



Good Gnus

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Jonesboro, AR
P.O. Box 1414, Jonesboro, AR 72403

Arlene Dormio, President
adormio@suddenlink.net

www.jonesborouu.org
facebook.com/jonesborouu

Betty Stafford, editor
nestafford@sbcglobal.net

September 2016

“Summer, bear in mind, is a loitering gossip, that only begins to talk of leaving when September rises to go.”

—George Washington Cable, 1844-1925

Service Calendar

The Fellowship meets at Temple Israel, 203 W. Oak Ave., Jonesboro. Services and Children’s Program 10 a.m. Coffee 10:45 a.m. Adult Forum 11 a.m.

We gather in worship to find meaning and to live more deeply. Worship creates connections within, among, and beyond us, calling us to our better selves, calling us to live with wisdom and compassion—UUA.

September 4 No Meeting—Labor Day holiday.
Enjoy a safe and relaxing weekend.

September 11 Annual In-Gathering and Water Communion.

Planet Earth abounds in water, but most of it is unusable. **Brandon Rout** will explore the rarity of serviceable water and its importance in our lives. You are invited to bring a **small container of water** collected from a special place during your travels, or closer to home that represents particular meaning in your life. All our waters will be gathered in a common vessel, and participants are welcome to share something of their inner or outer journeys.

*Please remember the **Children’s Shelter** with your donation of personal hygiene products. Especially needed are 100% real fruit juices, jellies, quart & gallon freezer bags.*

*The Second Sunday is also **Peanut Butter Sunday**, when we remember our neighbors with contributions of peanut butter and other nutritious foods to the Food Pantry.*



September 18 To Be Announced

*Our **Third Sunday Pot Luck** will be shared. You are invited to bring an easy-makin’ dish to enjoy along with visiting and conversation.*

September 25 “Forgiveness and Repentance—The Jewish High Holidays.” **Andrea Levy and Karen Yanowitz** will discuss the importance of these concepts and their application in all our lives.



Defying the Nazis: the Sharps’ War

This Ken Burns film will be broadcast on **PBS, Tuesday, September 20th, 8-9:30 pm.** In 1939, Rev. Waitstill Sharp, a young Unitarian minister, and his wife, Martha, a social worker, accepted a mission from the American Unitarian Association—they were to leave their home and young children in Wellesley, MA, and travel to Prague, Czechoslovakia, to help address the mounting refugee crisis. Armed with only \$40,000, the Sharps quickly learned the art of spy craft and covertly sheltered political dissidents and Jews, and helped them escape the Nazis. After narrowly avoiding the Gestapo themselves, the Sharps returned to Europe in 1940 as representatives of the newly-formed Unitarian Service Committee and continued their relief efforts in Vichy France.



RE Schedule

The Religious Education Committee has been arranging adult classes to take advantage of our Tuesday nights at the Temple.

- Second Tuesdays beginning September 13—**Jennifer Harris Watson** will offer classes on spiritual matters, beginning with “The Path of the Spiritual Warrior.”
- Third Tuesdays beginning September 20—**Book Discussion Group**. The first outing will feature *Non-Violent Communication* by Marshal Rosenberg. This selection is timely with other programming being planned for the congregation. The next selection is *Women Who Run with the Wolves*. These titles were tied in our recent survey.
- First Tuesday beginning October 6, **Norm Stafford** will coordinate a class on UU history.



The first of each class will meet at 6:30 pm. Participants may select other meeting times as necessary.

I hope everyone will find one or more of these offerings appealing. Please support the class leaders as they guide us in growing our UU identity and faith.

---Karen Brown, RE Chair

The Fellowship's August contribution to Helping Neighbors Food Pantry was 59 pounds of peanut butter. Your concern made the month easier for many needy families.

Encouraging Spiritual Growth

My older son might as well have taken a knife and stabbed me in the heart. I know teens experiment. I know they try on different ways of being until they find the right one that will drive you the most crazy.

I know it doesn't mean they are bad people if they are different from me. But this?

“Mom, I think I might want to take accounting classes in school,” he said.

Accounting classes? How could he be this different from me? I get tax forms in the mail, and I break into a sweat holding them by the corner, carrying them to the patient woman who does my taxes. I have always known this boy was an orderly person. When he was just learning to roll over, maybe five months old, I left him on the living room floor while I went to the kitchen to make a grilled cheese sandwich. A night-light in the shape of a seashell had fallen out of its outlet above the floor molding. It had been lying on its back on the floor for a day or two, waiting for me to bend over and put it back into the outlet. When I returned to the living room with my sandwich, my son had rolled the twelve feet over to the wall and was trying to put the light back into its outlet. At that moment, I caught a glimpse of the person he would become.

Orderly is good. I see the need for that quality in the world. I wish I had more of it. It's a strange feeling, though, to see a quality in my child that doesn't appear in either me or his father, a quality that just shows up like a stranger at a family reunion. When the boys were babies, my friends and I would speculate on what our children could do to drive us crazy. Could the boys wear mascara? Get their noses pierced? Shave half their heads and dye the rest green? Several months ago, I was joking with him that he would find a way to drive me crazy pretty soon. “I know exactly how I could do it,” my son said. “Become a Baptist Republican.”

He hit it on the nose. That is what is going to happen. Okay. I can live with that. Will I take a deep breath and applaud his columns in the *National Review*? Can I help him drive his Sunday school class to the Promise Keepers rally? Can I love his extremely sweet wife in white socks and the bow in her hair as big as a pie plate?

We'll see when the time comes. I will breathe deeply and get used to it. He will be different from me. It will be okay. Maybe he can do my taxes.

---from Rev. Meg Barnhouse, First UU Church, Austin, TX

**UU Fellowship of Jonesboro
Board of Directors Meeting 7/21/16 Temple Israel
Minutes**

Present—Arlene Dormio, President; Marlee McCampbell, Vice President, Sarah Rout, Secretary; and Sue Garrison, Treasurer

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes from the June Board of Directors Meeting were approved.

President's Leadership Convocation—Marlee and Arlene summarized their previous weekend in Dallas at the Convocation. The main topics were "Building a Loving Community" and "Strengthening Congregations." The Board discussed what could be taken from this event.

UUFJ Handbook—The Board considered the importance and the need for a handbook of information—policies, procedures, long-range planning, Board job descriptions, etc.—to be given to each new group of Board members. The following policy titles (which other UU congregations already have in place) are not set in stone, but are a work in progress—

Childcare (number of adults needed according to UUA)
Misbehavior (e.g., Denver, CO)

Worship Committee procedures (what speakers are responsible for, list of people who are willing to speak, list of annual services that are held, etc.)

Quarterly Congregational Meetings—The Board specified that these meetings will focus on creating a congregational mission, vision, and covenant.

Areas of Concern—The Board identified the following areas to focus on—updating the UUFJ website, investigating church database software, and creating guidelines and leadership for the Stewardship and Social Justice Committees. The Board's guidelines will not dictate the committees' activities, but only summarize expectations for leaders. Volunteers might be more willing to assume responsibility if they understand what is being asked of them.

Board Assignments—

Arlene—Policies and Procedures for the UUFJ Handbook

Marlee—Mission, vision, covenants, and affirmations of other UU congregations.

Sue—Job description for the position of Board Treasurer and create guidelines for the Social Justice Committee.

Sarah—Job description for the position of Board Secretary and create guidelines for the Stewardship Committee.

Next meeting—8/9/16, 5:30 pm, at Temple Israel.

Adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

**UU Fellowship of Jonesboro
Board of Directors Meeting 8/9/16 Temple Israel
Minutes**

Present—Arlene Dormio, President; Marlee McCampbell, Vice President, Sarah Rout, Secretary; and Sue Garrison, Treasurer

Arlene called the Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

MSP Sue/Marlee to accept the minutes from the July Board meeting.

Financial Matters

1. Sue presented the Treasurer's report.
2. Procedures to change the signature cards on Fellowship accounts at Simmons Bank were discussed (Sue as current treasurer and Betty Stafford as former treasurer). The financial policy should include the following statement—"The names of the active president and treasurer will be on the signature cards for the checking account and the CD, but only the treasurer's signature is required when writing a check."
3. The Board discussed including funds in the '17-'18 budget to purchase monthly board meeting dinners. Sue offered to search for economic food options.

Defying the Nazis—Options for viewing the PBS documentary were discussed briefly. No decisions were made because the viewing time and the desire for discussion are unknown.

Vision, Mission, and Covenant

1. Marlee presented examples from two Colorado congregations.
2. Marlee agreed to be the speaker on Sunday, August 28, while Arlene will facilitate small group discussions after Marlee's presentation. The Board intends that this worship service will to begin a revisit of our own vision, mission, and covenant, to assure (a) that it reflects who we are and (b) that the congregation will have identified the beginning pieces in this process. After a time for review, the Board will incorporate the congregation's distilled thoughts and create a few samples for congregants to discuss, review, refine, and adopt.

Next meeting—9/8/16, 5:30 pm at Temple Israel.

Adjourned at 6:50 p.m.



Our Interdependent Web

Three activists of the Cambodian NGO Mother Nature were released on 7/2/16 from the prison where they had been held for more than 10 months. They were found guilty of threatening to destroy property, ordered to pay fines and compensation to the company which had brought the original complaints—“interfering” with harvesting one of the 21st century’s most valuable resources —**SAND**. Believe it or not, we use more of this natural resource than any other except water and air.

Sand is what modern cities are made of. Pretty much every apartment block, office tower, and shopping mall from Beijing to Lagos, Nigeria, is made at least partly with concrete, basically sand and gravel stuck together with cement. Every yard of asphalt road that connects those buildings is also made with sand. So is every window in every building. Sand is the essential ingredient that makes modern life possible. And we are starting to run out.

According to the UN’s Environment Program, in 2012 the world used enough concrete to build a wall 89’ high and 89’ wide around the Equator. But usable sand is a finite resource. Desert sand, shaped more by wind than by water, generally doesn’t work for construction. We need the sand in riverbeds, floodplains, and beaches, an estimated \$70 billion extraction industry, from multinational companies deploying enormous dredges to villagers toting shovels and buckets. And if they can’t find it onshore, they’re going to the seas.

Sand dredging in San Francisco Bay and Miami has eroded nearby beaches. River sand mining in India disrupts ecosystems, killing countless fish and birds; two dozen small islands in Indonesia have disappeared since 2005; and Vietnamese miners have torn up hundreds of acres of forest to get at the sandy soil underneath. And government officials confronting black-market sand mining gangs in Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Gambia, India, and Indonesia have been killed.

Sand is tremendously heavy and expensive to transport. If you forbid sand mining in your backyard, it has to be trucked in from somewhere else. Concrete is relatively cheap, but if the cost of a new building or road were to double, it could hit the

economy hard, and increasing the use of millions more gallons of diesel fuel every year.

Crushing rock or concrete to make sand is costly, and the result is ill-suited for many applications. Alternative substances? Where can we find 40 billion tons of it every year? Hardly anyone thinks about sand, where it comes from or what we do to get it. But a world of 7 billion people, more and more of whom want apartments to live in and offices to work in and malls to shop in, can’t afford that luxury anymore. It once seemed as if the planet had boundless supplies of oil, water, trees, and land. But we’re learning the hard way that none is infinite, and the price for using them is going up fast. Conserve, reuse, find alternatives for, and generally get smarter about how we use natural resources—that’s how we need to start thinking about sand.

Arkansas is not immune to the sand mining dilemma. Our state’s contribution is frac sand mining, and over ten companies have permits to mine frac sand, mostly in Izard and Independence counties. Besides frac applications, Arkansas sand is mined for concrete, masonry, asphalt, and USGA-approved golf courses! And state highway requirements include 40% silica in road surface aggregate.

---from Vince Beiser, *NY Times*, 6/23/16; Rod Harbinson, *Mongabay*, 7/6/16; Cheree Franco, *Arkansas Times* 1/23/13

