

# Huntsville Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship



## May 2009 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.

*It is probably not love that makes the world go around, but rather those mutually supportive alliances through which partners recognize their dependence on each other for the achievement of shared and private goals.*

~Fred Allen

### May 10th, 2009



DT STRAIN

Our speaker will be Daniel T. Strain and the title of his talk is "Freethought & Compassion." In a world where compassion is under assault, Freethinkers may often have difficulty seeing the connection between Freethought and compassion. DT Strain will examine some of the misconceptions about compassion, the nature of compassion, and discuss how it is not only a part of Freethought, but fundamental to it.

Daniel T. Strain is a Humanist Minister, certified by the [American Humanist Association](#) (AHA). He is also an artist and a marketing director by profession who frequently writes on a wide variety of philosophic concepts and participates in several Humanist and Freethought organizations.

He is former president of the [Humanists of Houston](#) (HOH), and has served as vice-chair on the Executive Council of AHA's Chapter Assembly, and currently serves on the Education Committee of the *Kochhar Humanist Education Center*. His writings have appeared in several newsletters and in the AHA national publication "[Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism](#)". He has been a guest speaker on the [Philosophy of Religion](#) panel discussion at San Jacinto College. He has also appeared as a panelist on the Houston PBS television program, [The Connection](#), discussing religious belief and non-belief.

Currently, Daniel Strain maintains a website called the Humanist Contemplative at [www.humanistcontemplative.blogspot.com](http://www.humanistcontemplative.blogspot.com) and writes in the Religion & Spirituality section for [Examiner.com](http://Examiner.com).



**Sunday, May 24th, 2009**

Our speaker on May 24th will be the Rev. Mike Thompson. His sermon is entitled "Stuck in the Mud" Mud is a marvelous metaphor for all sorts of things. Pigs love it. When we were children, most of us made "pies" out of it. And according to the Bible, God used it to create the first human being. But one thing we really don't want to do is to get "stuck" in it.

Rev. Thompson is a native Texan who grew up in the Piney Woods, and has been a Unitarian Universalist minister for over fifteen years. He first served as a student minister in the Dallas-Fort Worth Area, then as an intern minister in Shreveport, Louisiana. For six years he was a parish minister in Beaumont, Texas. He has also served as a part-time contract minister in Houston and Galveston, and as an interim minister in Canoga Park, California. For the past six years, he has been parish minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Ministry is a second career for Rev. Thompson. He came to this calling after fifteen years as a high school teacher of history, government, economics and debate. He earned his undergraduate degree in political science and public address from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1974, and his divinity degree from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in 1993.

In 1999 he helped organize the Beaumont Chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). In 2005 he helped organize the Tuscaloosa Chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. In 1998 he received the CUUPS Fuller-Thoreau Award "for spirited defense of religious freedom," and in 1999 he received an Anti-Defamation League award "in recognition of outstanding efforts to guard religious liberties for all."

Rev. Thompson and his wife Pamela have been married for 34 years. They are vegetarians who share their home with two feline companions, Swoosie and Xena.

**Save  
These  
Dates**

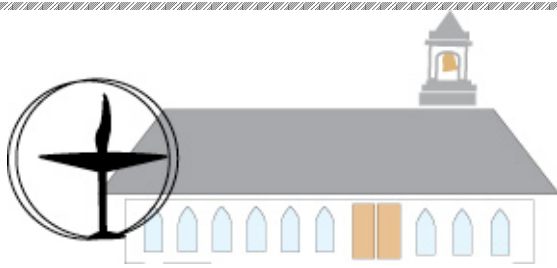
**Dwight Brown Leadership Experience**

July 19-24, 2009

**South Western Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute (SWUUSI)**

August 2-7, 2009

Western Hills Guest Ranch near Tulsa Oklahoma



## New Church

At a special congregational meeting on April 8th, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to construct a building for the Fellowship on the East Mosley Lane property. Thank you to the building

committee for their hard work in drawing up plans and determining costs.

The building committee would like to thank all those who have pledged their time and effort. On Sunday, April 5th, there was a day to help clean up the church property. It looks beautiful. We especially thank Bob Collier and Lee Stringer who worked tirelessly all day to ensure that the entire site was clean.

### Chalice Lighter Call:

The SPRING 2009 Chalice Lighter Call for the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference has been awarded to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Oak Cliff (UUCOC) in Dallas, TX.

UUCOC is seeking Chalice Lighter support for its Memory and Meditation Garden, which has been designed to meet three separate goals for the community. The garden will provide a space for members to address their end of life concerns and provide a sacred space for survivors to come and reflect. The garden is also intended as a beautiful site for celebration of church events. To date, UUCOC has raised \$13,400 for their project and they are hoping to match that amount through this Chalice Lighter Call.

Chalice Lighters is a program of the Southwestern U-U Conference in which members contribute small donations (typically \$10.00 - \$25.00) up to three times a year to help other congregations build or improve their churches and programs. 100% of the money collected goes to help the Chalice Lighter recipient. The Huntsville UU Fellowship urges all their members and friends to join. Please either give your contribution to our Chalice Lighter coordinator, Anne True, or send your check, made out to "SWUUC Chalice Lighters", to:

**Chalice Lighters  
SWUUC District Office  
6720 Brentwood Stair Road  
Fort Worth, Texas 76112**

Or you may also donate via PayPal to "Chalice Lighters" using SWUUC's website:  
<http://swuuc.org/pages/stewardship/support.php>.

Thank you for your generosity of spirit and resources.



## Annual Business Meeting

The Fellowship's annual Business Meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 16th, 2009, at the home of Joan and Lee Stringer (1800 Camellia Dr. in the Elkins Lake Subdivision). A budget will be set and officers will be voted on. A Potluck luncheon will follow; so please bring your favorite dish. Friends of our fellowship as well as members are welcome to attend; however, only members will be eligible to vote.

We thank the nominating committee, Ken Krock (Chair), Carla McAdams and Rick Norman, for their work in putting together a slate of nominees for the officers of the Fellowship.

### Nominees

President: Joan Stringer

Vice-President and Program Chair: Beth Williamson

Treasury: Ralph Phillips

Secretary: Pam Johnson

## Garage Sale A Success

A Huge bouquet of roses to Pam and James Johnson for hosting our first official funding raising for the church building!. Many, many thanks for letting us all bring our "treasures" to your house and for all the sweat you put into the organizing and selling for two days. Many thanks to all who contributed and helped Pam and James. This effort resulted in \$550.59 to add to our coffers.



## Thank you

Many thanks to Beth and Stuart Williamson, who have purchased a clip-on microphone for the Fellowship. Bill Balusek put it to good use when he spoke to us about the symbolism of Christian art. His voice is soft, so we benefited greatly by having this piece of technology.



### Charitable Giving

At our May 24th service, we will have a collection to benefit The Wynne Home Art Center. The mission of the Wynne Home Arts Center is to *promote and share the arts and our community heritage*. The Wynne Home Arts Center offers a wide variety of arts and cultural programs and field trips tailored to the interests and needs of our diverse community.

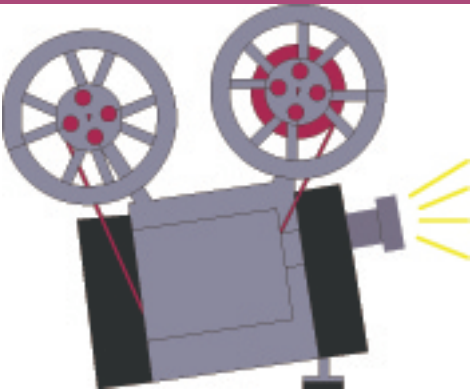
At our February 22nd service, we collected \$245.00 for CASA of Walker County.

Our member, Dorothy Huskey, has fallen and is facing orthopedic surgery. Thoughts, prayers and cards will be appreciated. Her address is

575 Brookshire Way  
Knoxville, TN 37923



Also our member and friend Gail Phillips has been feeling under the weather this past week. We hope that she is soon feeling better and that she knows that our thoughts are with her.



## Movie Night

Beth and Stuart Williamson recently purchased the "Religulous" DVD by TV commentator/comedian Bill Maher. It's about one hour and forty minutes long.

Paul and Joan Culp will host a get-together for the viewing of this DVD at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 10th. Their address is 1609 Woodland Valley in the Elkins Lake subdivision; telephone: 295-3404.

Come and enjoy seeing "Religulous" which looks at various religious denominations in factual yet sometimes humorous ways.

## InterConnections

Due to budgetary constraints, InterConnections, the quarterly newsletter for congressional leaders (both lay and clergy), will no longer be distributed through the mail. However, the newsletter will still be available online. All those that are interested in viewing this important resource may do so at <http://www.uua.org/publications/interconnections/>



First I need to apologize to Anne Staples. She sent me her recommended reading list to me weeks ago, and I lost it. I have searched everywhere and cannot find it. It will probably show up in the black hole that I call the childrens' room.

I mentioned that I learned about several opportunities that I would like to share with the congregation. The first is about pilgrimage opportunities offered by the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council, UUPCC. Several times this year, starting in late May, there will be two-week UU pilgrimages to Transylvania to visit the most significant of the Unitarian historical places such as Torda, Meszko, Gyulaferhervar and Deva. In October there is a ten-day pilgrimage to the Philippines to visit UU congregations located there. For more information visit <http://www.uupcc.org/trips.html>

In February of this year, a Unitarian-managed orphanage, The A. Margaret Barr Children's Village, opened in the Khasi Hills of India. The Children's Village was named after a British Unitarian who spent over forty years ministering to the needs of the people of the Khasi Hills. This orphanage currently houses 14 children and is at maximum capacity. The orphanage is seeking both donations to expand and also permanent sponsors for their children. \$700 will pay for each child's food, clothing, schooling and medical expenses for a year.

The UUPCC has a program entitled "Paths to Partnership". This is a student sponsorship where a person can pay for the education of a child or young adult for elementary school, high school, or college in the Philippines, Transylvania, or India. Expenses vary depending on the level of education and the country. The UUPCC asks that all sponsors commit to the numbers of years necessary to see the child through their education: 6 years for elementary school, 4-6 years for high school or college. More information can be obtained at <http://www.uupcc.org/studentponsors.html>



Huntsville Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship  
P.O. Box 6751,  
Huntsville, TX 77342-6751

Huntsville UU Website:  
<http://huntsvilletxunitarianfellowship.org>

### **Officers**

President: Joan Stringer  
936 291-6009; [ret2busy@suddenlink.net](mailto:ret2busy@suddenlink.net)

Vice President/Program Chair: Beth Williamson  
936-295-3170; [betwil@aol.com](mailto:betwil@aol.com)

Secretary: Pam Johnson  
936-294-9751;  
[pamjohnson05@suddenlink.net](mailto:pamjohnson05@suddenlink.net)

Treasurer: Richard Lane  
936 291-7212; [rhlane1999@yahoo.com](mailto:rhlane1999@yahoo.com)

### **Appointed Positions:**

Music Director: Beth Williamson  
936-295-3170; [betwil@aol.com](mailto:betwil@aol.com)

Song Leader: Beth Williamson  
936-295-3170; [betwil@aol.com](mailto:betwil@aol.com)

Co-Reading Leader: Anne Sigler  
936-295-8810

Co -Reading Leader: Richard Norman  
936-435-0450

Order of Service Editor: Anne True  
936-435-0450; [ae\\_true@yahoo.com](mailto:ae_true@yahoo.com)

Growth/Membership Chairman: James Moore  
832-687-2510; [admin@aardvarktutoring.com](mailto:admin@aardvarktutoring.com)

Newsletter Editor: Anne True  
936-435-0450; [ae\\_true@yahoo.com](mailto:ae_true@yahoo.com)

Publicist: Paul Culp  
936-295-3404; [lib\\_pmc@shsu.edu](mailto:lib_pmc@shsu.edu)

Huntsville Web Site Coordinator: Roberta Krock  
936-295-2178; [kenkrock@gmail.com](mailto:kenkrock@gmail.com)

Parliamentarian: Richard Norman  
936-435-0450