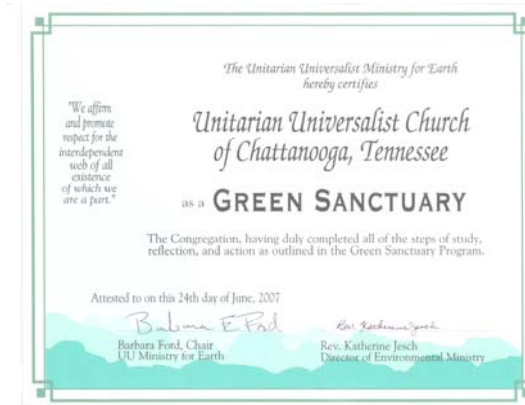




MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
by Sandy Kurtz



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga (UCC) is pleased to have received our official accreditation as a Green Sanctuary at the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly in Portland, Oregon. This acknowledgement signified our completion of and UU Ministry for Earth acceptance of our Green Action Plan. There to receive the award and the accreditation certificate was our then president Daidee Springer. Surely everyone in the congregation at one time or another has helped make this accreditation a reality

whether it was by simply answering a survey question, buying some Fare Exchange coffee, attending the Rachel Carson dinner, or acting on some environmental information learned through this nUUsletter or at church. You may have gone further and faithfully participated in our Privet & Pizza Party work days, signed up for Green Power Switch, bought a hybrid car, served on the Green Sanctuary Initiative Committee or significantly reduced your energy use at home. This was truly a whole church effort! Congratulations!

What Next?

We have come a good distance, but there is more to do. There are unfinished tasks and we need new ideas to move us toward an ever greener future. We will continue starting with a new assessment of where we are. Then we will set new goals and figure out how to get there. This would be a good time for you to be part of this Green Sanctuary Initiative Phase 2, starting this fall. Please contact Sandy Kurtz.

SUMMERTIME: Buy Locally, Eat Locally at a CSA

CSA stands for Community Sustainable Agriculture. Many are becoming members of CSA farms that provide an array of organic produce in season. Whether a CSA member or not, locally grown produce is available for your table. Remember, every time you buy food locally produced you avoid transportation/fuel air emissions and energy costs required to import food from far away places. Besides there's nothing better than Tennessee corn, tomatoes, or melons. To find out more about those who grow organic food in our area, you can visit <www.crabtreefarms.org> or <www.sequatchiecovefarm.com>. You will find produce from these and others generally at the Chattanooga market on Sunday afternoons. To find others, go to <www.localharvest.org>.

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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF CHATTANOOGA
*a liberal religious
community*

3224 NAVAJO DRIVE
CHATTANOOGA, TN 37411

423-624-2985
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Board President:
Daidee Springer

Minister:
Rev. Jeff Briere

Religious Education
Director:
Amy Ziegler

Music Director:
Linda Pehlman

Church Administrator:
Chris Tregaskis

SUNDAY SERVICES ♦ 11:00 AM

August 5th ♦ *THIS I BELIEVE*

A participatory service celebrating the range of beliefs that enrich our lives, this service will be based on the belief statements of willing members. New members, old members, participants in the Build Your Own Theology classes—all members—please prepare to share a statement of 100 words or less about a specific aspect of your belief. Nicky Ozbek will serve as service leader/facilitator.

August 12th ♦ *HEAVEN, HELL, OR SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN*

Why do Daidee Springer and Steve Hollingsworth find the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly (GA) an important part of their yearly journal? Come find out what our representatives to the GA learned this year.

August 19th ♦ *WHAT CAN WE DO?*

This service, led by the Rev. Jeff Briere, will focus on the church's need for dedicated leadership.

August 26th ♦ *WATER COMMUNION*

This is an annual service, in which we recognize that we all bring something to the life of the church. To symbolize this, please bring a small amount of water, either from your tap, your vacation, your pool, your birdbath or a rain puddle in your back yard. If no water is available, a small stone or shell will do.

SUNDAY FORUMS

August 5th - Summer Issue of UU World.

This issue of the magazine which arrives quarterly at the homes of all UUA members is full of goodies. We'll be discussing:

- * A review of 2 new books about the life of Unitarian, Louisa May Alcott.
- * A wonderful sermon about the contradiction of faith in goodness in a world full of evil.
- * A report on the place of Buddhist influence in today's UU churches.

August 12th - Medical Knowledge from India, led by Nicky Ozbek, psychologist and board member of our church.

Nicky's recent five week trip to India was a sabbatical for learning more about her specialty of brain injuries. You'll be surprised at what she learned.

August 19th - We will each take the Meyers-Briggs Personality Test.

Even if you already know your "type", take the test again to refresh you knowledge. You'll need that information to benefit most from a series of Forum discussions to start monthly in the fall.

August 26th - "Armageddon Now?" led by Charles Redwine, UUCC member.

Charles has a degree in anthropology, He has noted similarities in the current events of today to happenings preceding the downfall of ancient world governments. Will history repeat itself?

ART ON THE WALLS

Did you know that our own Tony Ziegler was an artist? His lovely works comprise the July/August display. Enjoy them!

THE INTERDEPENDENT WEB

by Steve Hollingsworth

We work toward a future characterized by easy access to media outlets and a broad, exciting selection of cultural and informative media resources.

- The Prometheus Radio Project

Another world is possible; another US is necessary.

- First US Social Forum

In June at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly in Portland I was finishing an unscheduled shift at the Interweave booth. A young woman sporting a Pacifica Radio Tshirt walked by and before she could pass out of earshot, I cheered, "Yay, Pacifica!" She did something of a double take, looked at my name badge, saw I was from Chattanooga, and asked, "How would you like to start a radio station?"



As I write this I cannot fairly guess the chances of success, but I know I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it any more. The national dialog is toxic and unvarnished truth is dead or MIA. So, what I can do I am doing. Looking for the right alliances, I've contacted many local activists. I've created an e-mail forum, which is a Google Group called *Truth for the Tennessee Valley*, (groups.google.com/group/wtftf). If you are interested and have not received an invitation, contact me and I'll set you up.

The response, so far, has been gratifying and has taught me more about the remarkable people of our church. Rev. Jeff Briere, a former NPR voice, explored low power stations awhile ago and is up to speed on many of the issues involved. Mike Bascom went to Atlanta for the US Social Forum and brought back Prometheus Radio literature for the church information table before he knew anything about what I was about. The connections are multiplying and I'm hopeful.

Success at last could be less than we aim for but still greater than we imagine. With coalition building done, we might still stream programming onto the Internet, broadcast on low power and/or pirate stations. Our voices will be heard.

Stay tuned!

So began a story still being written. Every decade or so, without a lot of warning, the FCC announces a window of time in which to make application for new high power licenses in the non-commercial/educational (NCE) part of the FM radio band. Such a window has been declared for October 12-19 this year and organizations of all kinds are hoping to thread the Byzantine maze that is the application process and emerge on the other end with a broadcast license.

CHURCH RETREATS: PAST AND FUTURE

by Helen Solomon

Have you been to a family reunion this summer? Or to a class reunion away from home, or any kind of summer camp for adults?

All events of this type have something in common. You take a bunch of people (often people of all ages). You put them together for at least 2 or 3 days in an environment different from ordinary days and let them interact in meaningful ways—doing things together that they have planned together. Usually, church retreats are intergenerational, are held on weekends and are produced on a very low budget so that everyone can attend. They are like reunions in that they strengthen ties while providing recreation.

Some early UUCC retreats were held at a Methodist Camp-ground. There we cooked and served all our meals in a huge kitchen where we had so much fun that everyone wanted to be on KP. Later, we had a few retreats at Watts Bar Dam

and we had the final big meal in their restaurant. The most memorable highlight of one year there was the production of "The Hobbit" directed by Nancy Wright when everyone was in costume, including the audience. The most deluxe church retreat we've had was the one year we went to the UU Regional Retreat Center in North Carolina, called "The Mountain." The most "low key" retreat may have been the one held at nearby Cloudland Canyon State Park. Campfires and hikes, sports and music and crafts classes are included in all, as well as a choice of spiritually enriching experiences. One year Delores Wood led a workshop in which we each made a personal fetish from natural materials, and Ralph Yates took us for boat rides on the lake. They always end with a special church service, like the Lakota "smoke ceremony" led by tom kunesh.

Where have our church retreats gone? I hope they'll come back soon. There are so many new folks I want to know better.

RE NEWS

by Amy Ziegler

August brings us to another budget year and your frugal Religious Education (RE) Committee managed to set a little aside from last year. What better way to use this bonus than to play? With the assertive action of a few parents, a new playground went up lickety-split. Thanks to Eric Papendorp, who took charge of the preparations, organization, and follow-through. Other willing talent included Adam Couch, David Vanderhoof, James Joyner, Tony Ziegler, and Noel Dillard. Guys, RE is grateful for your expertise and commitment to our church. This new equipment is sure to bring our children much joy.

RE continues with our summer curriculum, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. One of the many highlights in July included our floor pillows. The students created them from left-over t-shirts. Don't be shocked to come into a room full of UU torsos. We are planning another month of exciting ways to help our actions on the Earth. Our choice can help or harm depending on our

attitude. It is my goal to model that not only is it easy to conserve and protect, it's fun and rewarding, too.

The UU picnic was such a success. Member Kyle Waggener led a walk through Chattanooga Nature Center. What a treat to have such a captivating leader. The owl was especially cool. I have to say I'm thoroughly impressed at the stealthy reaction time and precision accuracy of our (Ahem), "older members." The squirt guns were a hit and literally all ages were happy to jump in and cool off. What sports you all are.

Kay Spehar was this year's recipient of the Heifer Quilt. RE is thrilled to be donating over \$500 to Heifer Project International, raised from various events throughout the year. This contribution is sure to impact the lives of people we may never meet but are connected to none the less.

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

by Roger Davis

At their July meeting, the Board

- √ approved the holding of Yoga classes for congregation and friends at the church on Saturdays from 10-11:30 for six weeks. An announcement with full details is forthcoming;
- √ approved the purchase of new and lighter tables for use during special events. Most of the old, heavy tables will

be sold to interested church members. A few old tables that do not need to be moved much will be retained;

- √ decided that the annual Board of Trustees retreat/meeting will be held on Sunday, August 5, from 9-3 at the Fairyland Club on Lookout Mountain;
- √ and approved a motion to look into setting up recycling at next year's River Bend.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND--ANOTHER LOOKOUTS OUTING

What: Chattanooga Lookouts vs. Tennessee Smokies

When: Friday, August 17, 2007 @ 7:15 p.m.

Tickets: \$2 per person, group rate. Reserve and buy in advance at the church.

Weather: Guaranteed much warmer than at the May 18th outing or your money back. Money back guarantee is for temperature only.

For more info: contact Daidee Springer at 423-697-4593

ANNOUNCING!
by the Reverend Jeff Briere

Once a week, we come together as a congregation to consider those things which are most important to us, those ideas which inspire us and which are central to our lives as human beings. We call this event a worship service, not because we worship some one or some thing, but because, as the root of the worship suggests, we give some shape to worth. We use words, music or images to make worthy concepts real and immediate. The service focuses our attention on something outside ourselves, our community, our world, something larger than our existence.

It has been said by many people at different times, that announcements distract us from our purpose during worship. For a long time, I didn't mind announcements, but this spring they began to bother me and I could readily understand what people had been saying to me. Announcements, whether placed at the beginning, the middle or near the end of the service, alter the mood and shift attention from the theme of the service to something entirely unrelated. By any measurement, this is not a desirable event.

For the past two years or so, I tried writing the announcements to control their sprawl and to make them as interesting as possible. Some people actually like announcements and look forward to them. I'd like to think that's because they are so well written and so artfully articulated, but I think some people just like to hear what's going on.

Announcements have had a place in the worship services of smaller fellowships for many years, primarily because that was the best way to publicize events of interest. No longer. Available to us now are many media for publicizing our activities: our website, three bulletin boards, a monthly newsletter, the telephone, e-mail, flyers and posters. Not to mention word-of-mouth.

Considering all the possible ways to disseminate information (some of which are currently under-utilized), I conclude that the congregation will best be served by eliminating announcements from the Sunday morning worship services. The only exception

to this that I can see is a significant unscheduled event, like a memorial service, which might merit a brief mention in a worship service.

To find out what is going on at the church and elsewhere, you can read the insert in the order of service and the bulletin boards when you attend services. You can also find information in the newsletter. You could also call Chris or me if you lose your newsletter.

In the electronic world, to get the latest information, you can visit the website, or ask Chris to check it out for you if you don't have a computer. Our website is <www.uuc.org>. Look for a link on the left side, "Announcements." We will edit announcements on the website to remove phone numbers and personal information. We will make more use of e-mail to announce events, perhaps sending a short summary of activities once a week. Chris already has the e-dresses of most members, but to be sure she has yours, please call her or send a message to <office@uuc.org>.

However.

Recognizing that changing the order of worship is disruptive and that some will miss all the alternative ways to receive information, I will assemble the announcements I know of and the ones submitted to me and either the BOT representative or I will read them before the service, at about 10:45.

On the flip side of this, if you want to get the word out, you can tell Chris, so that she can print it in the insert, or include it in a mass e-mail. You can also tell Wendy, so that she can put it in the newsletter and tell me so that I can put it on the website. If you want people to see your news, you might make a poster for the bulletin board.

I invite your response to this, both intellectually, as you read this, and in reality, as you experience our worship services. After a suitable period of time, we will re-assess our communications and reconsider how best to serve the needs of the congregation.

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Linda Pehlman resigned her position as Music Director on July 1st. We are sad to lose her contribution to the life of the church and wish her well in the future.

If you have ideas about the music program, concerns or questions about the future of music in the church, please contact Jeff Briere, Roger Davis or Daidee Springer.

INTERFAITH HOMELESS NETWORK

Good news!

Pilgrim Congregational Church has offered to be an IHN support congregation for our UUCC, beginning with our September 16 to 22 hosting. Formerly a hosting church itself, Pilgrim is now unable to do that job. Instead, its committed volunteers will come to our church to help each time we host homeless families with children. By working together, we will be able to form new friendships with Pilgrim members who share our commitment to being a diverse, welcoming congregation. This is great news for our IHN families, for us, and for our churches.

We are still looking for volunteers who would share the IHN coordinator's job after Marge Pasch finishes her term in

September. Two church members have volunteered to help, but one works full time, and the other may not remain in the area. Would you be able to do one part of the coordinator's job, perhaps being in charge of just one area? Some churches have sub-coordinators who act as Transportation Coordinator, Dinner Preparer Coordinator; Overnight Host Coordinator, and so on. If you would like to learn more, please call Marge Pasch at 875-4109 or email at <mpasch1@comcast.net>. During the next month or so, we will be meeting with the Pilgrim volunteers to discuss how to work together, so this would be a great time to get involved and give your input. We need you!

LOOK, MA! I CAN WALK! SORTA...

by the Rev. Jeff Briere

You have asked about my knee, and I thank you for your concern. It's a very nice feeling to have so many people concerned for your health. Originally, my physician thought I had torn the meniscus, a sliver of cushioning tissue between the upper and lower leg bones. The orthopedist found nothing on an X-ray, so to alleviate my discomfort, he gave me a shot of cortisone. That helped a lot, but within four days of getting that shot, a new pain developed in a different location. And it hurt worse than the original one. This new pain was located along the medial cruciate ligament (MCL), which connects the leg bones on the inside surface of the knee.

So the orthopedist ordered up an MRI, which found nothing amiss. It did reveal a marble-sized cyst, but that wasn't giving me any trouble.

Meanwhile, I was still scooting around in a wheel chair. So the plan was to do some PT and wait and see.

After six sessions of physical therapy, I can report that I am somewhat better. I can walk. Sorta. And I can stand without too much discomfort.

I can't walk very fast nor very far, but I can walk; and I prefer to sit when I can. Although I could probably walk around the store, at Home Depot I am happy to drive one of their electric carts.

I am scheduled for arthroscopic surgery on September 6th. Arthroscopy is a procedure in which the orthopedist cuts three tiny holes in my leg, one for a tiny flashlight, one for a tiny video camera and one for an instrument. Recovery is usually quite rapid, so I ought to be up and around in a few days.

Again, thanks for your thoughts. It means a lot.

WATER COMMUNION

Each year, in late summer, we bring water to a communal vessel in a symbolic service that recognizes that each and every member of the church brings something special to the life of the church. When we pour these waters together, we see that our church rises or falls on our own contributions.



This year, our annual Water Communion will occur earlier than usual, on August 26th.



Please bring to the service a small vial of water, perhaps collected on your vacation, perhaps collected from your kitchen faucet or a rain puddle on the way to church. As you add your water to that brought by others, we would love to hear what you learned this summer or how you contribute to the life of the church or what the (co-mingled) waters mean to you.

If you have no water to collect, bring a stone or twig that represents your travels this summer.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Roger Davis

Recently a few members have expressed concern about the content of our monthly publication, *the nUUsletter*. The essential question boils down to this: "What policy should guide editorial decisions on submissions?"

The Board has designated this topic for discussion at our upcoming all-day retreat on Aug. 5th. In light of some "controversial" topics covered in these pages recently, I feel that it's time to initiate an open discussion with the congregation. We don't want to be a Board isolated in an ivory tower – we want to represent our congregation. So please, don't be shy on this!

Here are two of the proposals being considered and a brief argument for and against each one:

1. Limit the content to that which is appropriate for all ages. Some parents would like *the nUUsletter* to be one media they do not have to preview before allowing their children to read. On the other hand if you look at our own *UU World* magazine provided to all voting members of the congregation, it offers a pull-out section for kids, but the magazine also challenges its adult readers with very adult issues.

2. Another proposal being considered is including a disclaimer in the newsletter for uncomfortable topics: something to the effect of "the views of this author do not necessarily represent

the views of the UUC." This would make a clear statement that content of the nUUsletter was not the "dogma" of our church. Alternatively, I don't believe that the UUC has a "common view" on just about anything. The newsletter simply represents a cross-section of concerned congregants.

Finally, I would like to remind our readers that this issue confronts every news organization in the world. Even though we have a very competent editor who reviews every submitted article, there are complex questions raised here: What criteria should we use to filter topics? Who should decide which articles to include – certainly the Board does not have time to fully debate every topic for each newsletter. Should we appoint a committee to do this? Should we start a weekly forum to discuss topics that are too uncomfortable for the newsletter? What constitutes "uncomfortable"?

Please share your thoughts about the nUUsletter with me, the editor, or any board member. The nUUsletter belongs to the congregation and we want it to meet the needs of our members. As I was reminded recently, let's be sure to use our brains and keep asking questions. We may not resolve the problem, but we'll surely understand it better.

Cheers all!

BILL FRANKS

Former active member Bill Franks died Wednesday, June 17, in Hospice Atlanta, of cancer. His wife Allene and two of his daughters were with him, singing hymns from the Christian Science Hymnal when he died peacefully.

William Maurice Franks was born in Decatur, Georgia 87 years ago. He served as a pilot of a B24 in World War II, was an industrial chemist for 40 years. In retirement, he served the

International Service Corp in such diverse places as Korea, Brazil, Pakistan, Mexico and Sri Lanka.

A memorial service was held in the chapel of Hospice Atlanta on Saturday June 30 at 2 p.m.. Remains were interred at the Georgia National Cemetery, Canton GA. Allene's address is 1800 Clairmont Lake, Apt. 610, Atlanta GA 30033.

ANGEL NUUS

The angels have been flying around the church again. Here are a few of the sightings.

Linda Helton, **Marge Pasch**, and **Pat Mann** cleared out and organized the kitchen closet. Afterwards, **Ron Pasch** made some modifications to the closet to better meet the church's needs.

Margaret Hudson found a bulletin board lurking about the church and brought it to Chris' attention. **Paul Adler** generously gave his time to put the bulletin board up.

Maurine Nichols Olin purchased 10 new hymnals to increase our hymnal supply. She gave the hymnals in memory of Dolores Wood and in honor of Evelyn Wood.

YOGA 4 U & UU

Have you always thought about doing yoga? Perhaps you have taken some classes in the past and want to resume? Well, it's time to make it happen! Time to get back at it!

We are very lucky to have a yoga teacher in our church community and she kindly agreed to teach classes at our very own church. Dottie Antman's niece, Mary Carol Moran, recently moved here and she is a yoga instructor. Her yoga method is called "Restorative Yoga." It is based on the more spiritual, communal and de-stressing aspects and techniques of yoga. She will work on the total body: breathing, relaxation and even some massage! Mary will make the classes accessible to all ages, both genders and all abilities. She will provide the necessary tools—all you need to do is dress in comfortable clothing so you can stretch and move.

Mary is offering two classes a week. One class is on Tuesday evening from 6-7 pm, beginning September 11th. The other is on Saturday from 10-11:30 am, beginning September 15th. You can choose the one most convenient for you. Both sessions will run for 6 weeks. She is charging only \$50 per person. Depending on interest and participation, another 6-week session can be scheduled before Christmas.

The very best part of all of this is that Mary is offering two FREE classes! You can come and try it out! Those classes are on Saturday, August 4th and 25th at 10 am.

Just show up in comfy clothes and join the fun!

Questions? Call Kate Briere at 423-624-8152.



Mary Carol Moran and her dog, Gemma

REDISCOVERING THE BIBLE

Bring your curiosity and imagination, and check your preconceptions at the door. This group study promises an opportunity to extend, deepen, and challenge your knowledge and understanding of the Bible in theological, cultural, and academic terms. Topics will be diverse and may include:

Themes in Christian and Jewish Writings, Theories and Controversies of Authorship and Dating, Hermeneutic Methods, Non-Canonical Writings, and more depending on interest. These interactive sessions may be used to lay the groundwork for a later comprehensive curriculum appropriate for a 2-3 month in-depth Bible Study.

This new group will meet three times in August. All meetings are at 9:30 in the Teen Room.

August 5th: Theories of the Bible and an Overview of Academic and Hermeneutic Thinking

August 19th: Understanding Apocalyptic Writings

August 26th: When the Pentateuch?

BIRTHDAYS



The Caring Committee plans to honor two members who will be celebrating 90th birthdays in August—Bruce Hollingsworth and Evelyn Wood. The Caring Committee invites everyone to enjoy cake and coffee and participate in the festivities on Sunday, August 12. Happy Birthday to both Bruce and Evelyn!

BOOK CLUB NEWS

The Book Club will meet on Thursday, August 16, 7:00pm in the fellowship area of the church. They will discuss Kurt Vonnegut's book *A Man Without A Country*. A best seller, the *New York Times Book Review* said: "Like that of his literary ancestor Mark Twain, Kurt Vonnegut's crankiness is good-humored and sharp-witted. Reading *A Man Without a Country* is like sitting down on the couch for a long chat with an old friend." How can you resist? Everyone is invited.

TWISTED KNITTERS

The Twisted Knitterz are taking a summer vacation. We will begin meeting again on Monday, September 10th.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT OUT

Wednesday Night Out is on vacation for August, but new opportunities begin in September. Starting in September on the first Wednesday of each month, We'll have a Wednesday Night at the Church! The other Wednesdays will continue to be out at local restaurants.

We did this several years ago and had a great time. This is how it works:

- The volunteer for the first Wednesday night will either cook dinner for everyone or make some other kind of food arrangement. (Don't forget we have vegetarians and omnivores!)
- We'll make the start time a little later, 7 pm, to give people, and whoever is organizing that night, a little more time after work.
- We'll be asking for a \$5 per person donation to pay back the cost of the dinner to whoever was in charge.
- A sign up sheet will be posted so we'll have an idea how many plan to attend.

Leslie Walters going to cook the first Wednesday, September 5, to get things started. She needs to get volunteers to oversee

the first Wednesdays for October through December. It's really easy; call Leslie if you have any questions. 706/858-0017.

CHIONS

CHIONS will meet on August 11, 2007 from 10:30 until noon. The topic is *Mysticism*, presented by Dr. Ralph Hood.

The argument for a perennial philosophy has long been connected with the claim that there is a mystical core, common across religious traditions. Dr. Hood will present a modified version of this thesis, arguing that while there is indeed a mystical core common to the great faith traditions, any expression of this core is historically and culturally contingent and hence whatever unity there is to faith traditions is inexpressible and absolutely ineffable.

Dr. Hood is a professor of psychology at UTC. Mysticism is his first love; he will present information from over 20 years of research. He is the author of several books on mysticism and related topics, and has been a popular CHIONS speaker in the past.

BEATITUDES

Blessed are the ones who make peace,
 Blessed are the ones who scrape by,
 Blessed are the ones livin' holy lives
 And here's to the rest of us who try.

-Paranoid Larry

THE NUUSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

the nUUsletter welcomes articles from members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga. Article topics should be of interest to our church members and could include: announcements of events, discussion of recent events in the church of community, and original essays or poems. Each article can be up to 400 words. Due to space limitations and selected topics, it is possible that not all articles will be published. Please send your submissions to *the nUUsletter* to the editor, Wendy Sapp, at *wksapp at charter dot net*. Wendy can also be reached through the church office. The deadline for the September issue is **August 15th**.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ASSERTS MORAL VALUES

Adapted from an article by Christopher L. Walton and Tom Stites. Visit <www.uuworld.org/news/articles/31475.shtml>

The 46th annual General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations in Portland, Ore., June 20–24, attracted the second largest GA crowd ever for five days of workshops, business meetings, lectures, and worship services.

The published General Assembly agenda included votes on a Statement of Conscience on “moral values in a pluralistic society,” two relatively minor bylaw amendments, and an uncontested slate of candidates for elected boards and committees. But delegates brought a dozen additional resolutions that livened up the plenary sessions on the final day of the Assembly.

The Statement of Conscience, which emerged from a two-year “study/action” process in congregations, called for Unitarian Universalists “to assert and defend two basic principles underlying the American Constitution”—“the right of all human beings to follow a life of their choosing, as long as others are not harmed,” and “the basic principle of inherent equal dignity of all human beings.” (The full text of all General Assembly resolutions will be available at UUA.org.)

Delegates approved six social justice resolutions or “Actions of Immediate Witness” on torture, immigration raids, international women’s rights, sexuality education, gay rights in the U.S. military, and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. The first four passed with little debate, but the last two inspired passionate exchanges.

An Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) entitled “Repeal ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” which calls for an end to a policy that allows gay and lesbian people to serve in the military only if they are closeted, drew statements of opposition from delegates who raised class issues and criticized military violence. “This is yet another campaign being pushed forward by white, privileged queer people,” said Jason Lydon, a delegate from the Community Church of Boston, “without being in accountable relationships with queer people of color, or being aware of the impact the military itself has on all communities of color.” A handful of speakers expressed concerns that repeal could lead to an epidemic of hate crimes—“open season on gays in the military,” in one opponent’s phrase. Courter called for a vote and announced that the resolution had clearly carried.

The final Action of Immediate Witness, entitled “Pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act with Transgender Inclusion and Protection,” also attracted spirited opposition from

delegates who said it did not go far enough and from others who said the resolution expressed commitments the UUA has already made. (Some of the opponents had sponsored a resolution specifically affirming transgender people that the Commission on Social Witness merged with a separate resolution on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.) This AIW also passed easily.

As the final plenary session was coming to a close, delegates came forward with six “responsive resolutions,” which were approved with little or no debate. The UUA bylaws permit delegate-initiated resolutions in response to reports by UUA officers and committees.

One responsive resolution reaffirmed the General Assembly’s opposition to the war in Iraq and urged delegates to take “all necessary action to end the U.S. occupation of Iraq.”

One asked congregations to report back to future General Assemblies about their historical “complicity with the genocide of native people, with slavery and the slave-based economy, and with all types of racial, ethnic, and cultural oppression past and present, toward the goal of accountability through acknowledgment, apology, repair, and reconciliation.” The resolution asked for updates at the next two Assemblies.

Other resolutions asked congregations to report next year about their engagement with people in communities of color regarding their voting experiences; encouraged congregations to raise funds to provide health insurance for approximately 200 uninsured church employees; and asked the General Assembly Planning Committee to discuss devoting at least 30 minutes of the opening of General Assembly 2008 to help attendees “engage in compassionate response and witness” when encountering new people.

One responsive resolution grew out of a proposed Action of Immediate Witness about transgender people. It affirmed “the commitment to the inherent worth and dignity of every human being, including transgender individuals” and urged that “this spiritual value” be expressed through “employment practices, educational efforts, congregational life, and public witness.” The resolution notes that no prior General Assembly statement specifically addresses the Association’s views on transgender identity and encourages congregations “to explore with their communities the important differences between sexual orientation and transgender identity.”

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DATE	8/5	8/12	8/19	8/26
TOPIC	This I Believe	Heaven, Hell, or Somewhere In Between	What Can We Do?	Water Communion
LEADER	Nicky Ozbek	Daidee Springer & Steve Hollingsworth	the Rev. Jeff Briere	the Rev. Jeff Briere
BOT MEMBER	Maddie Kertay	Nicole Barhhart	Rich Dwyer	Roger Davis
GREETERS	Nicky Ozbek	John Standridge	John Standridge	John Standridge
USHERS	Lynna Ruth Standridge	Lynna Ruth Standridge	Lynna Ruth Standridge	Lynna Ruth Standridge
CHANCEL DÉCOR	Mary Hunter	Mary Hunter	Mary Hunter	Mary Hunter
MUSIC	Steve Hollingsworth	Marcia Jenison	Steve Hollingsworth	Marcia Jenison

