

The Discoverer

The monthly newsletter of the
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus
93 W. Weisheimer Road, Columbus Ohio 43214

July/August 2016

Our Mission Statement

We are here:
To learn and practice true hospitality
To revere the reasoning mind and the generous heart
To claim our diversity as a source of our strength, and
To relinquish the safety of our unexamined privilege for
the freedom to engage in transforming justice.

WINGS AND SONG

Rev. Jennifer Brooks, Interim Senior Minister

Life is a journey. It's often an adventure, but always a journey. When the UUA learned that Westboro protestors were planning to picket the Columbus Convention Center during General Assembly, the GA planning committee asked me, GA Lead Chaplain, to coordinate our UU response. Of course I said yes.



The Westboro protesters are infamous for picketing at military funerals of those they believe to be gay or lesbian. "God Hates You" is one of the mildest signs they carry. Last month, during the funerals of the 49 victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida, they showed up carrying their wrathful signs. So the Angels came.

The Angels, with their tall, broad wings, first appeared in Laramie, Wyoming, during the trial of the gay-hating murderers of 21-year-old Matthew Shepard in 1998. Westboro protesters had appeared at the funeral, shocking his loved ones with their signs and chants. They announced that they'd protest again during the 1999 trial, as if Matthew's being gay made it inappropriate to seek justice for his death. Romaine Patterson, one of Matthew's classmates who'd attended his funeral, created the Angels to shield his loved ones from Westboro's messages.

In that first Angel appearance, Romaine explained that the Angels represented a message of peace and love. She said, "Hatred is running rampant through our everyday lives. But as a group, we choose to lift ourselves above that hatred. We feel, as many others do, that love and compassion for our community and our humanity are the answers that so many people are desperately searching for." The Angels have since appeared many times, in many places, as various groups have sought to respond with love to a message of hate. (Instructions for the wings are on [Romaine's website](#).)



In Orlando, less than a month ago, the Angels reappeared, thanks to First Unitarian Church and the Orlando Shakespeare Theater, which made the costumes. Our own Christine Davidson arranged for Orlando's Angel wings to be sent to Columbus in support of our UU "wings and song" response to Westboro's message.

The one clear idea in my mind was that I longed for UUs to be filled with love, support for GLBTQ people, and (ideally) compassion for those raised in the cult-like, hate-promoting culture of Westboro "Baptist Church." The young teens we saw on June 24 are the third generation of children steeped in the practice of hurt and hate. Who among us would hand a 14-year-old a sign that says, "God Hates You"? My eyes fill with tears as I remember.

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Please send articles for the September issue of the newsletter by Sunday, August 21, to office@firstuucolumbus.org.

Rev. Jennifer Brooks, Interim Sr. Minister
Rev. Eric Meter, Associate Minister
Rev. Carol Brody, Minister Emerita
Rev. Wendy Fish, Minister Emerita
Rev. Mark Belletini, Minister Emeritus
Rev. Kathleen Fowler, Minister Affiliated
Rev. Suzan McCrystal, Minister Affiliated

Rev. Lane Campbell, Minister, Religious Exploration
Deb McGuire, RE Assistant/Staff Secretary
Tony McDonald, Music Director
Minji Kim, Chalice Choir Director
Nathan Hamm, Accompanist/Pianist
Karen Madden, Choir Director
Leigh Mamlin, Children/Youth Choir Director
Cath Saveson, Children/Youth Choir Director

Brian Hagemann, Church Administrator
Marian Garcia, Office Manager
Joe Voltolini, Bookkeeper
Naoko Kobayashi, Facilities Assistant
Cathy Hausmann, Facilities Assistant
Susan Roscigno, SYC Co-Associate Director
Amy Rudawsky, SYC Co-Associate Director
Jabar Cole, Sound Technician

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July/August 2016

LINKS

Rev. Eric Meter, Associate Minister

When I was somewhere in my teens, my mother asked my brother and me what we would want to do in our retirements. Within a moment, we both began spouting off a long list of things we would want to do, none of which I can remember now.

“Those sound great, Eric,” Mom replied, “but you didn’t mention travel. Was that an oversight, or is that less important to you?”

How could I have not included seeing more of the world?

Since then, I’ve been fortunate to walk on two other continents and spend time with those who call several other nations home. Little in my life has helped me grow and mature as much as the time I’ve spent stretching my sense of what it means to be human by navigating other cultures than the one I was born into.

All of this was front and center for me while hosting our partner church minister, the Rev. Albert Kozma, this June.

While he had been in the States before, that was back in 1999. Things here have changed since then.

Whenever we could, we’d sit on the back deck to watch the fireflies. This year they were the most active and numerous I’ve seen in my years in the house. Albert remembered watching them fondly during his childhood. In Transylvania, they are called St. John’s insects, for the saint who went door to door with a lantern in hand spreading care and the good news of his faith. Sadly, fireflies have been absent from Bölön for years now. Albert thinks this is due to pesticide use. A cautionary tale for us, perhaps.

The other moment from his time with us that comes to mind now took place at a local urgent care clinic. Albert had what looked like an infected insect bite on one of his fingers, and while he wanted to lance it himself, we insisted he go to the clinic. There, a nurse practitioner from the Ukraine and a doctor from south India cared for him. But when we paid the bill, Albert turned to me and quietly whispered, “Eric, that is far too much money. In Romania it would have only cost \$20, or nothing at all, depending on when you went to the clinic.” The conversation that followed taught both of us about the vagaries of health care in our world today.

I have to say that Albert is an amazing traveler. He jumped in and raised his fist with the rest of us protesting for justice in the killing of Henry Green. He spoke to us about the history of Transylvanian Unitarianism and his congregation in Bölön. He relished learning about the Hungarian community here in Columbus and teaching Ann and me how to make elderberry lemonade and palacsinta.

Lastly, he invited all of us (well, as many as his congregation’s new guest house can accommodate) to visit him and get to know the members of his congregation better. For myself, the four days I had in Bölön back in 2013 were not enough. I can’t wait to return. What about you?

in peace,
Rev. Eric

Healing Journey

Are you experiencing grief due to the loss of a family member or other loved one, a job loss, or the pain of another unwelcome life transition? If so, the Healing Journey may be for you. Together we share our stories and learn how much we have in common with others who also know the experience of loss. The group will meet from 7:00 to 8:30 pm on Tuesday evenings, July 12 – August 2. Led by Rev. Kathleen Fowler and David Maywhoor. Contact the church office to sign up.



GROWING AS WE GO

Rev. Lane Campbell, Minister of Religious Exploration

A People Who Show Up

This week, I have been reflecting in the wake of our most recent General Assembly. Close to 4,000 UUs came to Columbus to celebrate Unitarian Universalism, to worship together, to learn in workshops skills and knowledge to bring back to their congregations, and to just be with one another. I hope you were able to attend a portion of it, to feel the magnitude of it all.



From those of you I did see, I want to reflect back that First UU Columbus showed up. A majority of volunteers at GA were from our congregation. It was a delight to be greeted each day by a familiar face. The church was a part of making our public witness happen, providing a loving presence for a brief visit from the Westboro Baptist Church, and coming out in droves for an extremely touching worship service on Sunday morning. This is a congregation that shows up.

And by showing up, we are transformed. We are changed by the power of standing in a room with UUs being in the large majority. Our hearts are softened by worship that touches our hearts and brings a new perspective. We are opened by uncomfortable challenges to the way we have thought or acted previously. And our hearts become full with the all of it all, with an experience that cannot be forgotten.

I took a look this morning at the General Assembly app. I am always fascinated that people continue to post things there well after the event is over. It is as if the five days of GA cannot contain all of the energy and emotion it stirs up. People still have the need to connect with one another days and weeks following the event. When I visited the app this morning, someone had left the following reading by Steven Charleston:

“Nothing will stop us now. We have come through so much, seen so much, that we are veterans in the struggle for good. It has not been easy. It never is. But it has been worth it, because along the way, however difficult it may have been, there are a million hearts healed, a new nation of hope, a path of blessing so wide that anyone can find it, no matter how much they have hurt or how downcast is their vision. We have broken down the walls and cleared the rubble of sadness. Nothing will stop us now, for we were made for this moment, and called to live it in love.”

Such a deep call to us all in this important moment. We too have been showing up for good for the long haul by taking part in struggles for social justice, serving our church community, and serving the wider world. You have been there to answer people’s questions, to care for the children and youth of the congregation, to welcome folks into “a path of blessing so wide that anyone can find it.” I imagine more than a million people have walked through the doors of First UU in its many incarnations throughout the church’s history. We have worked as veterans in the struggle for good, whether that be in conversation with loved ones and strangers, in showing up and putting our bodies to work, or even in singing our heart out into the world.

Let us move forward living life in love, showing up in love, ensuring a million hearts healed and even more than that. I imagine you left GA inspired, just as I did. Let us adventure out of where we feel most comfortable to bring this love to even wider circles of people who need to hear our saving message. A message of hope, a message of peace, a message that we are not alone in this world, a message of showing up.

Rev. Lane Campbell

Summer Sunday School Volunteers

Summer Sunday School is more relaxed and it's lots of fun to be with the kids. Assistants are needed all summer to support our Summer Sunday School teacher, Jen Bojanowski, as she helps our 5 to 12 year olds build community with Cooperative Games. Contact Rev. Lane Campbell, Minister of Religious Exploration, to sign up, lane@firstuucolumbus.org.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Cancelled: The **First Friday Potluck for July** has been cancelled. The next one will be August 5. Potluck at 6:30pm. At 7:30pm, kids' movie and board games for older kids/adults. Laurie Brown, [614-246-0170](tel:614-246-0170).

Bookbites will meet Tuesday, July 19, from 7 to 9pm, in Slowter Lounge. June topic is "Revolution." Questions, call Kathleen at [614-262-4025](tel:614-262-4025).

Art Quilt Alliance *Sheer Magic* is an exhibit of 26 works, in the Gallery and Worship Center at First UU July 1-August 28. The works use gauze in mysterious and magical ways, stitched, dyed and embellished. Join us for a reception Sunday, August 28, 11:30-1:30. Deb Baillieul debbsyc@yahoo.com

Healing Journey Are you experiencing grief due to the loss of a family member or other loved one, a job loss, or the pain of another unwelcome life transition? If so, the Healing Journey may be for you. Together we share our stories and learn how much we have in common with others who also know the experience of loss. The group, led by Rev. Kathleen Fowler and David Maywhoor, will meet from 7:00 to 8:30pm on Tuesday evenings, July 12 – August 2. Contact the church office to sign up. 614-267-4946, ext. 21 or office@firstuucolumbus.org.

Calling all First UU Library books/CDs/DVDs
Now that construction is finished and the Library is back in service, the Team invites you to return items belonging to us. Any time you are visiting the church you can place items in the "Return Box" on the shelf near the Library sign on the north wall. If you used books for a class or series, please return them so we can prepare them for the next group/borrower. This is your chance to check all your books and return to us only those with the "First UU" stamp in the front and the back. Or you may want to renew one on the card in the small box.

Paula Hook, Library Team

Summer Sunday School Snack Sign Up Please sign up to bring a snack on a Sunday through September 6. Fruit is a big hit, as well as pretzels, goldfish crackers, raisins, etc. No peanuts or peanut butter due to allergies. Water is served. Bring your snack to the kitchen before the end of service. Contact Kelly Blake with questions 396-6761, kellyblake@wowway.com.

DENOMINATION

Summer Institute July 17-23. An intergenerational week of fun, learning, and music at Oberlin College, with speaker Matt Meyer, who was the presenter of our worship service at First UU on Sunday, June 26. Register online at www.omdsi.org or by contacting Amy Kent, registrar@omdsi.org, or (412) 999-7067.

Mindful Journey in 2017, for UUs and friends
Peru: Always wanted to experience Machu Picchu? Join us March 25-April 5, 2017. Our journey will be filled with comfortable places to stay, Shamanic conversations, lovely food, water blessings at an old Inca spring, beautiful natural vistas and reflections while sitting on a mountain top. Journey led by UU minister, Wayne Walder, Toronto, Canada, www.nuuc.ca. To receive a detailed itinerary for the journey, please email Beverlz@me.com. To learn more about Mindful Journeys go to <http://nuuc.ca/spiritual-growth/spiritual-practice/mindful-journeys/>

Midwest UU Summer Assembly July 3-9. Intergenerational Retreat at YMCA of the Ozarks, Trout Lodge near Potosi, Missouri. muusa.org.

WINGS AND SONG

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We had a peacekeeper training Thursday morning, and an Angel-wing-assembly session on Thursday afternoon. Many who volunteered to be Angels were youth, our young teens determined to share a message of love.

On Friday, as we waited for the Westboro protesters to show themselves, we sang songs. We prepared to respond to hate and hostility with love and peace. We considered the effects of culture and teaching on children. We honored the beauty of children who grow up taught to love others, and we paused, somber, at the pain of children who grow up taught to hate. Then we moved outside on wings and song, overwhelming the hate messages with love messages. Near the end, spontaneously, our group began chanting "We love you." People spread in a large circle around the Westboro protestors, inundating them with love. "We love you." I could sense the love flowing outward, astonishing and freely offered. I am grateful to have been there, and to have felt the power of love at work. The Westboro protestors seemed disconcerted, confused. And they left.

Life is a journey. It's often an adventure. But always a journey. This was one from which we UUs returned, transformed, by the power of love offered freely in the face of hostility and hate.

Rev. Jennifer Brooks

JUSTICE ACTION MINISTRY (JAM)

Steve Palm-Houser, Chair

Feed My Sheep Food Pantry We celebrated June 6: Esther Stuntz became the 100th youth to volunteer and work at the food pantry. Since our first youth from First UU went to Mineral, Ohio in August of 2004 to help at the food pantry, there have also been 99 adults from First UU to do so. Evelyn (Esther's older sister) has been there three times. She received service hours for school requirements for two of the trips. Her mother and father have also been down there to work and volunteer.

It's just as important to meet the people being helped as it is to actually help. This project, taking youth and adults from our church to see, meet, and help those in rural Appalachia in Ohio, was started many years ago by First UU member Jacques Angelino.

The first week in August will begin our 13th year. We have provided school supplies, food, Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas dinners, Christmas presents, winter coats, children's books, and Easter dinners.

Since, according to the U.S. Dept. of Labor and the U.S. Census, this is the poorest county in Ohio and, according to the Children's Defense Fund, the children in rural Appalachia (the population that we serve) are the poorest children in the U.S., these children are certainly among the most vulnerable. Athens county has a 32% unemployment rate. Our youth and adults are making a difference.

The Feed My Sheep food pantry needs items such as peanut butter, feminine hygiene products, chunky soup, dog food, cat food, canned meat, and children's books. Bring these to Fellowship Hall on any Sunday morning.



BREAD (*Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity*, 614-220-9363, www.breadcolumbus.com, www.facebook.com/breadorganization) is Central Ohio's congregation-based,

multi-faith community organization, which holds local officials accountable for serious problems in Central Ohio.

At BREAD's recent celebration dinner, First UU was honored for turning out 66% of our average worship attendance to BREAD's Nehemiah Action (NA). The following successful justice ministry network members were also honored for playing a major role in that achievement by bringing three or more people to the Nehemiah Action: Marilyn Beerman, Sue Carter, Chris Collins, Larry Drake, David Easter, Cathy Elkins, Joanne Frantz, Danya Furda, Pat Hoffman, Chris Johnson, Oliver Jones, Pat Larson, Kathy Lin, Stephen Lovejoy, Marylou MacDonald, David Maywhoor, Meg McGuire, Tashia McMullin, Kynteja Moss, Georgeanne Neuzil, Alice Rathburn, Ron Rathburn, Doug Rossiter, Amy Sievert-Wagner, Wesley Thompson, Karen Torvik, and Charnae, C.A, C.R and Noel Williams.

Those attending heard reports on several of BREAD's successes: primary health care, affordable housing, jobs, transportation, and mental health care. Also, Franklin County Treasurer Ed Leonard attended to update us on the Franklin County and Columbus Land Bank, the result of a three-year BREAD campaign. Franklin County had 70,000 vacant and abandoned houses in 2013, but only 30 were being torn down each year. Now, with the Land Bank generating \$3.5 million per year to tear down or rehabilitate abandoned units, over 2,000 have been demolished since 2013 and the Land Bank is working with several non-profits to renovate some of the vacant properties.

None of this would have happened without BREAD's member committees, backed by the organized power of between 2,000 and 3,500 people at each year's Nehemiah Action!

Contact Alice Rathburn, eulala1905@me.com, 895-2109 or 563-0536, for further information and/or to be a part of this important work.

CARING CORNER

With our members:

Congratulations to:

Suzanne Koebel on her 80th birthday;

Mark Gaskill on the birth of his granddaughter, Cameron Suzanne Gaskill, born on May 27;

Sharon Hamersley and **Willkie Cirker** on the birth of their grandson of Evan Scott Cirker, born May 18 to Ben and Mairssa Cirker; and

Marla McMichael-Liston and **Lisa Angstadt** who were married at First UU on June 16.

A speedy recovery to those who were hospitalized during the month:

Jeanne Desy (tests),

Pat Hoffman (hip replacement),

Pamela Hambrick (appendectomy),

Vanda Hughes (appendectomy), and

Phyllis South (back surgery).

Our sympathy to:

Martha Gifreda whose husband Jim died May 27, under hospice care; and

Meg Spernoga, on the death of her sister.

Many thanks to the following, who assisted with the memorial service for Jim Gifreda, husband of Martha: Susan and Chas Williams, Jane Knuppel, Olwen Firestone, Sharon Oliver, Eve Catus, Carolyn Madison, Joan Matyskella, Patty Monroe, Steve Lovejoy, Leigh Mamlin and Family, Karen Nekervis, Sue Pascual, Linda Miller, and Joanne Wiggins. Chris Sullivan and Carole Wilhelm, co-coordinators.

The memorial service for Tex Kohles will be held at First UU on Tuesday, July 5, at 4pm. Tex died on May 22, at the age of 93.

With our ministers:

Congratulations to:

Rev. Kathleen Fowler, who celebrated her birthday on June 25.

The Caring Network:

The Caring Network strives to help our members and friends in times of need- after a health issue or family crisis. We connect those people with meals, rides, and sometimes other services that members of the congregation have volunteered to provide. This is on a moderately short term basis, but flexible depending on needs. Coordinators:

Gail Baxter: gailsporch@gmail.com

Karen Torvik: kptorvik@gmail.com, [614-262-3010](tel:614-262-3010)

Thank you to **Florence Jain** for five years as coordinator of the Caring Network. She has linked many church members and friends to help each other in time of need.

Bill Cohen Concert *Facing Death With Music* Sunday, July 24, 7pm, at First UU



Join us for an evening of songs by a local folk singer and musician who has created a program of inspiring quotes and songs about how, once we accept that we will someday die, we can feel free to live our lives more fully.

This is a benefit concert for the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Ohio, an organization supported by the First UU Caring Team. FCACO consists of area residents dedicated to helping individuals understand options and costs so they can make funeral arrangements that are dignified, meaningful and affordable. For more information, go to <http://www.funeralsohio.org/>

We will present an information meeting about FCACO at First UU, Sunday, August 14, 11:30am. Join us!

CALENDAR

- Adult Programs: 1st Thursday, 7-9pm
- Atheists/Skeptics/Humanists: 4th Tuesdays, 7pm
- Book Bites: 3rd Tuesday, 7pm
- Board Executive Committee: 2nd Wednesday, 7pm
- Board of Trustees: 4th Wednesday, 7pm
- Book Group Yet to Be Named: Wednesdays, 1pm
- BREAD Team: 3rd Monday, 7pm
- Bridge Group (call 499-2434): 4th Sunday, 6pm
- Building and Grounds: 1st Monday, 7pm
- Care and Share Time Bank: 3rd Sunday, 6:30pm
- Caring Team: 1st Tuesday, 7pm (not meeting in July)
- Cooking for Faith Mission: 1st & 3rd Friday, 12pm (cancelled for July 1)
- Covenant Group Facilitators: 1st Wednesday, 7pm
- Creative Open Studio: Mondays, 3-5pm
- Family Small Group Ministry: 2nd & 4th Thursday, 6pm
- Finance: 3rd Tuesday, 7pm
- First Friday, 1st Friday potluck/activities 6:30pm (cancelled for July)
- Getting to Know UU: Sundays, after each service
- Healing Journey: Tuesdays, 7/12 – 8/ 2, 7pm
- Hispanohablantes: Saturdays, 10:45am
- Improvisational Dance: Thursdays, 9:30am
- Intergenerational Book Group: 3rd Wednesday, 7pm
- Job Seekers Support Group: 4th Monday, 7pm
- Justice Action Ministry: 4th Monday, 7pm
- Library Team: 2nd Tuesday, 1:30pm
- Memoir Group: 2nd Wednesdays, 7pm
- Move to Amend: 3rd Saturday, 12pm
- Nominating Committee: 1st Sunday, 8:30am
- PFLAG: 4th Sunday, 2pm
- RE Team: 3rd Wednesday, 6:30pm
- Stewardship: 3rd Tuesday, 7pm
- TED Talk Tuesdays: 8/2, 8/9, 8/16, 8/23, 7pm
- This Month in Science: 2nd Tuesday, 7pm
- UU Dance Fellowship: Mondays, 7pm
- Worship Team: 1st Tuesday, 7:30pm
- Zen Meditation: Saturdays, 8:30am; Tuesdays, 7pm

Friday, July 1

CANCELLED: First Friday Potluck and Activities
CANCELLED: Cooking for Faith Mission

Monday, July 4 Church office closed

Tuesday, July 5

4:00pm Tex Kohles Memorial Service

Saturday, July 9

6:00pm Moss-ShIPLEY Wedding

Sunday, July 24

7:00pm Bill Cohen Concert
(see page 6)

Wednesday, July 27

6:00pm Summer Work Session

Friday, August 5

6:30pm First Friday Potluck & Activities

Monday, August 1 – Friday, August 5 and Monday, August 8 – Friday, August 12

9:00am Peace Camp

Sunday, August 14

11:30am Funeral Consumers Alliance Info Mtg.

Tuesday, August 16

7:00pm Caring Team Pizza Party

Saturday, August 20

7:30pm All Soles Contra Dance

Friday, August 26 – Saturday, August 27

Board Retreat - Offsite

Sunday, August 28

11:30am Visioning Circles
11:30am Artist Reception "Sheer Magic"

Wednesday, August 31

6:00pm Summer Work Session

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus
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July/August 2016

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, July 3, 10am
What's Next, Rev. Eric Meter

Sunday, July 10, 10am
*What I Learned from my Parents and What My
Children Teach Me*, Morgan Patton

Sunday, July 17, 10am
The Importance of Loafing, Rev. Jennifer Brooks

Sunday, July 24, 10am
*Interfaith Collaboration is Leading the Way to Healing
Our Home (Climate Change)*, Michael Greenman

Sunday, July 31, 10am
*The Largest Community in All the World:
Reflections on the Losses in Our Lives*
Rev. Eric Meter

Sunday, August 7, 10am
Outing Racism in this Post-Racial Age
Tony McDonald

Sunday, August 14, 10am
Waking Up, Rev. Jennifer Brooks

Sunday, August 21, 10am
One to Grow On: The Value of Not Having Arrived
Amy Watson

Sunday, August 28, 10am
The Intimacy of Vulnerability, Rev. Lane Campbell