

THE UNIGRAM

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Columbia, SC

April 24, 2007



April 29, 2007

11:00 Sermon Topic: "Resisting a Culture of Rudeness" by Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones
Don Imus' remarks about the Rutgers women's basketball team, which cost him his job, are just the tip of the iceberg in what appears to be our increasingly rude and crude culture. How did we end up in this cesspool, and how do we climb out?

9:30 Forum Topic: Flat World Theory

May 6, 2007

11:00 Sermon Topic: This year's annual Beltane (May Day) celebration is a lively romp through the great literature of love and fertility, from Shakespeare and Chaucer, to Whitman and Sappho, to Rumi and Song of Solomon. Come prepared to jump the fire and dance 'round the Maypole, and enjoy a luncheon (\$6 adults, \$3 age 12 and younger) at the 11:00 AM service. All are welcome. Questions, call 803.799.0845, or email columbiacuups@yahoo.com.

9:30 Forum Topic: Intuition vs. Cognition

Sunday Schedule

Forum: 9:30 AM in the Library

Worship: 11:00 AM -12:15 PM followed by a Coffee Hour in the Social Hall

Nursery: Available during service for infants through age 2

Children: 11:00 AM -12:15 PM Religious Ed. classes for children ages 3 through 8th grade

Religious Education

Would you like to help with the RE Program this summer, but only have one or two Sundays free? Our Native American Summer Program is designed with you in mind. Each week, the children will be exploring the culture, customs, and crafts of Native Americans of many traditions. There is no advance preparation required of teachers. The craft supplies and instructions will be in the classroom when you arrive. If you are interested teaching or assisting this summer, please fill in your name and phone number on the dates you are available on the poster in the Fellowship Hall. We would also like any junior or senior high students to sign up as assistants to help the younger children with the craft projects we have selected. Questions? Contact Sonya Jones or Barbie Seymour.

Children's Choir

Join the Children's Choir. Children of all ages are welcome to join. They will practice after the service each week for 15 minutes. Questions contact Bethany Storalazzi xxx-xxxx.

From the Minister . . .

God and Guns

I was alarmed and disappointed that in a letter to the editor of "The State" (4/21/07), a clerical colleague, the Rev. Timothy Bryson, advocated laws allowing concealed weapons on college campuses as a way of stopping the Virginia Tech psycho-killer. Now there's an idea. The right-to-bear-arms Rev. imagines that if Man-About-Campus Ken and Co-ed Carol had been toting a piece on the way to calculus, they could have taken out their deranged classmate.

Here's another idea: since guns are made to injure and kill people, perhaps they should be regulated. Like requiring a waiting period to perform a background check and to allow a "cooling off" period. Like requiring handgun buyers to obtain a license, undergo safety training, and register their firearms with the police. Like restricting the sale and possession of semiautomatic assault weapons and rapid-fire ammunition magazines. Like allowing city and county governments to take legal action against gun manufacturers to hold them accountable. Virginia has no such laws.

The most reasonable thing that Rev. Bryson had to say was that no law could have probably prevented the gunman's mayhem. That is certainly true. But proper regulations would have made it more difficult for that disturbed young man to obtain his weapons. It is unnerving to learn that Cho Seung-Hui may have purchased his ammo clips off eBay with the ease of buying a book. No right is absolute. All rights, including the right to speech, press, assembly, and to bear arms, must be balanced with other rights and responsibilities, with reason, and with the common good.

Another thing is certainly true. We live in a violence-obsessed society. The United States has the highest homicide rate of any industrialized country. We are enamored with bloodshed on TV, in movies, and in video games, with war, and with state-sanctioned execution. We also live in a fear-filled society. We are afraid of terrorists, Muslims, Arabs, immigrants, homosexuals, atheists, liberals, and other bogeymen concocted by fear-mongering politicians and preachers. The last thing we need is a proliferation of guns ... or ministers who advocate their use.

I would call upon my clerical colleague to be an advocate for reason. I would remind him that he represents the Prince of Peace.

Neal



Community Chalice

We extend our concern and support to ...

Ruth Sproat, whose mother, Anna Olson Christensen, died April 10 at the age of 101.

Betty Glad, who is recovering from a broken wrist and rib after experiencing a fall. Hopefully, she will be able to travel to her alma mater, the University of Utah, in a couple of weeks. The College of Behavioral and Social Sciences is honoring her with its "Alumna of the Year" award.

We extend our congratulations to ...

Jack Sproat, who has been honored by the history department of USC with its formation of the John Sproat Lecture Series. Jack is a former chair of the history department.

Larry LeFebvre and Regina Moody, who will be displaying their art on May 5, 10 am – 6 pm, and on May 6, 12 pm – 6 pm, as a part of the Columbia Festival of the Arts "Open Studios 2007." Larry will be exhibiting his sculpture at his home at 2839 Sheffield Road, and Regina will be showing her paintings at the Viridian Gallery & Studio at 3130 Carlisle Street.

Congratulations and best wishes to **Carita and Bill Barr** who celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on Sunday, April 22nd.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Joining ceremony will be 4/29/07.

Anyone wishing to join us as a member please contact Larry Siegel xxx-xxxx or other members of the membership committee to discuss what is involved. There will be a meeting after the service 4/22/07 including the members of the membership committee and the potential new members to detail the procedure. On the 29th there will be a potluck after the service for the entire congregation to welcome the new members.

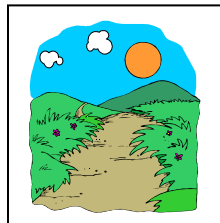
Every Week for Harvest Hope Food Bank

When you buy your groceries leave some in the car so you'll have them to bring each and every Sunday and help fill the basket on the stage in the Social Hall. Volunteers deliver all donations to the Food Bank every Monday.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

September Set potluck

Will be held in the Fellowship hall this Friday, April 27th at 6:00 PM. As usual, we are asking everyone to bring a dish, beverage, or desert to share. Joyce Rodgers will be bringing an entrée of Chicken and a veggie entrée. We look forward to seeing you there.



Walk/Hike Group

Peach Tree Rock Heritage Preserve Hike, 10:00 AM Sat. April 28. The hike will begin from the Peach Tree Rock Preserve Parking Lot, located just outside the park entrance, "approximately one half mile south of the park's

intersection with SC Highway 302 in Lexington County."

Carpooling from Columbia:

Please meet us at 9:00 at the Fellowship Hall where we will divide up into cars and drive there. If you already live in Lexington or Irmo, you may find it more convenient to head directly to the Park's parking lot. Remember to bring drinks and lunch.

A Deeper Look at the Principles and Purposes of Our Denomination

The Board of Trustees and the Commission on Appraisal (a "think tank" elected by delegates to the General Assembly) of the Unitarian Universalist Association have jointly announced a process whereby all UU congregations are asked to conduct workshops to more fully explore the meaning of our Principles and Purposes. On May 20, immediately after the Sunday service, Don and Pat Mohr will lead this workshop at the UUFC. Depending on the number who attends, the workshop will last about two hours, and, if you reserve in advance, a simple lunch will be provided. Make a reservation by calling the UUFC Office 803.799.0845 or the Mohrs at 803.782.9468.

Drum Lessons/Drum Circle

Master drummer, Amara Camara, will start a series of drum lessons/drum circle on Sunday afternoons. Class is from 3:30-4:30 pm, and the cost is \$10 per class, \$8 for students. Beautiful West African drums are provided. The money from the classes will be used to buy rice for the people of the Ratoma neighborhood in Conakry, Guinea. Rice, a staple of the diet, has become increasingly costly in Guinea, one of the poorest countries in Africa, where people live on about \$1 per day.

The drum classes/drum circles are so much fun! Each week, we will work on a different piece and learn to play it together. You do not have to commit to a certain number of classes - just come when time allows and the spirit moves you. Those who want to observe classes are welcome. If you have questions about the classes, please contact Toni Jones at xxx-xxxx or by email at tonijones@sc.rr.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Needed: New Residence - -

My Landlady will be moving soon so I need a temporary residence till November. If you know of any place, garage apartment or anyone that has a couple of rooms to rent, please call me, Gin Beery at 799-0845.

Beltane (May Day) celebration

This year's annual Beltane (May Day) celebration is a lively romp through the great literature of love and fertility, from Shakespeare and Chaucer, to Whitman and Sappho, to Rumi and Song of Solomon. Come prepared to jump the fire and dance 'round the Maypole, then enjoy a yummy lunch prepared by our Gaia's Rising CUUPS group (\$6 adults, \$3 age 12 and younger).

In Irish mythology, the beginning of the summer season starts at Beltane. Great bonfires in times past marked a time of purification and transition, and hope of a good harvest later in the year, and were accompanied with ritual acts to protect the people from any harm. For the Celts, Beltane marked the beginning of the pastoral summer season when the herds of livestock were driven out to the summer pastures and mountain grazing lands. Early Gaelic sources from around the 10th century state that the druids of the community would create a need-fire on top of a hill on this day and drive the village's cattle through the fires to purify them and bring luck. People would also pass between the two fires to purify themselves. This was echoed throughout history after Christianization, with lay people instead of Druid priests creating the need-fire. The festival persisted widely up until the 1950s, and in some places the celebration of Beltane continues today. The Gaia's Rising CUUPS group will present two events for Beltane 2007. A traditional Wiccan ritual will take place at the UU Fellowship Hall, 7:00 PM, Friday, May 4. Then on Sunday, May 6, Gaia's Rising will present a Beltane celebration, Maypole, and luncheon, at the 11:00 AM service. All are welcome at both events. Questions, call 803.799.0845, or email columbiacuups@yahoo.com.

Cato's Rebellion - Friday, May 4, 8 pm at the Township Auditorium:

This dramatic stage presentation is based on historical events in Charleston, SC, in September 1739 when African slaves marched near the Stono River carrying a banner that read "Liberty!" as they chanted the same word in unison. This event is considered the first anti-slavery rebellion in the history of the US. Don't miss this heart-stopping performance dramatized by Columbia's Lanyi African Dance Company with special appearances by members of the world-renowned Les Merveilles and Les Ballets Africaines of Guinea, West Africa.

Tickets are \$18 and are available by calling Ticketmaster at xxx-xxxx or at the Township Auditorium Box Office xxx-xxxx.



The Green Corner

<http://everythingcool.org/action.htm>

Increase your energy efficiency

Turn off lights, TVs, computers, electronics when not in use - Reduce your energy use. Activate "sleep" features on computers, printers, and televisions.

Unplug appliances or chargers when not in use - These electronics continue to draw electricity even though not turned on.

Replace old light bulbs with new Energy Star Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) - Each CFL uses 2/3 less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and last 10 times as long. CFLs come in all different sizes to fit standard fixtures.

Replace old appliances with energy efficient Energy Star appliances - Make sure to run all appliances in the "energy saver" mode.

Insulate your hot water heater with a hot water heater blanket, available at home improvement and hardware stores.

Get out of the gas line - Replace driving with walking or riding a bike whenever there is an opportunity. When there is not, consider public transportation, carpooling or driving a **hybrid** car or using **biofuels**.

Treat yourself to local and organic foods - Buy local and organic whenever possible. Organic farming uses up to 50% less fossil fuels than conventional farming and it actually helps store carbon in the soil - instead of the atmosphere.

Contact these organizations & campaigns

National Resources Defense Council: Global Warming Campaign NRDC uses law, science and the support of 1.2 million members and online activists to protect the planet's wildlife and wild places and to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all living things.

League of Conservation Voters - League of Conservation Voters is an independent political voice for the environment. To secure the environmental future of our planet, LCV's mission is to advocate for sound environmental policies and to elect pro-environmental candidates who will adopt and implement such policies.

Step it Up - Step It Up is a national day of action on April 14th, 2007. People will gather in their own communities and send the same message: Step it up, Congress! Enact immediate cuts in carbon emissions, and pledge an 80% reduction by 2050. As people gather, Step It Up will link images of the protests together electronically via the web - creating the largest protest the country has ever seen, not in numbers but in extent.

"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction." Rachel Carson

Pulpit Editorials from our Members about *What Our Fellowship Means to Me*

Don Mohr

I'm here today to tell you why I am devoted to Unitarian Universalism and this Fellowship in particular. There are a lot more reasons than I have time to talk about this morning, but let me tell you a few.

- This is the only place that I can comfortably, even joyfully, join with and explore and compare my spiritual beliefs with a group of people with very different beliefs. I once heard somebody refer to our Fellowship as being theologically like the Island of Misfit Toys from the kids Christmas movie. There may be some truth in that, and that's a good thing. There is no other place in Columbia that I can think of where we can bring our different beliefs together and actually enjoy that.
- This is the place that nurtures me. I'm suddenly closer to 70 than 60 years old, and I'm feeling just fine, thank you. But, at a certain point I imagine many of us begin to wonder what life might be like after we have seen our last sunrise. What I know is that this Fellowship will be here then. It is our community, our family, and as such, we want and need to support that community both now and into the future.
- And the future is what really makes me support this Fellowship these days. If you haven't already looked at the wall of history in our Social Hall, I hope you will do that. It's a depiction of a good part of our history. We know this Fellowship was begun in 1950. We also know that, in the past couple of years we have made remarkable progress. We have prepared a long-range plan and are actually implementing it. Our Sunday attendance has increased enormously. Over the past year, we have averaged over 95 people at Neal's services. Last year we had what is probably the most successful pledge drive in our history. I am very optimistic that we will be able to bring Neal on as our full-time minister next year. We are on the verge of signing a contract with an architectural firm to develop a master plan for renovating, beautifying, and "greening" our building.

I think, most importantly, our leaders have broken through a psychological barrier that has bedeviled us for years. So often, in the past, I have seen many good ideas broached, and, too often I have heard people say, "Oh, we can't do that." And then they offer any number of good, reasonable reasons that we can't do whatever it is. But I truly believe we are past that now. I believe we are entering a new "can do" era. And this is what will take us into a future that I think we all want for this Fellowship.

So, what I'm really supporting today is our future. Let's not forget our past, but also, let us not be consumed by it. Let us look to the future. It's the future that will nourish us, those who will join with us over the years, our children, and our children's children. That's what I support, and I trust you will, too.

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Sonya Jones

Today in Sunday School, I'll be teaching the children one of the stories from the Ramayana. The reader's digest version would go something like this—the perfect boy gets unjustly banished to the forest with his perfect wife, Sita, instead of getting to become king. The evil, multiheaded demon god—Ravana is plotting to kidnap Sita, to have her as his own. Ravana is successful, but not to worry, the monkey king finds her and they fight a grand war to bring Rama and Sita back together again. And then the story takes a decidedly western turn, and they live happily ever after.

But, they go home and take the throne, people gossip. So, he banishes her to the forest to give birth to and raise twin boys in the wild. Rama and Sita are human incarnations of the gods of goodness and wealth. Now, these are gods I can understand. These are gods that could have lead us right into the mess we live in right now, with their petty jealousies and putting gossip before truth. All I can say is thank the gods of wisdom I'm a UU, so I've at least heard this story.

I've been a UU for almost as long as I've been an adult. Which honestly is not as long as you may think, but it's seems like a long journey. On this leg, I've found you. Here at UUFC, I've found that I have much to learn about faith traditions and what they may have to offer our children and me. I've learned that simplifying complex ideas such as those in the Hindi fairy tale of Rama and Sita into ideas that resonate with our principles opens me to the simplicity and beauty of our faith. Teaching children about these stories and their value in our lives opens the door to loving acceptance of people of different faiths, of different beliefs; it's a chance to help them find the small truths available to all of us. I thank this congregation for opening this door for me, for facilitating my own growth as a UU by allowing me to teach your children.

In India, they pay the compliment, "He's a son like Rama" or "He's a brother like Rama". You'll never hear, "He's a husband like Rama," said as a compliment. To you I will say, "You've been friends as faithful and unswerving as Sita". And for this reason, I'm glad to serve here.

"Getting Your Legislator's Vote" Get Active: Free Advocacy Training

South Carolina's progressive community must unite to more effectively advocate our diverse issues and to stand against our mutual opposition. The South Carolina Equality Coalition is co-sponsoring free advocacy training in an effort to cooperatively and effectively develop communication with our elected officials. We are not only bound by common opposition, but also by the fact that our freedoms and liberties are being eroded, daily, by our representatives. Our movements have the power to form a united front in support of all of our issues.

In order to effectively move our legislature in a positive direction, the South Carolina Equality Coalition is conducting advocacy training to educate people on how to communicate with their elected officials. Dr. John Ruoff, Research Director of South Carolina Fair Share, will conduct the training.

Date: May 5, 2007 **Location:** Unitarian Church

Time: 12 to 2 pm

A New Opportunity for You

Patient care volunteers at Palmetto Health Baptist continue their ministry of compassion, emotional support and direct hands-on care to hospitalized patients. A new Personal Touch Volunteer role provides additional staff assistance and follow-up contact after a patient is discharged. If your interest includes ministering to the sick, giving either direct or indirect assistance, learn more about Personal Touch Volunteers at www.palmettohealth.org, or call Kristin Hill at xxx-xxxx.

If you've never been thrilled to the very edges of your soul
by a flower in spring bloom,
maybe your soul has never been in bloom.
~Audra Foveo

On Saturday, April 28, the UU Coffeehouse presents The Kennedy's

www.kennedysmusic.com

Pete and Maura Kennedy first toured together as part of Nanci Griffith's band, and as the opening act on Nanci's two-month tour of the British Isles. Eight CDs and half a million miles later, they enjoy loyal followings in both the guitar camp and the singer-songwriter set. Featuring Pete on acoustic guitar, electric sitar, and ukulele, and Maura on acoustic guitar and vocals, The Kennedy's tight harmonies, chemistry, and unashamedly idealistic outlook have carved them their own niche in the studio and on the stage.

The UU Coffeehouse is a smoke and alcohol free listening room located at 2701 Heyward Street, the corner of Heyward and Woodrow Streets, in Shandon.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for high school and college students with a reservation request by calling 1-888-849-4224 X 4. Leave your name and the number of tickets you need, and pay at the door. Without reservations, tickets at the door are \$12 and \$7. Children up through 8th grade are free with a paying adult.

Doors open at 7:30 and the music begins at 8:00.

For more information, visit our website at uucoffeehouse.org

UU Coffeehouse May 5, *The Green Light Tour*

A month-long national tour to help raise awareness about global warming

<http://myspace.com/greenlighttour>

<http://myspace.com/jenwoodhouse>

<http://myspace.com/lesliesanazaro>

<http://myspace.com/language room>

<http://jenwoodhouse.com>

Listen to great music while you help raise awareness about global warming by attending the **Green Light Tour's Columbia concert on Saturday, May 5** at the Unitarian Universalist Coffeehouse.

Alabama-based singer/songwriter Jen Woodhouse, St. Louis-based Leslie Sanazaro, and Austin-based Todd Sapio will be traveling by car visiting 22 cities, starting in Alabama, all the way up the East Coast, into parts of Canada and back down through parts of the Midwest. While touring they will be measuring their CO₂ emissions and to offset that damage, they hope to plant a tree in every city they stop in. Also, they plan on raffling off CFL light bulbs, along with a free CD, to people who sign up their mailing list or buy a ticket to the show.

The Green Light Tour will be documenting their daily travels and post their videos on YouTube.com. They hope to generate more awareness for global warming not only for the people in the cities they will be visiting, but all around the world, as this is a very serious issue that affects us all.

Doors open at 7:30, and the music begins at 8:00 \$10/\$5 advance by leaving a reservation request at 1.888.849.4224 extension 4 or \$12/\$7 at the door Children through 8th grade are free with an adult.

The Green Light Tour's Columbia concert is sponsored jointly by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Columbia and the John Bachman Group of the Sierra Club.

The Unigram

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Columbia
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FAX: (815) 550-4740

Web Page: www.uu.columbia.sc.uua.org

Special Events Line: (888) 849-4224 ext.4

The Mission of our Fellowship is:

- To nurture and respect each other in our spiritual growth and pursuit of meaning,
- To create a welcoming and engaging environment through which we work for positive change in our community and the world.

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Unigram Deadline

The e-mail deadline for the next Unigram is **9:00 p.m., May 6, 2007.**

Please submit articles and announcements for the next issue to UUFC@bigfoot.com
Typed or neatly handwritten copy must be received in the office by 12:15 p.m. the same day.