Extension; or if you're interested in being one of our consultants, or interested in being listed in our Speaker's Bureau, please get in touch with the District Office. We need your skills and enthusiasm in the Heartland.

Each of us can only be as strong as we are together, and together we can all work to help each and every one of our congregations grow healthier and stronger. I invite you to take the journey with me.

Peace,
Lisa

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee— Volunteer Wanted!

The UU Service Committee has a vacancy in the position of Regional Coordinator for the Heartland District. The Regional Coordinators (RC) are volunteers who must stay consistently well informed on UUSC's work and opportunities for congregational and individual involvement. They help facilitate the success of the Local Representatives' efforts to strengthen UUSC's role within their congregations. RCs provide the leadership, outreach, membership and fund raising efforts, and involvement vital to the UUSC's human rights work. RCs train, guide and recruit Local Reps when needed. They communicate regularly with Local Reps, their National Co-Chair, and with the UUSC's Associate for Member Development. They also assist in strengthening UUSC's partnership with the UU community through events, print publications and other methods. RCs also attend the UUSC National Volunteer Network Leadership Conference in Boston each September. If you are interested in being considered for this position, please contact Interim District Executive Lisa Presley at de@heartlanduu.org or 317-525-2808.

Heartline

Published quarterly with exceptions by the
Heartland District of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
445 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 510, Indianapolis, IN 46204-1893
(888) 948-HUUD (4883) • Fax (317) 634-5385 • www.heartlanduu.org

Interim District Executive..... Rev. Lisa Presley (888) 948-4883..... de@heartlanduu.org
Office Administrator..... Barbara Hamilton (888) 948-4883..... office@heartlanduu.org
Lifespan RE Program Consultant Nancy Combs-Morgan (859) 276-1585..... pc@heartlanduu.org

Heartland Leadership

President..... Connie Haas Zuber (260) 456-4132 chzuber@comcast.net Fort Wayne, IN
VP-Finance..... Susan Bookout (812) 976-9790 sbookout@juno.com Bloomington, IN
VP-Admin..... Steven Thompson (937) 626-5325cell sthompson7@woh.r.com Springboro, OH
Secretary..... VACANT
At Large..... Rev. Todd Eklof (502) 899-1337 todd@cliftonunitarian.com Louisville, KY
At Large..... Markie Oliver (765) 282-1366 moliver@bsu.edu Muncie, IN
At Large..... Leigh Robertson (269) 342-9372 arobertson57@yahoo.com Kalamazoo, MI
At Large..... Laura Spencer (734) 665-6158 Laura@uuaa.org Ann Arbor, MI
At Large..... VACANT
DYSC Youth Observer..... Becca Brown (317) 255-0208 u_u_youth@hotmail.com Indianapolis, IN
UUA Trustee..... Rev. Douglas Gallagher..... (248) 647-2380 douglas.gallagher@bucmi.org Bloomfield Hills, MI
Annual Meeting..... VACANT
Communication..... VACANT
District Youth..... Samantha Dewald (513) 245-2378 entucara151@yahoo.com Cincinnati, OH
..... Jason Keller (513) 293-2289 Jason-Keller@earthlink.net Cincinnati, OH
Extension..... Rev. Nana' Kratochvil (231) 755-2931 huucmusk@verizon.net Muskegon, MI
Leadership Dev..... VACANT
Lifespan RE..... Barbara Weber (937) 435-5046 biw622@yahoo.com Dayton, OH
Social Justice..... VACANT
YA/CM Sustainability Corp.. Kelly Rauch (812) 876-4312 kellymrauch@yahoo.com Bloomington, IN
Nominating..... Rev. Elwood Sturtevant (512) 425-6943 elwoods@aol.com Louisville, KY
UUMA Rep..... Rev. Thomas Perchlik (765) 288-9561 dharmarev@hotmail.com Muncie, IN
MUUC Rep..... Veronica Smith (313) 824-2702 vsmith508@aol.com Grosse Pointe, MI
MUUC Rep..... Susan Porter (317) 251-7346 msrporter@aol.com Indianapolis, IN
UUMN..... Anne Littlefield anlitt@comcast.net Fort Wayne, IN
UUMN..... Lois Hitchcock maw4@juno.com Southfield, MI

Send submissions to Heartland District office at the above address or email to office@heartlanduu.org
Deadline for articles for next issue: March 15, 2006

Heartline is now available electronically via email or on the Heartland website at www.heartlanduu.org.
Contact the district office at office@heartlanduu.org to have an electronic version emailed to you.

Former Grosse Pointe Minister Passes

William D. Hammond, minister of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church from 1950 - 1964, died peacefully in his sleep in late November. A memorial service was held in Groton, MA on December 17, the day Rev. Hammond would have celebrated his ninetieth birthday.

The legacy of Bill Hammond's ministry remains with us. Those who knew Bill will remember his thoughtful sermons, his skillful celebration of rites of passage, and, overall, his caring ministry. All of us continue to benefit from his churchmanship; he helped grow a young church into the institution we now have.

I knew Bill for almost forty years, yet I was particularly moved by a paper he delivered in his late seventies. In it he told of how he had changed his mind about some of his beliefs. He hadn't stopped growing.

Bill Hammond was a good man. We will dearly miss him.

Rev. John Corrado
Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

One Man's Fight by Rev. Todd Eklof, Clifton Unitarian Church, Louisville, KY

As I look ahead to the possibilities of the coming New Year, I cannot help but reflect on all that has happened for me during 2005. Until around this same time last year, I had worked as a fulltime corporate video producer, in addition to my role as minister at Clifton Unitarian Church. It was just over a year ago, in November of 2004, that George W. Bush was re-elected (according to some) President of the United States, and eleven state laws were passed around the nation banning marriage equality, including one here in Kentucky. The following Sunday, November 7, 2004, I responded by informing my congregation that I can no longer, in good conscience, perform marriage ceremonies for anyone until I'm free to perform them equally for everyone.

My rather strong stance made a few local news reports, prompting my secular employers to call me into a meeting a week later to discuss their dismay over the coverage I'd received. Although I was not happy about the meeting, feeling my constitutional protections were violated, I knew there was little I could do about it at the time. It wasn't until the next day, when I was handed a document to sign, summarizing my employers' version of the meeting, that I realized I had been reprimanded, demoted and asked to resign. To make a long story short, I did not resign and was fired less than two months later for a variety of unrelated reasons I consider trumped up. On October 28, 2005, after participating in a "Justice for All" rally in downtown Louisville, about 150 supporters and I marched across the street to the courthouse, singing "When we all have equal rights," to the tune of *When the Saints Go Marching In*, where I filed a discrimination suit against my former employers.

Secondly, some national media exposure has prompted other progressive ministers to reach out to me in an effort to network on behalf of our bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender brothers and sisters whom the Empire is now officially discriminating against. Some of us, from a variety of denominations, have written a resolution asking other ministers to join us by, at the very least, no longer acting as agents of the State by signing marriage documents. Our website is www.yestomarrriageequality.com.

Thirdly, my own congregation, Clifton Unitarian Church, has been extremely supportive and has since decided to bite the bullet, a bit ahead of schedule, and give me a pay increase so I can pay my bills and devote myself to fulltime ministry. Following my decision not to perform weddings until all laws discriminating against marriage equality are overturned, our church board also adopted a resolution prohibiting weddings from our building until we can open our doors freely and equally to all couples seeking matrimony.

But the good news is...

Firstly, continuing media interest in the story has enabled me to keep the important issue of marriage equality before the public. (We're not hearing much about it these days, but just wait until the next election when the Christian Taliban resurrects it as a major campaign issue!) Early on the *UU World* also published a small article on the matter, and, more recently, I had a delightful meeting with Keith Kron, Director of the UUA's Office of BGLT Concerns. Interest in my story has allowed me several opportunities to speak about marriage equality, in general, and, specifically, about the Bible

and homosexuality, at various events and venues, including during Pride Week at Hanover College, as a guest speaker at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit, and at a "Love Comes Out" conference here in Louisville.

Finally, I have been deeply touched and humbled by the many supporters who have reached out to me with words of encouragement, including both individuals and entire UU congregations who have contributed to my legal expenses. Although I realize this is ultimately my struggle, that I'm the one who will eventually be deposed, and, likely, further maligned and defamed by my former employer, the support of so many also makes me realize that I am not alone, that this is not just *my* fight, it is also *our* fight. Like the song says, "We are a justice seeking people..."

Obviously I don't know what the coming year has in store, or what the outcome of my case may be. It may even span several years, in which case my former employers will likely outlast and outspend me, and will probably win by default. But that's okay. I simply want my day in court—the opportunity to say this is unjust, you can't fire people because you don't like their politics or their religion—regardless of the outcome. More importantly, however, I hope so many of the positive things that have happened to me during the past few months are just the beginning of the love and kindness that will come my way.

Love & peace,
Todd

UUA Matters by Rev. Douglas Gallagher, UUA Trustee

As you might have heard, the UUA is instituting a Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth. A youth survey will be available during the first week in January through the UUA congregational mailing and the Consultation website at UUA.org. Many in our churches have concerns about not only how well we minister to and with our youth, but what we are doing, or not doing, to insure that we don't lose our youth. So the survey is designed to collect information about the experiences of youth ages 12-20 with a variety of involvements – youth involved in YRUU, youth involved in their congregation but not in a youth group, and youth who left their congregation after junior high. Individuals can get a copy to fill out or distribute by contacting Beth Dana at bdana@uua.org.

A guide to organize your congregation's conversation will be available online and mailed to committed congregations during the second week in January. If your congregation has not yet made a commitment to take part in this Consultation you can receive a process guide by contacting Beth Dana.

The UUA Board of Trustees meets January 20-22. If you have any concerns or questions I'd like to hear from you.

Rev. Douglas Gallagher, D.Min
Birmingham Unitarian Church
douglas.gallagher@bucmi.org

REvision

by Nancy Combs-Morgan, HUUD Lifespan RE Program Consultant

I recently helped to lead a Religious Education Consultant Training in Dallas, Texas where the Mid-America UUA Districts (Central Midwest, Prairie Star, Ohio Meadville, Southwest Conference and the Heartland District) came together to offer an extensive training session for folks to provide direct congregational services for Lifespan Faith Development.

Our Heartland RE Consultants, including Diane Melvin (Kalamazoo), Teresa Putnam (E. Lansing, MI), Kathy Silver (Farmington, MI), Barb Weber (Dayton, OH) and Lisa Minor (Bloomington, IN) are available to any of our congregations to lead RE Committee Mission/Vision/Purpose Workshops, DRE Exit/Transition Interviews, DRE Start-Up workshops and Safe Congregations workshops. To learn more or to schedule a consultant visit at your congregation, contact the district office at 888-948-4883, or email office@heartlanduu.org.

At the training, we had an engaging session on what does **Lifespan Faith Development** really mean. For me it relates back to the vision statement produced by the UUA Lifespan Faith Development Department in preparation for the new, integrated lifespan curriculum series. As a UU Religious Educator, I share and affirm many of the goals of this vision statement (and if you have been at any of my trainings, you know firsthand that I spend a great deal of time seeking feedback on this vision statement from other religious leaders).

The vision statement expresses:

Lifespan Faith Development (should) integrate four strands:

- **Ethical Development**
- **Spiritual Development**
- **Unitarian Universalist Identity**
- **Faith Development**

We envision children, youth and adults who –

- * Know that they are lovable beings of infinite worth, imbued with powers of the soul, and obligated to use their gifts, talents and potentials in the service of life;
- * affirm that they are part of a UU religious heritage and community of faith that has value and provides resources for living;
- * accept that they are responsible for the stewardship and creative transformation of their religious heritage and community of faith;
- * realize that they are moral agents, capable of making a difference in the lives of other people, challenging structures of social and political oppression, promoting the health and well-being of the planet, acting in the service of diversity, justice and compassion;

(continued on Page 5)....



Calling all DREs, Youth Advisors and YRUUs

Come to the.....

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CON

Heartland District YRUU Event

February 10-12, 2006

Who: Any youth or adults who want to get involved with the Heartland District or in their own churches and/or communities.

When: 7:00 PM Friday, February 10th through 9:00 AM Sunday, February 12th.

Where: First Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Ann Arbor, MI

Why: An LDC can provide energy to rebuild a struggling youth program or maintain a strong one by increasing the pool of able and enthusiastic youth and advisors, enhancing youth-adult communications, and increasing the skills and tools of the youth and advisors leading your church's youth group.

Cost: \$35 (scholarships are available)

Registration Deadline: February 2, 2006

What the UUA Youth Office has to say about Leadership Development Conferences: Leadership Development Conferences are small working conferences designed for youth and adult leaders. A Leadership Development Conference (LDC) focuses on making the YRUU group mind "smarter" by helping the participants learn how to be leaders. At an LDC, YRUU youth and advisors learn concrete leadership skills within a structure that helps them reflect on why they are involved in YRUU, what roles they play in their YRUU group (local or district), and what they think it means to be a leader in YRUU. Leadership training is a process of empowerment-giving the members of the group the skills they need to have power in their group. An LDC can also provide benefits to local youth groups and congregations; the youth and advisors returning from LDC conferences often bring their congregations new skills and energy. Most importantly, an LDC is about personal empowerment, offering each participant a chance to grow in terms of actual skills, self-confidence as a leader, and enthusiasm and commitment. Who should attend an LDC? Youth who want to learn to be leaders. Advisors who want to learn to be empowering. DREs and Ministers who want to learn to support youth programming. Recommended ratio of youth to adults 3:1

(Contact office@heartlanduu.org for registration details or log on to www.heartlanduu.org)

EXTENSIONNews by Steve Scott

It's All About Growth!!

The Chalice Lighters Program is a grant program funded by your generous and faithful giving. The grants are given to congregations to foster numerical growth in their congregations. Congregations who apply must demonstrate that they are committed to growth by preparing themselves through education and honest self assessment. A strategic plan is required that details the current status of the congregation, staff and facilities. The plan must also describe how the grant will be used and the hoped for outcome. In addition we ask each successful applicant to provide follow up reports. There are many possible uses for a Chalice Lighters Grant.

The quality of the Sunday morning service is paramount to attracting and retaining new members. People visit our congregations in hopes of finding a spiritual home. They look for people who share their values and a community that challenges them to live their lives in harmony with those values. Professional program staff is essential to consistent, quality services. Staffing for growth requires having one full time professional program person for every one hundred active members. Chalice Lighters grants are sometimes given to help hire program staff. Program staff includes Ministers, RE Professionals and Music Directors.

People want to visit us but we do not always make it easy or pleasant for them. Our signs, if we have them, are sometimes small or inconspicuous. Our parking is often inadequate. Our RE space is worn out or too small for growth. The building has stairs, but no ramps for accessibility. Our meeting space may need renovation or new seating. There is no office staff to answer the phone except on Sunday morning. A Chalice Lighters grant may be given to help solve these kinds of problems as well.

Before applying for a grant here are some things to consider. Congregations who are given a grant have demonstrated their willingness to grow by making plans to accommodate growth. They have already committed their own time and efforts to bring the project forward. They have shown their ability to manage their financial affairs by staying within their budget. They have already spent their own reserves as far as they think is prudent.

Growth is not easy or cheap, but it is necessary. There is a world out there waiting to discover we are here and that they are welcome. (*Chalice Lighter guidelines and grant application forms are available at www.heartlanduu.org.*)



IT OUT
Check out our new website at
www.heartlanduu.org
Website design by:
Lori Stone Sirtosky
UU Church of Indianapolis
Awesome job, Lori!

RE Vision ...(continued from Page 4)

- * recognize the need for community, affirming the importance of families, relationships and connections between and among the generations;
- * appreciate the value of spiritual practice as a means of deepening faith and integrating beliefs and values with everyday life;
- * experience hope, joy, mystery, healing and personal transformation in the midst of life's challenges.

How do you feel about this vision statement? Has your congregation already lifted up aspects of this statement in the practice of your RE programming? I would love to hear more....

In faith and practice,
Nancy

PEOPLE'S CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO, MI CELEBRATES 150 YEARS

In the mid-1850's when the nation was moving westward, and Franklin Pierce was president of the United States, "liberal" religion was expanding with the nation. In 1855, Michigan had been a state for only 18 years when the Rev. D.A. Russell reported to the fourth Annual Conference of the Western Unitarian churches in Boston that he had been using Fireman's Hall in Kalamazoo to attract 65 "hearers" and a Sunday School of 35. The first record of our affiliation with the American Unitarian Association came in 1856. These events establish the original date on which People's Church bases its sesquicentennial year in 2005-06.

By 1905, Theodore Roosevelt was our president, technology was booming, and Susan B. Anthony was pressing for women's rights (a woman could be arrested for smoking in public!). In Kalamazoo, Caroline Bartlett Crane had been the minister of the People's Church of Kalamazoo for several years. As an activist, she organized a Sunday School, Ladies Society, and was involved in many community projects, including starting the first kindergarten in Kalamazoo.

Fifty years later in 1955, two world wars were over, Ike was president, women could vote, and Mr. Edwin C. Palmer had been ministering to People's people for 22 years. He guided the congregation toward a naturalistic, humanistic form of worship. People's has had several ministers following Mr. Palmer, including Roger Greeley, whose passionate dissertations concerned national problems of the day, biographies of Free Thought pioneers, and problems of everyday living.

One hundred fifty years later, we have global warming, George Bush and war. Jill McAllister ministers to a thriving church. She introduced a Sunday morning centering service. Summer Sunday morning lay services were started in 1999 and continue to the present. Our church is blessed to have an active membership working on social justice issues, personal improvement, and building a church community that will be serving Kalamazoo and surrounding areas with liberal religion until 2155! For more historical information go to www.peopleschurch.net, or call 269-375-3262.

Heartland District of the UUA
 445 N. Pennsylvania St., Suite 510
 Indianapolis, IN 46204-1893

DISTRICT *Calendar*

January through March 2006

(For details, contact the district office at office@heartlanduu.org, or log on to the HUUD website at www.heartlanduu.org)

January 6-8	DYSC Spirituality Development Con	St. John's Unitarian Church, Cincinnati, OH
January 13	DRE MI Cluster Meeting	Emerson Church UU, Troy, MI
January 13-15	Kalamazoo UU Liberal Students Conf	People's Church, Kalamazoo, MI
January 16	HUUD OFFICE CLOSED Martin Luther King's Birthday	
January 18	DRE Cluster Meeting	UU Church, Bloomington, IN
January 20-21	HUUD Program Council Meeting	Indianapolis, IN
Jan 29-Feb 2	UUMA Pokagon Retreat	Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN
February 3-5	HUUD Board of Trustees Meeting	Best Western Luxbury Inn, Fort Wayne, IN
February 10	DRE MI Cluster Meeting	UU Church of Greater Lansing, E. Lansing, MI
February 10-12	DYSC Leadership Development Con	UU Church of Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor, MI
February 15	DRE IN Cluster Meeting	TBD
February 20	HUUD OFFICE CLOSED President's Day	
March 2-5	UUA Mid-Size Church Conference	Phoenix, AZ
March 10	DRE MI Cluster Meeting	First UU Church, Ann Arbor, MI
March 10-12	DYSC Committee Meeting	St. John's Unitarian Church, Cincinnati, OH
March 15	<i>Heartline</i> newsletter articles due	
March 15	DRE Cluster Meeting	Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church, Louisville, KY

Bits & Pieces

UU Church of Greater Lansing has a job opening for a part-time professional church administrator. Email resume and cover letter to uucgljob@comcast.net.



Food for All Souls, an attractive, hardbound cookbook with 300 recipes, including a few from local PBS chef, Marcia Adams, is on sale for \$10 at the UU Congregation of Fort Wayne. To order, contact Cynthia Powers at uufortwayne@verizon.net, or call 260-744-1867.