

Huntsville Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship



April 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.

All true Artists, whether they know it or not, create from a place of no-mind, from inner stillness.
~Eckhart Tolle



April 26th, 2009

Our Speaker on April 26th will be Bill Balusek. He will be speaking on the topic of "Christian Symbolism in Art."

Mr. Balusek grew up in Dallas, Texas where he graduated from W.W. Samuell High School. After graduation, he attended Texas Lutheran College, Arlington State College (now the University of Texas at Arlington) and Texas Christian University. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a major in commercial art in 1963. Immediately after graduation he went into the army for four years with two oversea assignments: Turkey and Viet Nam. When he completed his military obligation, he worked for several years as a commercial artist in Dallas, Arlington and Ft. Worth. He decided to go to graduate school in 1969 and completed his Master of Fine Arts degree at TCU in 1971.

He was hired to teach at San Jacinto College in Pasadena, Texas in the Fall of 1971 to teach a variety of studio classes. A few years later, as the college's art curriculum expanded, Art Appreciation and the two undergraduate survey classes in Art History were added to his pedagogical assignments. He was to teach at San Jacinto College for twenty-five years. In addition to teaching, Bill Balusek also was active in art galleries in Houston and in Ft. Worth. Additionally, during that time, he participated in competitive shows with his paintings, drawings and prints until he retired.

Among Bill Balusek's interests in art was the symbolism that various cultures and civilizations developed in their religions and how one culture's religious symbolism affected the civilizations with which it came into contact. Having attended two church affiliated colleges/universities, Bill took several required courses in religion for his undergraduate degree. Symbolism was an integral part of the art history he studied. He also has done independent research into that subject on his own.



Sunday, April 12, 2009

Our Speaker on April 12th will be Billie Jenkin. The title of her talks is "Lemons to Lemonade."

Of herself, Ms. Jenkins writes "I grew up a Houstonian, graduated from high school at Waltrip, then attended vocational nursing school. I used my license as an L.V.N to pay my way through college (Abilene Christian University) with a B.S. Ed. in 1971 (secondary education in biology and English). After marrying and having two sons, I returned to get a M.Ed. at West Texas A&M (Canyon) in 1978 (Elementary education).

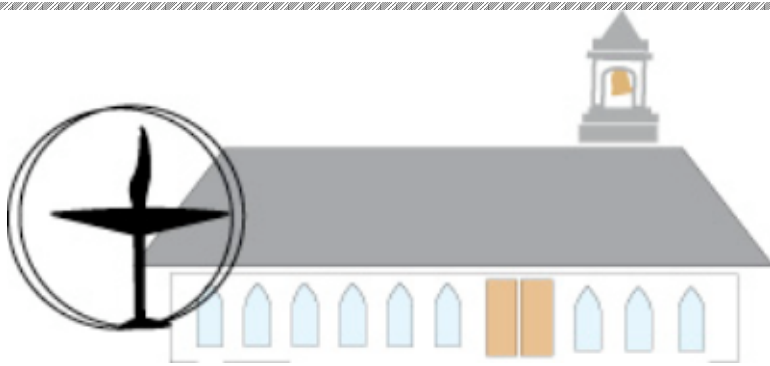
Although I had jobs in sales and nursing, most of my "productive" life was spent in rural or small-town classrooms. If the football coach's wife needed an elementary teaching job, I got moved to secondary (and vice-versa). One of my most memorable years was spent teaching a kindergarten third-grade class! That kept me hopping! My last teaching experience was at the Wynne Unit for Windham ISD. Both in the smaller school districts and at Windham I taught in the classroom, did staff development, and developed testing and curriculum.

Since retirement from Windham (early 2000), my husband Alan Jenkin and I have enjoyed a home both in Elkins and one in Honduras (on the island of Roatan). We travel, SCUBA dive, and look for new challenges constantly. In late 2007, I decided to revisit my love of writing. As I was rewriting a story I had told my children when they were young, I received two invitations to co-write. These two books - *Wake Up Moments* and *Wake Up Women: BE Happy, Healthy, and Wealthy* - have since become best-sellers at Barnes & Noble.com.

My passion lies in empowering others to find and accept the greatness in themselves, in others, and in the alleged "lemons" that Life sometimes deals. It was with that passion that I wrote, illustrated, and chose to self-publish my children's chapter book: *The Knock-Kneed Cowboy: A Tale of Being "Just Right"... Just As We Are*. It is with the same passion that I love speaking to audiences about making changes in their lives by first accepting where they are right now.... And that very often the things that we fret about turn out to be exactly what we need.

Thinking about how helpless many people today feel regarding their lives, and how so many are focused on "bad" things are, my topic will be "Lemons to Lemonade."

I have two websites that you might also peruse if you'd like more of a bio: <http://www.EmpoweringForChange.com> and <http://Knock-KneedCowboy.com> At the latter site, I have an excerpt from *The Knock-Kneed Cowboy* that may be interesting to people with school-age youngsters."



Important Business Meeting

There will be an important congregational Business Meeting on Wednesday, April 8th. At this meeting the congregation will vote on whether or not to construct a

building. Financial information about the building costs and resources available to the congregation will be made available before the meeting. A list of voting members of the fellowship has already been sent to all members of the church.

The meeting will be held at the home of Anne True and Rick Norman (1879 Greenbriar Dr. in the Elkins Lake Subdivision) on Wednesday April 8, 2009. A potluck supper will begin at five thirty. The meeting will be held at six thirty. The only item on the agenda is a presentation by the building committee to be followed by a vote on whether to build the building. It is important that all members of the congregation attend this meeting.

Please note that it is a potluck dinner, so bring your favorite dish. We will have the church history scrapbooks on display for you all to see how far we have come already! Yes, that is plural on the scrapbooks.....we've had lots of activities to fill lots of pages!

Women's Sharing Circle

The trip to view the Bluebonnets has been rescheduled for March 31st. Please meet at the JC Penney's parking lot at 10:00 a.m. to carpool to Brenham. Elkins Lake people, please meet at Gail Philips house at 9:45 a.m. We will meet Alice and Sandy for lunch at Ernie's Bistro (103 South Baylor in Brenham). If we get there early, we can browse around the antique shops. Please RSVP to Gail Phillips by e-mail or phone (438-8569) so that she can make a reservation for lunch.



The next regular meeting of the Women's Sharing Circle will be at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, April 23rd, at Brenda Barr's House. Beth Williamson will discuss the topic "The Goddess Revisited"



Charitable Giving

At our April 25th service, we will have a collection to benefit CASA of Walker County. CASA stands for A Court Appointed Special Advocate who is an adult willing to stand up for an abused or neglected child. A CASA volunteer is appointed by a judge to provide factual information on behalf of a child caught in a difficult legal process.

At our February 22nd service, we collected \$190.00 for the Jesus Good Shepherd Mission.

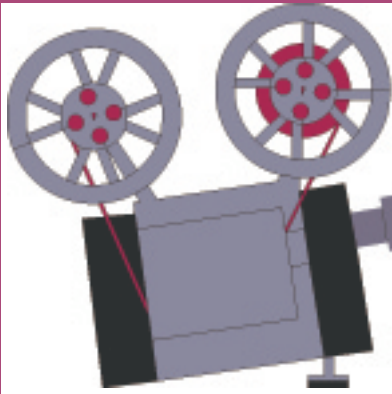


Update From the Building Committee

Thanks to Bob Collier and Lee Stringer, the pavers to spread the water going through the weir, have been placed. The two of them worked two days on the project, and on sorting the salvageable lumber. A big stack of lumber to be used for forms and such for the building was recycled and the trash was hauled away.

The church property looks so much better and it has been tested with the huge rains.....it works!!





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.

Music Requests

James has done such a beautiful job with his performances that many people are asking him to play their favorite songs.



However, to accommodate everyone's requests, we ask that if you have musical suggestions, please see Beth Williamson, our music coordinator. Do please keep the ideas coming, but go through Beth.

Natasha is coming at ten and providing us with beautiful music on both the organ and keyboard. Please do come in and sit and enjoy it.

May we keep singing together!

SWUUC Spring Conference

April 24-26, 2009

First Unitarian Church in Memphis, Tennessee

<http://www.swuuc.org/>

General Assembly - Unitarian Universalist Annual Conference

June 24-28, 2009

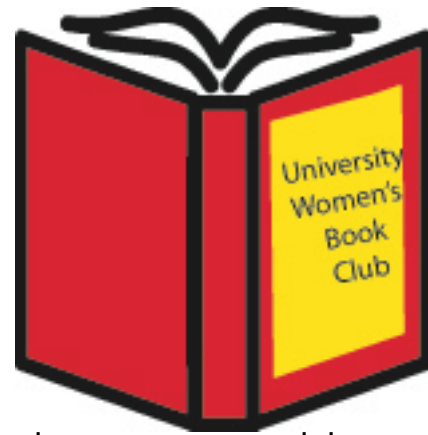
Salt Lake City, Utah

<http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/>

**Up-Coming
Conferences**

University Women's Book Club

Beth Williamson will be reviewing ***Three Cups of Tea*** by Greg Mortenson and Oliver Relin for the University Women's Book Club on Monday, April 20 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be at the home of Carla McAdams, 86 Dahlia Rd. in the Timberwilde Subdivision, and all UU's are invited to attend.



Mortenson, the son of missionaries, had a great interest in mountain climbing. He had a fall and a serious injury on Mt. Everest and spent time recuperating in a village down the mountainside where he learned that the community had a school that did not protect the students from the elements. He decided to go home and raise money to build the town a school. When he went back up to the village every town he passed on the way up asked him to build them a school. Over the next decade, he built 55 schools, especially schools for girls, in Taliban terrain. The Taliban oppose all education for girls and women and have even thrown acid on girls who dared to go to school.

Meadville Lombard Theological School

Meadville Lombard Theological School, a Unitarian Universalist seminary in Chicago, Illinois, is holding a Prospective Student Conference on April 8 and 9, 2009. Visit the school, meet our award-winning, full-time faculty, and the students who will be your future colleagues. Learn about our Master of Divinity degree program that infuses practical experiences throughout your academic career. And learn how you can earn your degree through our innovative **TouchPoint distance learning format**, where you travel to Chicago for academic courses and orientation, but do your community and congregational experiential work where you live. For more information, www.meadville.edu/ or call the Admissions Office at (773) 256-3000 x250.

Theological Education for Lay Leaders and Seminarians

Deepen your Unitarian Universalist theological understanding as you study with current and future leaders of our movement. Several week-long courses during the summer will be offered for lay leaders and seminarians. The courses can be taken for credit at full-price (\$1500) or audited at half-price. Visit their website to view course descriptions and syllabi. Registration opened on-line on March 16. Early registration is recommended

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.

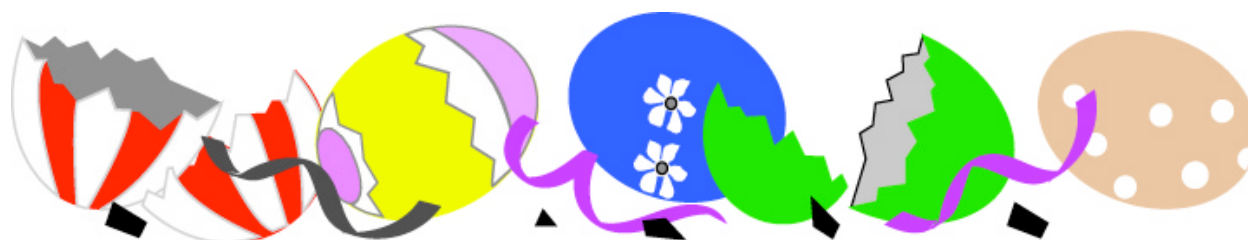
Nominees

President: Joan Stringer

Vice-President and Program Chair: Beth Williamson

Treasury: Ralph Phillips

Secretary: Pam Johnson





First Light

Starting on April 14th, the Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Huntsville (700 Highway 30E/Riverside Dr.) is hosting a 12-week DVD and curriculum-based study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God with two of the world's leading Jesus scholars: John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. There will be both a morning and evening course. Those interested in attending should contact Laura Young at 295-1327 or laura@areiospagos.com



next month.

Four women from our congregation, Gail Phillips, Pam Johnson, Carol Turner, and I, went to the International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women held in Houston at the end of February and a wonderful time was had by all. I met so many new people and learned so many new things. The worshipping was beautiful. We discussed much of this at our last women's sharing circle. I was going to write about some of the UU charities and pilgrimages that I learnt about, but this newsletter has turned into a monster already and I will postpone that information until

Special Thanks was given to Alice Schulman for her contributions to the Scholarship Fund. Every international attendee who could come and that needed a scholarship was able to receive one.



Recommended Books by Ann Staples



Descartes' Bones: A Skeletal History of the Conflict Between Faith and Reason. by Russell Shorto

This book, which I listened to on 9.25 hours of tape, had lots of information, and I cannot help thinking that it would have been perhaps wiser to have read it. The author uses the journey of Descartes' bones to tell the story of his impact down through the years. I felt that disk 8 had the most important information and that you may wish to listen to disk 8 first and then decide if you want to hear the entire book.

The Mapmaker's Wife: A True Tale of Love, Murder and Survival in the Amazon by Robert Whitaker.

The Siglers gave me this excellent book to read. It is the story of the French expedition that starting in 1735 went to Peru as part of the quest to determine the shape and circumference of the earth. Chapter two gives an excellent summary of the scientific situation of the era. In this wonderful tale of exploration and adventure, the Peruvian wife of one of the team members decides to go through the mountains and down the Amazon to find her husband after being separated from him for 20 years. She succeeds!

Animals Make us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals by Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson.

This is the second book of their collaboration. Grandin is known for her work in animal science and autism. Johnson specializes in neuropsychiatry and the brain. The book has a beginning section, a section each on dogs, cats, horses, cows, pigs, chickens and other poultry, wildlife, and zoos, and an ending commentary. I would recommend this book not only to people who have dogs and cats, but to everyone, since we all (vegetarian or not) should be concerned about the welfare of domestic animals and wildlife. In addition to information about animal behavior, a great deal about human behavior is discussed.

The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008 by Paul. Krugman.

This short readable book on economics is a new updated edition of his earlier 1999 book, *The Return of Depression Economics*. As I did not read the earlier book, I cannot compare the two. This tome gives good insight into past and present world-wide economic trends and happenings. I was surprised that there was no commentary on the influence of the rise of terrorism on the economy of countries. Paul Krugman just recently won the 2008 Nobel Prize in Economics.

The Bay Area Unitarian Universalist Church (BAUUC) will train Covenant Group Leaders on Saturday, May 2nd, 2009. Folks from other UU churches are invited to join them. This training is free and child care and a light lunch are provided.

Covenant Groups are our small group ministries. Groups meet monthly, some more often. Most have a facilitated discussion. Currently, BAUUC has more than a dozen Covenant Groups, with over 100 people involved. Many of the groups are organized around themes, such as a spiritual practice (Buddhism, Pagan, Christian) or a life situation (parenting, mental health issues.) Also, they have recently launched Connections Groups – organized around discussing life's big questions. The training covers the leadership of both types of group.

For more information and registration, please contact David Throop at (281) 460-8415 or drthroop@earthlink.net

Covenant Group Leader Training



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

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

Officers

President: Joan Stringer
936 291-6009; ret2busy@suddenlink.net

Vice President/Program Chair: Beth Williamson
936-295-3170; betwil@aol.com

Secretary: Pam Johnson
936-294-9751;
pamjohnson05@suddenlink.net

Treasurer: Richard Lane
936 291-7212; rhlane1999@yahoo.com

Appointed Positions:

Music Director: Beth Williamson
936-295-3170; betwil@aol.com

Co-Song Leader: Melissa Templeton-Mahaffey
936 295-3486; mtcycle@hotmail.com

Co-Song Leader: Beth Williamson
936-295-3170; 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

Growth/Membership Chairman: James Moore
832-687-2510; admin@aardvarktutoring.com

Newsletter Editor: Anne True
936-435-0450; ae_true@yahoo.com

Publicist: Paul Culp/Stuart Williamson
936-295-3404; lib_pmc@shsu.edu
936-295-3170; betwil@aol.com

Huntsville Web Site Coordinator: Roberta Krock
936-295-2178; kenkrock@gmail.com

Parliamentarian: Richard Norman
936-435-0450