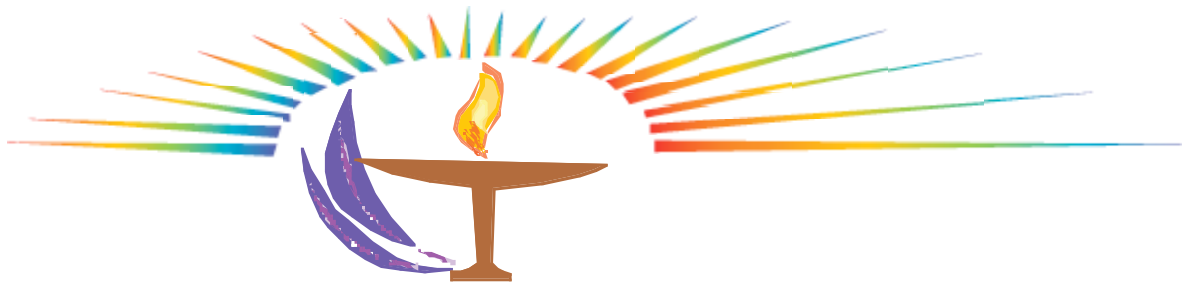


Huntsville Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship

Rev. Tom Capo, Minister



August 2008 Newsletter

Services are generally held on the second and fourth Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Laura Chapel of Huntsville Memorial Hospital. From 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., we gather and have coffee. For more information call (936) 295-3170.

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson



Sunday August 10, 2008

Looking Forward with Hope?

by Reverend Tom Capo

The future holds many changes for me and for the Huntsville Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship. The generous and caring members and friends of the Huntsville Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship need to look forward to the future with much hope in their hearts.

Sunday, August 24, 2008

Our speaker will be John Pepper, a UU from Houston. He has recently completed his Masters of Divinity at the Houston Graduate School of Theology while working full time as an engineer with the federal government. John began graduate school several years ago after discovering a passion for theology and religious history. Currently he is in the fellowship process within the UUA and hopes to perform some form of community ministry after retirement in the near future. His Sermon is entitled *Living in Ambiguity*.

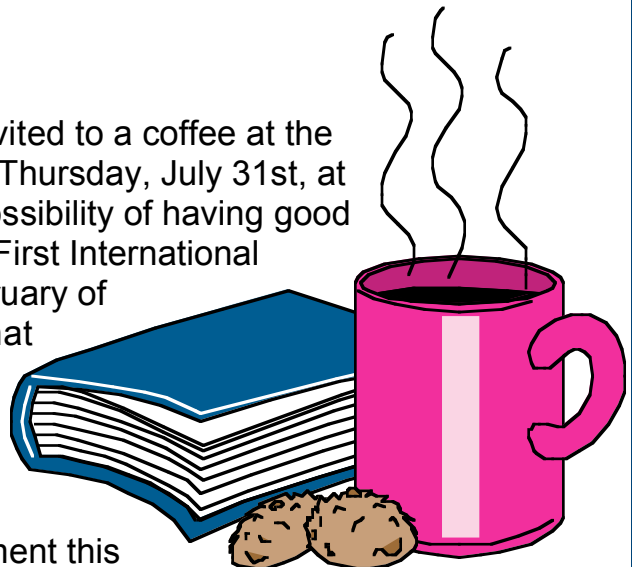
Living in Ambiguity – Lord Krishna's birthday is coming up and there are some striking parallels to this Son of God and another Son of God, Jesus. The proponents of these two religions assert divinity respectively for Krishna and Jesus. Why do some people and religions need to claim "divine authority" for their prophets and the associated wisdom literature while other people shy away from those claims? Why do some people need definite answers to life's ultimate questions while others do not? Why is ambiguity okay for some and not for others? I don't have all the answers, but please join me as I explore some of the questions.

**July 31st
Ladies Coffee**

Ladies of the UU Fellowship: You are invited to a coffee at the Stringer residence at 1800 Camellia this Thursday, July 31st, at three o'clock. We need to explore the possibility of having good representation from our group when the First International UU Women's Convocation meets in February of 2009 in Houston. I also have a project that I think will work for us to work on together. Together, we are able to accomplish much more than we can by ourselves.

Also, the first of the scrapbooks to document this Fellowship is ready to be viewed and will be available for any one interested in looking at it. I will be working on the second scrapbook at an all day session tomorrow and again on Saturday. It's just about to be current!

Joan Stringer



Business Meeting

This is a notice of special called business session for after the church service on August 10, 2008:

REASON FOR THE MEETING:

Before any building can be started, we have been told the City will require that adequate rainwater detention be already constructed. What this means in simple English is that when you build buildings and parking lots, the rain runoff is accelerated, and this can result in more water being dumped downstream in a short period of time than the ditches and streams can handle. Detention is a means to slow down the water-runoff speed so that it would be the same as if there were no building or parking lot.

ACTION TO BE PROPOSED:

It is anticipated that there will be a motion to consider authorizing the Building Committee to secure final engineering drawings for a water detention plan, to obtain City of Huntsville permits as needed, and to contract to have a weir built on church property to meet legal requirements for rainwater detention. Funding for this project, if approved, would come from funds already donated to the Building Fund by members and others. The engineer has said that this can be done fairly simply and cost effectively by building a concrete wall (a weir) between the two sections of the old logging railroad tram. There will be a means to let the water through the weir at an appropriate speed to meet legal requirements. The engineer will recommend the method to do this by means of his drawings.

The Building Committee will have more details to present before the meeting, including projected costs. The Building Committee is recommending this action now for two reasons. The first is that the Committee feels that constructing the weir now will remove one of the uncertainties of the building process regardless of whether the starter building is built soon, or built later. The second is that this year we have been "blessed" with some dry weather. While this is not good for our yards and gardens, it should make doing the weir work much easier and could possibly save thousands of dollars compared to possibly doing the same work later when the soil might be very wet.

A list of voting members has been sent to the congregation in a separate mailing.



Diversity Forum

Thanks for all of your help with the 3rd Diversity Dinner/Festival of Cultures. Several UUs expressed their regrets for being out of town or for having medical problems keeping them from participating this year, but we had plenty of help.

The attendance for the dinner has decreased each year, and perhaps the summer date was responsible for a smaller turnout this year. We served lemonade or ice water to somewhere just over 300 people.

Beth Williamson set up and manned the UU information table. The crowd had to pass by the tables to enter the main building for the dinner, so we had some good exposure. Kelley Sigler also helped out at the table. Joan Stringer's comments about the occasion were quoted in the *Item* the next day.

James Moore brought a group of SHSU international students, and one of them even helped stir the lemonade. Several UUs helped transport the group to the dinner.

Anne and Kelley Sigler bought the lemonade mix, and they also provided the nice banner that they had had made for last year's dinner. Mixing and pouring and serving and dumping and cleaning up were the Stringers, the McAdams, Richard Lane, the Phillips, Anne Sigler, and the Krocks.

Thanks to all,
Roberta Krock

The next Book Club meeting will be held on either the 2nd or 3rd Wednesday of September at Cloud 9 Café at 5:30 pm (exact date will be announced later).

We will be discussing *Jesus For The Non Religious* by John Shelby Spong. In this book Spong's aim is to separate the historical Jesus from the Jesus myth. He challenges much of the traditional views of Jesus from his birth to his miracles and explores the story of Jesus by considering the Jewish Scriptures and the liturgy of the first-century synagogue.

John Shelby Spong was a Episcopalian priest and bishop for forty-five years. He has written over 20 books and is one of the leading spokesman for progressive Christianity.

Book Club





August 10th marks the last sermon that the Rev. Capo will give to our congregation. He and his wife, Martha, will be moving to Cedar Rapids, Iowa where he will become the pastor of the People's Church, a Unitarian-Universalist church that was founded in 1869. We will miss them both, but we understand that he will be following his heart and soul with this new ministerial position. His skills will be needed in the Cedar Rapids area as it recovers from the widespread flooding that occurred last month.

Please join us in saying Goodbye to Rev. Capo and his wife. We will be having a party for them following our August 10th service at the Junction Restaurant on 11th Street.

Tom Capo
Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist
600 3rd Avenue SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
<http://www.peoplesuu.org/>



Charitable Giving

At our August 24th service, we will have a collection for the Friends of the Huntsville Public Library. Friends is a non-profit volunteer citizens group organized in 1982 to support and enlarge the scope of public library services beyond those funded through the Library's annual City budget. The Friends Board utilizes annual dues to fund the presentation of monthly enrichment programs for children. Currently they are also exploring the possibility of enlarging the city library.

If you are donating via check, please make the check out to the Huntsville U-U Fellowship and write "For the Friends of the Library" in the memo space.

At our July 27th service, we collected donations for the C.O.M.E center to help buy school supplies for low-income students. A total of \$133.00 was collected. We thank our members and friends for their generous contributions.



Next year at General Assembly we Unitarian Universalists will elect a new president for our association. Given that we have two excellent candidates, the reverends Dr. Laurel Hallman and Peter Morales, who bring different conceptions for the future of our religious movement, I decided to create a neutral online forum where their platforms can be discussed publicly in a civil manner

To that end I created an open blog that uses the transcript of the first official candidate forum at GA 2008 with its mix of scripted remarks and unscripted answers to specific questions as a starting point. Other campaign documents will follow as they become available.

Since this will be neutral territory perhaps even the candidates themselves will chime in with clarifications or commentary. But most importantly, we hope for input from members of your congregation or fellowship!

Please visit this new moderated forum, and then post your opinions, or submit materials worth discussing. The forum came online today, July 8, with an introduction and the opening speeches of the candidates. The complete transcript and links to video are also available on the site:

<http://uuapresidentialdebate2009.wordpress.com>

Peace!
Martin Voelker

The Turners and the Stringers have returned from their first SWUUSI (Southwest UU Summer Institute) adventure. What a wonderful feeling to be gathered with 260 Unitarians at Lake Murray at Ardmore, OK!! The Southwest Conference covers a wide area, so there were folks there from as far north as MO and as far south as San Miguel de Allende, where the Turners attend when they are in Mexico.

The four of us opted to stay in cabins that turned out to be very comfortable. The workshops were many and varied so that it was difficult to decide which to attend. I think that I can speak for the four of us and say that we are so glad that we went and would encourage each of you to attend at least once since it is such a high to meet and greet so many of "like mind". The venue is to be at Western Hills Resort near Tulsa, OK next year, but will be later in the summer, August 2-7, 2009. Think about it!!

**The Southwestern U-U
Summer Institute**

Congregational News

Mardi Sale

The former president of our fellowship, Mardi Sale, has written to tell every one that the move to Florida went well and that she is busy settling into her new home. She wanted to make sure that everyone had her new address.

Mardi Sale
977 Tavernier Cir NE
Palm Bay, FL 32905
321-327-3379

Dr. Martha Lair Sale
Associate Professor of Accounting
Florida Institute of Technology
150 W. University Blvd.
Melbourne, FL 32901
321-6747-327

Roy Turner

Carol Turner would like everyone to know that Roy is back at home and doing well. He was released Monday from the hospital, and only took 2 pain pills the first day. Now he is just a little tired, and is still able to get dizzy from the radiation if he bends over too quickly. He will have another MRI on Monday July 28 and get the results on the 30th when he sees the radiation oncologist. Tuesday the 29th he goes to Houston to see his medical oncologist, who is ready to put him on Nexavar, a new drug for renal cell carcinoma. He will also have a follow up with his surgeon. At that point the Turners may go to San Miguel a few weeks before beginning any new therapy, which can have difficult side effects. Since the medicine can cause bleeding it is best to wait some after surgery to start it. It can also raise blood pressure, which is already high. To help lower their blood pressure, Carol and Roy took sessions on meditation techniques including breathing exercises at SWUUSI.

Dixon Lichtenauer

Dixon Lichtenauer would like to thank the congregation for the Get Well card that was sent when she had an eye inflammation. She also wants everyone to know that she is recovering well from the hernia surgery that she had on the 27th of June.

Katherine Payne

Katherine "Kathy/Katie" Payne, wife, mother, theater actor/director, artist, writer and world traveler, died peacefully in her home on July 22, 2008. She was born on April 13, 1929, in Fond du Lac, Wis. She studied art at the University of Wisconsin and later moved to Texas to continue her studies at the University of Texas. She is survived by her husband, Glenn; children, Carl Payne of Ahlerstadt, Germany, Jacqueline Burson and Robin McClure of Huntsville, Craig Payne of Wimberely, Diana Alford of Loena; 12 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



Payne and her husband lived in Austin and Houston before being transferred to Pennsylvania where they subsequently retired in 1984. They then traveled throughout the United States for a year, a trip she always referred to as her favorite. Continuing their adventure, they moved to England as a base for traveling in Europe and Africa for another year. Returning to the U.S., they lived in Arkansas and Arizona and continued to travel making an around-the-world "sidepacking" trip for another year as well as a year in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia. When not on the road, they were both active in theater work and she continued to paint and write. Her artwork can be found in homes from the east to west coast. After an absence of 30 years, the couple moved back to Huntsville in 2000, and continued their travels. However, a little less "roughly" than previously, as well as acting and directing for the Huntsville Community Theatre. An informal open house will be held on Aug. 9, 2008 at the Payne home (3829 Summer Lane), from 2-5 p.m. to celebrate her exuberant spirit, wit and creative flair. Anyone wishing to make a contribution may do so in her name to the Rita B. Huff Animal Shelter in Huntsville. An online register book is available at www.brookefuneralservice.com.

The International Convocation of Unitarian-Universalist Women will be from Feb. 26 - March 1, 2009 at the Hilton of the Americas in Houston, Texas. This will be the first time in 15 years that the U-U women has met nationally, and the first time ever that they have met internationally.

Early registration has started with a discount rate of \$299. You can pay by credit card online at <http://www.icuuw.com> or with a check to "Southwest UU Women", 3224 Timmons Lane, #165, Houston, TX 77027. Starting September 1, 2008, the registration fee will increase to \$350.

**International
Convocation
of U-U Women**



A Note From Our President

Dear UU's,

The July thirteenth Sunday morning exchange of ideas about visions for the church was interesting and

helpful. We can only know what each other is thinking if we talk to each other openly. Only when visions are written down and discussed, can they become goals. Each person was asked to write down his/her visions. Some of the people turned in the sheets of paper. I'd like to share the notes that were turned in. Some were discussed and some were not.

1. Vision - congregation of larger number (over 100); to continue learning and discussing ideas as alternative to conservative churches; active in community; without financial worries for operating budget (no frequent requests for money)
2. Start church within 1 yr; RE program in 2 years; Small growth 1st 5-10 yrs; Church has 3-5 families with small children 28 members now - 50 members in 2 years
3. Be a church with members involved in charitable and civic organizations---serve by example.
Be an organization know for its support of the arts and cultural events.
4. UU Huntsville "mission"
 - Support liberal social (organization causes) that benefit community as a whole (e.g. Planned Parenthood, SAAFE House, racial relations)
 - Counter attempts to legislate morality and/or fundamentalist attitudes in taxpayer-supported institutions (e.g. schools, cultural events)
 - Support public lectures, films on topics that fundamentalists have made controversial (evolution, mental health, penal issues, etc).

5. Short term - More community involvement and activities for members
Long term - Church building filled with people every Sunday and weekly meeting and activities for fellowship and religious education

6. • More involvement in community: a) food bank b) day care c) youth programs d) literacy e) environmental awareness
 - community garden- to promote local production of food
 - outreach to those seeking a "liberal religious tradition"
 - library

7. A place for religious and spiritual education and discussion - a center for a community presence for the practice of "compassionate citizenship"

8. More families with children and an RE program

9. Short term - a rural looking church nestled in the woods which would be ours to gather and invite individuals, families, and groups.

Long term (1-2 years) - an active RE program with at least ten new families.

Rental of our space to groups for added visibility and community outreach.

Ten years - membership growth to be able to have a well developed music program
Twenty years - growth to the point of need for building a sanctuary and using the little starter building as a fellowship hall and classrooms.

10. Communicate the Unitarian guiding principles and key thoughts to the community. This is what we believe via newsletter, webpage, displays at community functions, etc. (The local community does not understand what the Unitarian community represents)

Thanks to all who came and shared ideas for our future.

Joan

Living the Questions 2



The Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Huntsville (700 Highway 30E/Riverside Dr.) is hosting a 23-week DVD and curriculum-based study of the Bible called *Living the Questions 2* (LTQ 2) and our Fellowship has been invited to participate with them. This program is intended for Progressive Christians, and it probes what faith can look like in the 21st century.

Many members of our Huntsville U-U Fellowship have participated in and enjoyed the original *Living the Questions*. LTQ 2 offers additional study themes, contributors, and a new component called, "Living it Out." It also offers a slightly slower pace allowing study groups

to spend a little more time on each topic.

Starting August 28th, LTQ 2 will be offered on Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 8:30 pm. Childcare is available and there is a charge of \$15.00 per person for a notebook and printed material. Those interested in attending should contact Laura Young at 295-1327 or laura@areiospagos.com



On July 4th, my neighbor, Connie Heiland was walking her 14-year-old Border Collie, Buddy, when the Pit Bull who lives across the street from us slipped its choke collar and viciously attacked Buddy. It took 6 adults 10 minutes to pull the Pit Bull off Buddy and Buddy had to be euthanized. We are so sorry for Rich's and Connie's loss, but we can only thank God that it wasn't one of the neighborhood kids that was attacked.

In June another Pit Bull bit a Huntsville police officer as he was responding to a call. After being quarantined for 10 days this dog was returned to its owner to further terrorize the neighborhood. This dog was so vicious the animal shelter workers could not walk or feed it - the dog owners had to come in and do it.

Currently there is no city ordinance that will remove dangerous dogs from the city of Huntsville. They can bite people and kill other animals and still be returned to their owners after only a 10-day quarantine. There are also no regulations on how these dogs must be contained. This is unconscionable. We should not have to live in fear! Please contact your city council members and demand that a city ordinance be passed that will eliminate dangerous animals from Huntsville.

Recommended Books by Ann Staples



Predictably Irrational by Dan Ariely

The title implies the content: that we are predictably irrational.

The book includes many interesting studies on our responses to situations. It also provokes thought on why we do what we do and how to mitigate some of our irrational responses.

Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness by Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein

This very interesting book which was mentioned in *Predictably Irrational* has some very good points about positive things to do to get people to make beneficial choices.

"Small" changes can be designed to result in "large" benefits. I did not think the writing style of this book was as engaging as that of *Predictably Irrational*.

The Drunkard's Walk: How Randomness Rules Our Lives by Leonard Mlodinow

The subtitle is a good general description of this interesting book that points out how we try to make patterns out of things that are really random. It also gives some steps we can take to evaluate things.

The Mysterious Montague by Leigh Montville - on CD.

This nonfiction book is about a man who had wonderful golf talents and was a golfing partner to many Hollywood stars in the first part of the 20th century. It would be a good read for golfing enthusiasts; I am not, but I found it intriguing and enjoyable, nonetheless.

What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and What's Wrong with Washington by Scott McClellan

This book is a very interesting discussion on the political and governmental policies during the George W. Bush years. The author has suggestions about what we need to do to put our government system back on a better track for the sake of our country. If you do not read the entire book, be sure to read the last chapter. This book is a thoughtful assessment by a young man.

Unitarian Universalists Respond to Knoxville Shooting Disaster

A member of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (TVUUC) in Knoxville and a member of the Westside Unitarian Universalist church of Farragut, Tennessee have died in a shooting incidence at TVUUC during the performance of a youth play. The gunman was tackled by congregants and eventually taken into police custody. Seven other adults were also injured in the attack and, at this time, four of these remain in critical condition.

In response to this tragedy, Unitarian Universalists are rallying to offer practical and spiritual support to the members of both Unitarian Universalist congregations. The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), in association with the UUA Thomas Jefferson District, has established the Knoxville Relief Fund, to bring ministry, spiritual care, and practical financial assistance to the people affected by the tragedy in Knoxville, Tennessee. Gifts to the fund will assist members of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church and Westside Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and their families, and will remind them that they are not alone during this time of sorrow. For more information on the Knoxville Relief Fund, including online donations, please visit <http://www.uua.org/giving/donatenow/117168.shtml>

Furthermore, to show their solidarity with those affected by this tragedy, UU congregations across the country are holding Vigils and Services of Remembrance. In addition, the Unitarian Universalist Association has provided a forum for anyone who wishes to share messages of support with Unitarian Universalists of Knoxville. This can be accessed at <http://knoxvillesupport.blogspot.com>

On Monday, the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Rev. William G. Sinkford, was on his way to Knoxville and he released the following statement.

"I am shocked and sorrowed by the terrible shootings in the sanctuary of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church. My heart is heavy and my prayers are with our injured sisters and brothers in Knoxville. While many details of this tragedy remain unclear, our Association will do all we can to support Unitarian Universalists in Knoxville in the hard days to come.

A tragedy such as this makes us acutely conscious of the beauty and fragility of our lives and those of our loved ones. I am especially saddened by this intrusion of violence into a worship service involving children and youth. I know that many people, both in Knoxville and around the country, are struggling with shock and grief right now. I pray that those so affected will find strength and comfort.

Members of the Unitarian Universalist Trauma Response Ministry are on their way to Knoxville to offer additional ministry to the congregation as it grieves. And Unitarian Universalists around the world are sending love and prayers to the Tennessee Valley congregation to tell them they are not alone on this dark day."



The Millbend Coffeehouse is a non-profit live music venue hosted by the Northwoods Unitarian-Universalist Church at their church at 1370 N. Millbend in The Woodlands. Performers with a variety of musical styles come from all over the United States and Canada to play in this intimate, smoke-free, and family friendly venue. Performances are held at 8:00 pm on the 2nd Saturday of every month. Refreshments such as several gourmet flavors of coffee and a variety of scrumptious pastries are available.

At every performance the audience votes as to which local charity will receive the proceeds from that evenings performance. Since the Coffeehouse opened in 1992, the Millbend Coffeehouse has donated over \$15,000 to local charities. Recommended Donations are as follows: Adults - \$15.00; Seniors and Differently-Abled - \$12.00; Attended Child - \$2.00.

On August 9th, the artists will be Tom Prasada-Rao and Cary Cooper. Paul Klein & KlâyVàge will open. On September 13th, the artist will be Michael Smith

For more information go to <http://millbend.org/index.htm>

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936-594-5962; dixonann@windstream.net

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