

AUUF News



AUUF SERVICES • 10:00 A.M.

March 7

“Your Religious Vocation”

Rev. Diana Jordan Allende

A “vocation” is a calling and we often think of religious vocation as a “call to ministry,” or to the priesthood, or other religious orders. But if you are reading this, you are likely a member or regular attender of a religious community, albeit a *liberal* religious community. What’s that about? What mundane and mystical voices have called you into this community? You may be surprised by what counts as “religious.”

March 14

“Life is a Trip”

Annual Women’s Service

Potluck - Board Meeting - Giving Away the Plate

Come along for the ride.

March 21

“Thomas Merton: Poet, Activist, Monk”

Rev. Diana Jordan Allende

Or mystic, best-selling author and teacher. With the publication of his early autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain* in 1948, Thomas Merton captured the hearts and souls of war-weary America. What would cause a young, urbane, sophisticated intellectual to leave the lights of New York City and enter a monastery in rural Kentucky? And what would keep him there?

We’ll consider the uses of silence and solitude as we explore the ever widening circles of Thomas Merton’s thought.

March 28

“Canvass Kick-Off”

Conrad Ross and Jennie Raymond

Come and discuss our future. More inside...

*Community
Lunch Comes
Back South!*

South College, that is. Fine China is located next to the Days Inn, where China Palace once was. Free restaurant parking, buffet dining and within walking distance of campus. First Tuesdays every month. Join fellow UU’s and share a meal. Noon. March 2.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Weekly Events Choir @ 8:30		Diana 1:30-5, & by appt. Yoga @ 5		Diana 1:30-5, & by appt. Meditation @ 6		
↙	1	2 ↘ Comm. Lunch @ 12	3	4 ↘	5 Macho Men @ 7 Jim Photoglo Sundilla @ 7:30	6 Meditation @ 10
7 Always We Begin Again 1 -2:30 Busch Cnt.	8	9	10	11	12	13 Spring Work Party!! 8 till Noon
14 Potluck Board Meeting	15	16	17	18 Cotton Boll Guild Speaker @ 7	19 Feminista @ 8:30	20 Meditation @ 10 News Deadline
21 Until It’s Gone 1 -2:30 Busch Cnt. Humanist Dinner @ 6	22	23	24	25	26 Mike Fambro- Sundilla @ 7:30	27
28 Canvass Kick-Off						Please see inside pages for more info about events.

Diana's COLUMN

In 1985, I moved out of a ten-room Victorian house in Social Circle, Georgia, and into a four-room house with a screen porch in Decatur—thus to facilitate my return to college as a working, single mom. Moving day was, as moving days are, bittersweet. Sons, Gabriel and Noah, who were 9 and 7, looked on skeptically as the moving van was loaded. Sure, they were moving closer to their cousins, but this rambling old house was the only one they had known—or at least the only one they remembered. A light rain began to fall as the truck pulled away and we loaded the car for the 45-minute drive to our new home. Though not a long-distance move, it is said that even a move across town can be traumatic. We were leaving a very small, semi-rural town that had grown up around cotton mills and the railroad for a still-sleepy-back-then county seat in a community that bordered the city of Atlanta. Agnes Scott College and the DeKalb County Courthouse anchored downtown Decatur.

On the little screened porch of the new place, Gabriel and Noah were soon unpacking a box of their favorite toys, able to be outdoors even in the rain. Inside was a maze of boxes and ill-placed furniture, but there on the porch they started to feel at home among their favorite things. Clearly we were all going to be much cozier here, and as I passed by, arms loaded, one of the boys noted, “I think this *is* going to be better.” I breathed a sigh of relief. Going back to school was my dream, not theirs. I appreciated their adaptability, their willingness to see new possibilities despite considerable downsizing.

In 1985, I don't think I knew anything about global warming, peak oil, or reducing one's carbon footprint so I can't explain why I wrote in my journal then that this move felt like a *moral* choice, not simply a practical one. The old Victorian house had been expensive to heat, and there were too many rooms that went unused. A lot of time and energy went into “property management,” and I longed for smaller, more manageable space, space that would require us to be more selective about acquiring “things” in general. Over the long haul, the house in Decatur proved to have problems that the seller had failed to disclose or had outright concealed, but my basic intuitive leaning toward a philosophy of “enough” was sound. I wanted to be free to study and think, not simply cope with a perennial roof leak as I had done in Social Circle.

I think about that move these days from the warmth and coziness of my 700-square-foot home here in Opelika. Today I am better able to connect the dots and articulate why, for me, small is beautiful. And workable. And wonderful. I read the statistics that indicate the average size of a new home going from under 1,000 square feet in the '50s to over 2,400 today, and I give thanks for my affection for small spaces. I find it interesting that it's an affinity to which I keep returning.

Lately I have perused old journals and find that there are several themes that have called to me persistently—consistently—at least over my adult years. A desire to live a contemplative life, coupled with a desire to “build the common good,” as one of our hymns says. There is something reassuring to me about the consistency, even if many of those desires have yet to come to full fruition.

What about you? What themes have been fairly constant in your life, and to what extent have you been able to make them manifest? Perhaps it is the cold winter and now spring fever that has me mentally “flying forward while looking back,” a concept captured in the African word *Sankofa*. We can always learn from the past. And in looking back, it's important to keep bringing forward that which is most worthy.

Happy Spring!

Love, Diana

RE NOTES

from 4-7 Class

Our Toolbox of Faith continues to grow. The kids have learned about conviction and courage in the person of Universalist itinerant preacher Eliza Tupper Wilkes. They have explored the qualities of water in connection with the Spirit of Life. While discussing the Democratic process, they learned that consensus is not easy but ostacizing a dragon is kind of fun! They learned about the importance of self-expression while spelling out words with their bodies. We used a mirror to understand the importance of reflection in our lives, and pounded nails into a board to experience the meaning of strength in our faith.

As the year contintues, I am sure that their UU faith will deepen in understanding and in practice. Greg and Ken and I are all enjoying sharing the teaching of these great kids.

Terry Rodriguez



The Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is a community dedicated to affirming a reverence for life and enriching the spiritual lives of its members. Here we honor the one and the many; here we welcome a diversity of thoughts, beliefs and passions; here we speak without fear and listen with open hearts. We gather to care for one another, share our burdens and joys, and celebrate life's passages. Strengthened by this fellowship, we bring a liberal religious presence to our larger community and work for a safe and just world.

Office Hours—
Tuesdays and
Thursdays
1:30-5:00 p.m.
and by appt.
Time off: Mondays

**Diana's office is
in the lower
level of the
Busch Center,
most easily
reached by
walking down
the sidewalk and
entering through
the back door.
Do stop by!**

Living Green, Living Well

The Green Raven

(o o)
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Garden the 'Burbs!

Many prophets of doom (like your raven) are telling us that our children will be the first generation that does not live as long as its parents. We also hear that the next generation will not be as prosperous, and that they already know they will not be as prosperous. Furthermore the safety nets that were established by our parents may not last to catch future generations who need them. Social Security and Medicare for all old folks may go the way of welfare for the poor.

Folklore teaches that our elders always think the world is "going to the dogs." The kids are not as obedient, the winters not as cold, the fruits don't taste as good. As we age we seem to cover the past with a pleasant patina that provides more nostalgia than hope. So that is probably a factor.

Still, I think there is some reality to what the doom-sayers predict. We are putting a lot of poisons in our air, water and soil. People striving to outdo the Joneses in greenness of lawn put on more fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides than farmers use in growing all our conventional crops. Too bad it is green lawns and not green living. Potions that poison plants and animals are not likely to leave people unscathed. Artificial fertilizers may be almost as poisonous as the intended killers over the long haul. Certainly the fertilizers are desperately destructive to the oceans, creating dead spots at the outlets of many of our rivers, not just in the U.S., but everywhere fertilizers are used.

Why can't we stop? Ignorance? Stubbornness? Competition with the neighbors? Do we have a world full of Luddites who cannot acknowledge that anyone might know better than they do?

But pollution may be too slow, too minor to cause problems for coming generations.

If global warming proceeds as it now looks almost certain to do, the average life expectancy may be very much reduced. Even if we save some lands with levees and pumps we may have farmlands that are too hot and water that is too scarce (or salty) to keep our food supplies going. Not a pleasant prospect.

You might want to take some time off from the TV and such, dig up a sunny spot of lawn and learn to grow some of your own food. I see in many



magazines tales of "urban artists" who are growing veggies on their front lawns. It is the one bright spot in our pattern of suburban sprawl: many of us have sunny front lawns only kept out of food production by reversible, ill-advised deed restrictions or zoning. Peppers are handsome on the lawn, and a bite from a fresh, homegrown tomato will pay for a big rumpus with your neighborhood association!

Garden the suburbs! Teach your kids.

-Chip Busch

Sharing the Plate-Follow-up

In February we shared our plate with the UU Ministry for Earth. I'm pleased to announce that we collected \$250.00 towards their matching grant. I've heard back from them already and they are very appreciative. They are making good progress on raising the necessary funds and so, the AUUF and other UU congregations can look forward to new environmentally focused resources for worship and religious education in the coming months.

As a former UUMFE Board of Directors member, I too would like to thank you for your support.

-Sharon Roberts

AROUND THE HODGEDEROSA

"Share and save the world." Maitreya

The recent snow was a wonderful sight, wasn't it? Snow adds a protective blanket of insulation for plants and even animals if you consider the critters working tirelessly away beneath the surface of the soil. Snow "fluffs" the soil, too, because it melts slowly and swells the ground whereas rainfall tends to pack the soil. Though the chickens did not much care for pecking their treats from its depths, the snow added nutrients to the soil everywhere that it fell. What are the nutrients that come with snow? Nitrogen, for one, in some amount, collected from the air as moisture particles form. Large flakes, or large amounts, some say, usually carries more nitrogen than rainfall. Rain falls on the ground and quickly runs off in excess amounts that can't be

absorbed. Snow, on the other hand, lies on the ground and melts slowly, giving the ground a chance to absorb as much as possible, even deep into the subsoil. Snow also contains sulfur in addition to nitrogen, and both elements are more abundant in snow than in the past. Why? Acid rain, according to many scientists. Snow also carries oxygen, hydrogen, and other gasses that we breathe with every breath. Although we may not need them for nutrition, plants do.

While snow melt adds some of the “N” in N-P-K, we do not get enough of it in the South to make a huge difference. Aunt Ida always said, though, “It’s like the old lady who spit into the ocean; every little bit helps.” Alas, it seems that Americans have maintained an insatiable appetite for nitrogen. According to Tom Philpott at Grist.org, the U.S., with 5 percent of world population, consumes almost 12 percent of the planet’s annual synthetic nitrogen production. In addition to the ecological footprint to which we as consumers contribute via petroleum usage and associated air pollution, our food---or at least the beginnings of much of it---comes as much from Trinidad and Tobago, Canada, Russia, and The Ukraine as it does from Mexico, where the fuel used in the synthesis of nitrogen fertilizer is cheaper. What is the fuel source? Why, natural gas, of course! And though the U.S. ammonia industry has recently touted a new technology for making ammonia---gasified coal and gasified petroleum coke---it is not likely that it will take off in the near future. Okay, good enough. Ergo, America will continue to import much of its nitrogen from places that have more lax environmental regulation and cheaper labor. Sound familiar? And if that news isn’t enough, consider that a consolidation of only four transnational corporations---CF Industries, Koch Nitrogen, PCS Nitrogen Fertilizer and Terra Industries---command 72 percent of the ammonia produced in the U.S. When considering where our food comes from, remember that much of it starts way further than we might have thought, with more environmental damage than we thought, and spreading more profit\$ than we thought to those already literally making a killing at the expense of consumers.

So, as you head out to plant those flowers and shrubs, poke those spuds in the ground and start those Spring greens in the garden patch, remember to give it all you’ve got to divine a little more snowfall this March. Help prove Aunt Ida right!

-Tom Hodges

Taking up Chip’s Challenge to “Garden the ‘Burbs”

Hmm... Ok, I’m going to take up Chip’s challenge to “Garden the “Burbs”. As many of you know I live in one of those silly suburbs where the whole point of owning a home seems to be how much you can sell it for rather than on the fact that **it’s your home!**

Well, my project this spring is to landscape with veggies. I’m sneaking them in where ever I can. Chip’s right about peppers. They are a cute plant and hey, nothing beats sweet potatoes for a great border. I’ve got herbs too. Last year I planted horseradish. Lovely plant but apparently very invasive so I’m trying it in a container this spring. If you’d like to suggest any other veggies I should “hide” in the front yard, send them my way!

I’m not ready to just forget the lawn all together, so I’m going to work on it too. I’ve been doing a bit of study about how to grow a green, organic and safe lawn without chemicals. I’m going to use corn gluten as a pre-emergent and then add some compost. Oh, and yeah, the soil test. I’ll do that first and find out what the lawn actually needs. Finally, I’m going to mow it high.

Wish me luck. I’ll keep you posted on my progress.

-Sharon Roberts

Lydia’s up to the Challenge Too!



Here’s Lydia Hodges mowing around the tomatoes in their front yard last summer! And, look closely. No motor. She’s using a reel push mower. Now that’s Gardening the ‘Burbs!



Mid-South District News

SOUTHLAND – WHAT’S THAT?!

The larger UU family is looking at new ways of linking congregations to each other and to the resources they need to be the best they can be. We’re “thinking outside the box!”

One outside-the-box idea is the creation of ‘regions,’ geographic linkages that will connect congregations and districts to open up opportunities for wider communication and sharing. It’s cool! And it creates “Southland!”

The “Southland” Region includes Mid-South, Thomas Jefferson, Florida and Southwest Districts – a wide swath that links over 200 UU congregations, their leaders, and the UUA and District Staff folks who serve them.

One of the first projects of the Southland Region is the creation of “leadership schools” that will be open to congregation leaders (lay and professional) across the four districts. Another initiative is the coordination of a single calendar that will make many events, including webinars, in all four districts accessible to congregation leaders across the region. Yet another Southland project is the training and linking of ‘congregation consultants’ who can serve congregations as extensions of staff.

To make all of these good opportunities visible a web site – www.uusouthland.org – is set up!

Visit www.uusouthland.org to view the calendar, to find out about the Southland UU Leadership Experience (at The Mountaintain in August), and to read about other news and opportunities!

Eunice Benton, Executive Director
Mid-South District, UUA

In the Loop

The AUUF Board has been very busy on a number of items this year and I want to give you a quick status update. If you have any questions, feel free to contact any Board member or me.

The property on Thach adjacent to the Fellowship is still for sale. We are working to establish a bid price for the land. The Finance Committee has started to plan a capital campaign that will start in earnest once the size of the campaign is determined. Preliminary work to assess further the property for environmental hazards has started. We hope to have an informal appraisal of the property’s value by March 1.

Dan Thompson, a Starr King seminarian, has proposed volunteering his time for a nine-month, full-time ministerial internship for the 2010-2011 year. A subcommittee of the Board has met with Dan. At the February Board meeting, a motion to extend Dan an internship offer was passed. At the time of this writing, a formal offer letter is being drafted.

Finally, at the February Board meeting, the potential for AUUF sponsorship of Village Montessori School was discussed. There were numerous questions to be answered and questions to be resolved, thus this topic will be on future Board meeting agendas.

Again, feel free to contact any Board member or me if you have questions about any issue before the Board.

Carl Hudson
President of AUUF Board

It soon will be Canvass time at AUUF, a time when we consider our needs of the spirit and of the community, a time when members, as well as friends, commit to give the time and energy and financial help that is required to keep our Fellowship vibrant and growing.

We will be canvassing members for our upcoming budget year 2010-2011. And we will be seeking volunteers to help with the canvass. But first we have scheduled a Town Meeting after the service on February 28th at 12:15 to review the current budget, to invite input from members about what might be added or changed. This is an opportunity for members to make known their desires or simply to review the process. The information gathered is reviewed by the Finance Committee and submitted to the Board. The canvass is our major effort to establish the yearly budget to gain your pledge and to support the AUUF. Conrad Ross and Jennie Raymond are heading the Canvass Committee.

Let us celebrate the joy and strength we find here at AUUF through a generous commitment to its support.

Canvass Kick-Off 2010-2011



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Reminder: The deadline for newsletter items is the 20th of the month.

Spring WORK PARTY!

We've got some important Spring chores to complete at AUUF on (and before!) **Saturday, March 13**. Here's the plan: Pop Koehler and other B&G guys are going to install new flooring in the Fellowship bathrooms and hallway. During the week beforehand, we will need 3 or so volunteers to clear those areas. The floor will be done on Friday, so on Saturday, we will need people then to move things back.

Meanwhile, we plan to wash the exterior of the Fellowship and the RE building using pump up garden sprayers and a bleach/water mixture. We also need to clean the RE stairs/deck, AND wash algae from the base of the buildings. Don't worry, I have terrific instructions from painter John Ernst. ~Terry Rodriguez, B&G

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· We Can Do This!! Look for the signup sheet soon. ·
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SCHEDULES

Playground Volunteers		Greeters	
March 7	Jack and Suzanne Walker	March 7	Leigh Jacobson & Claire Crutchley
March 14	Darrell Crutchley, Carl Hudson	March 14	Terry Rodriguez, Ken Walters
March 21	Noriko Aoi, Temesgen Samuel	March 21	Peter and Emily Livant
March 28	Shannon and Penny Price	March 28	Ila Callaway & ?
Storytellers		Angels	
March 7	Leigh Jacobson	March 7	Leslie Moland & ?
March 14	Women's Service	March 14	The Walkers & ?
March 21	Ila Callaway	March 21	? & ?
March 28	TBA	March 28	Laura Kloberg, Janice Ross