

FEBRUARY 2003 BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Allegheny ADVOCATE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ALLEGHENY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2

Christianity & the Religion of Jesus: Are They the Same? The Legacy of William Ellery Channing

Rev. Art McDonald

For many Unitarians in our UU movement (Unitarians and Universalists, two distinct denominations, merged in 1961), a key historical symbol in the nineteenth century is Ralph Waldo Emerson, a major theologian and literary figure in U.S. religious history. William Ellery Channing, though more significant in Unitarian roots, has not always enjoyed the same stature. At this moment in our UU history, Channing is making somewhat of a comeback, especially among those who feel close to the Christian tradition, i.e., the religion inspired by Jesus. Art will discuss this resurgence. As part of today's Service, there will be a simple sharing of communion – bread, wine, juice, which will be offered for those wishing to participate.

FEBRUARY 9

The Relationship of Faith and the Struggle for Justice

Chris Moore, WQED

As part of our celebration of Black History Month, we are delighted to have television and radio personality, Chris Moore with us today to reflect upon his own work to educate and advocate for equal rights and justice for the African-American community.

FEBRUARY 12 7:30 PM

Communion Service

Reader: Lawrence Wray

Monthly Service that reconnects us to our community of faith and action.

FEBRUARY 16

A Personal Faith Journey: Recovering Roots

Jean Kablack

Jean Kablack, the daughter of long-time Allegheny member, Shirley Nusser (now deceased), and a member of Temple Sinai, a Reformed Synagogue in Pittsburgh, will share with us her faith journey as connected to Unitarian Universalism through her Jewish mother, Shirley, and her decision to explore these Jewish roots by joining Temple Sinai. Through Jean's great efforts, and her personal commitment to Tikkun O'lam (repairing the world), Temple Sinai has recently joined PIIN.

FEBRUARY 23

From Emerson to King

Rev. Art McDonald

Having dealt with a major Unitarian figure of the early nineteenth century, William Ellery Channing earlier in the month, Art will talk about Emerson's legacy on democracy, race and protest seen through the eyes of Dr. King and others. Art is indebted for his ideas on a book by Anita Haya Patterson, entitled *From Emerson to King*.

**Sunday Services at
Allegheny Unitarian
Universalist Church
begin at 11 o'clock.
All are welcome!**

BOARD BUSINESS

Kathy Kozachenko

Planning For Our Future

In January, the Board of Trustees met with our Ohio Meadville District Consultant, Rod Thompson, to learn about the UUA's recommended procedure for moving forward in search of a new minister/director of social advocacy.

We face the challenge of finding an individual who will meet our needs and will enhance our journey both in spirit and in committed action. The process that the UUA sets out is a step by step process which begins by us asking ourselves who we are, what is our purpose, what do we want our minister to do. Then we create a packet which describes ourselves to interested applicants, gives them the answers to the above questions and tries to convey a sense of who we are. We form a search committee to assess and interview interested applicants and to make a recommendation to the congregation.

The process is thorough and deliberate and can take a year to complete. In many congregations an interim minister is hired for a year, so that the congregation can take its time searching and the tasks of the minister are still performed. To find an interim minister, the Board can work with the District Consultant to put out the call, as well as advertise by other means. People who choose to do Interim Ministry generally fall into

three categories: those who are professional Interim Ministers; those who are newly ordained; and those who are in transition or taking a break between long-term ministerial commitments.

The Board is recommending to the congregation that we proceed with the steps needed to hire an interim and to begin the search for a new minister/director of social advocacy. By the time this is printed, the mid-year meeting will have occurred and hopefully we will have input from the congregation.

In conjunction with revising and defining our long-term goals, the Board would like us as a congregation to really tackle the questions of who we want to be, what is our purpose, what are our commitments – in terms of our children, our social advocacy, our outreach. To have meaningful dialogue, we will begin by meeting in small groups in 'living room' type settings. If you did not receive a copy of the time and location of these February meetings at the mid-year meeting, a copy will be mailed or e-mailed to you. Please sign up for one of these discussion groups – our best effort requires the ideas, the concerns and the energy of each of us!

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IN THE CHURCH

What We're About

On Sunday, February 23, at 12:30, the Membership Committee is offering its bi-monthly introduction to UU and Allegheny for newer folks who might have questions about UUism or our own church. This session is open to anyone, new or not so new, and will be conducted by Jane Dirks, Lynn Glorieux and Art McDonald.

Guest at Your Table

If you haven't already, please turn in your *Guest at Your Table* collection box for the UU Service Committee. Last Call!!!

Poetry Jam Session

This February's Coffee House features Allegheny Poet's (still living) and the talents of community presenters in an exciting, eloquent and open mike **Poetry Jam Session**. Lawrence Wray, Kathy Kozachenko and other poets will share home-spun inspirations and thought-provoking insights as we sip on free and delicious coffee, nibble on home-made bake goods, and embrace the warmth of our family, friends and neighbors at this monthly event. Hope to see you there! For more information, please call Diane McMahan at 412-322-0132.

Hooray for AUUC!

After paying our annual Fair Share dues to the Unitarian Universalist Association, we received a lovely note from an assistant in the office which read: "Thank you for your Fair Share contribution. We truly value your long-standing history of being an Honor Society. Yours in Faith, Julie Lichtman"

We can be proud of our commitment to our denomination.

Thanks, Jesse

We received a letter recently from UUA President, Rev. Bill Sinkford, that Minister Emeritus, Jesse Cavileer, made his eighth gift to the UUA Charitable Gift Annuity Fund. Under the terms of the agreement, Allegheny will receive 50% of the full market value of the gift at his death. Jesse has given a lot to Allegheny and the North Side through his 17-year ministry, as demonstrated by his award at the December Capital Campaign Energizer. He continues to give now through his financial contributions. We are blessed. Maybe others would consider doing something like this.

Forum On The War With Iraq

Thanks to some good advertising and publicity, we are happy to report that over 50 people participated in our Friday evening forum on the impending war on Iraq. Our good friend, Jules Lobel, was eloquent in his presentation on such of the legal issues around the potential war and human rights issues. On Friday, January 17, we hosted the direct action/civil disobedience training for the upcoming anti-war activities in late January. **Don't forget out weekly vigils from 12-1 on Saturdays in front of the church; we average 15 people per week.**

GREEN PERSPECTIVE

Learn About the PRC

The Pennsylvania Resources Council is a not-for-profit citizen's organization founded in 1939. PRC serves as a link between industry, government and grass-roots organizations. It initiates the dialogue between these groups to seek solutions to environmental problems.

PRC is recognized as a state and national leader in waste reduction and recycling, and it also works to protect the land's scenic beauty by fighting litter and visual pollution. PRC introduced the LITTERBUG, in the 1940s, and played a major role in bringing mandatory recycling to municipalities in Pennsylvania.

Some of PRC's programs are:

- Environmental Living Program – teaches individuals how to change the way they live to help reduce waste and protect the environment;
- Business for a Green America Program – provides an action plan for businesses to include environmental protection in everyday practices and decisions;
- Community education – provides easy-to-understand publications and programs, including materials for educators;
- Healthy Home Program – helps families identify and deal with health hazards such as lead, radon and carbon monoxide.

PRC staff members provide a list of *What to Recycle and Where, in Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh* at the back of the Verizon Yellow Pages.

PRC has offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Their Pittsburgh office is at 64 South 14th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203. You can call them at 412-488-7490. Their web site is www.prc.org.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Kris Thomas, DRE

Upcoming Activities

On February 16, we will have our annual St. Valentine's Day celebration for the children, during RE class time. On this date, we will also have our intergenerational Valentines exchange. Please bring a valentine, either homemade or store bought, for each of our 30 children. Their valentines bags will be placed in the back of the sanctuary, where you can deposit your valentines, and the children will pick them up during coffee hour.

Also, bring your favorite board games and some snacks or drinks to share, and join us for our annual intergenerational **games night** on March 1, 7:00 PM. Please see Kris Thomas, Lynn Yocum, or Kim Winbush for more information.

Remember your valentines for the exchange with the RE children on 6 February.

This section is suppressed for web viewing. Contact the Church for inclusion on our mailing list.

FROM THE COMMUNITY

“How can I keep from singing?” The choir is always looking for new members. Please join us on Sunday mornings at 9:30.

NCM Night at the Theatre

On Tuesday, February 11, at the O’Reilly Theatre, there is a benefit for NCM and South Hills Interfaith Ministries. It involves a performance of *Man of La Mancha*. There will be a reception and silent auction at 6:30 PM, followed by the performance at 8:00. The cost is \$70. Any Takers?

YM&WAHA Program

We are delighted that our YM&WAHA friends are conducting a cooking school on Saturdays, from 9:00–1:00. If you want to know more about it, call Janice Parks at 322-4008.

Organic Vegetables Co-Op

There is a group of North Siders who work with Kretschman’s Farms to bring organic vegetables to the North Side for 22 weeks of the year. Organic eggs and chickens are also available. A sign-up sheet can be found on the bulletin board. Web site: users.stargate.net/~kmann.

UU Winter Institute

Why not attend Winter Institute at Salt Fork State Park, February 14–17th, to hike, swim, play, etc. Contact Dana or Linda, 216-397-0613 or dmbjork@aol.com.

MUSIC NOTES

Kiki Barley

Choir Update

The choir has been active in the last few months and is working on some interesting music. Thanks to DZ, we were able to obtain the beautiful *Sacred Stillness* piece directly from the composer, John Becker, even though it is unpublished. We will be singing it again soon. The choir is always looking for new members, so if your New Year’s resolutions include any thoughts on releasing the artistic and creative parts of your nature, please join us for a practice Sunday mornings at 9:30.

LOOKING AT OUR PAST

Over the years, our ministers have initiated projects and programs that touch the community – and used the great resource that is our church building. One such project was inaugurated by Rev. John E. Evens at the beginning of his time here in 1949.

The program was called *Hobby House*, and children from the neighborhood were invited to the Sunday School room (Founders Hall) to “make simple things of clay, wood, paper and woven goods.” This Saturday afternoon craft program sometimes attracted thirty-five children. It was reported that the parents of these neighborhood children were very pleased with the project.

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SERVING THE CONGREGATION

Greeters

February 2

Linda LeFever and Steve Wertheim

February 9

Martha and Walter Brethauer

February 16

Andy Schwarz and Martha Cullens

February 23

Beth Halliday and Richard Graham

Refreshments

February 2

Melanie McDonald and Heather Neill

February 9

Pat Downey and Ann Sitrin

February 16

Betty Schwarz and Jane Schwarz

February 23

Linda LeFever and Lynn Glorieux

What a Calling!

In ministerial circles, special language is used for what happened between me and Allegheny UU Church some 11½ years ago. We would not call it a hiring but rather a “calling,” i.e., that many years ago I received a call from the then congregational members (at least most of them! As I’ve shared before with members of the congregation, one member back in 1991 said to me that it was a bad decision for the congregation to call me; a waste of good money). The word calling is related to the notion that ministry is a vocation not just a job. In traditional theological thinking, ministry is fundamentally a vocation from God as, for example, the Hebrew prophets received in order to become mouthpieces of God to the people of Israel. Nevertheless, vocation is not a word or notion that needs to be confined to such “professions” as ministry; I think many people have vocations to be doctors, social workers, artists, etc.

At any rate, not very long ago a friend shared a story that an acquaintance of his said he would love being a minister and preparing sermons to preach every Sunday, but would be a lot less interested in the ministry if he had to deal with people! Maybe I really do have a vocation because (for the most part!), I like giving sermons and dealing with people – and social, community organizing, and pastoral counseling. Furthermore, I often feel privileged in the way I am invited into people’s lives through this calling. I had such an experience last week when Tammy Taucher and Nancy Karpinski asked me to write a letter of support and attend a judicial hearing with them and their family members to support, and potentially testify, to their desire to have Nancy named as an adoptive co-parent for Jacob. What a treat. What a privilege. What a victory for the cause of human rights. Only Nancy and Tammy were asked to testify by the judge, and it was such a privilege and joy to hear each of them talk about their 20-year relationship and commitment, how they were best friends and how Jacob was now such a light in their lives. According to Kathryn Hans-Greco, their lawyer, and a member of First Unitarian Church, theirs was the first case heard and approved in Allegheny County since the recent

Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling on second parent adoptions. It reminded me of the time, several years back, when Janice Anderson and Patricia Downey went through a similar process as the first such couple under previous rulings. Old friends of Allegheny, Kate and Claudia Neely also were part of this struggle to make families whole in our region. What blessings that I, as minister, and the congregation as religious community, have been able to be part of these ongoing struggles for human justice and liberation. Thanks to all of these women, and their lawyers, for their courage and love.

Dr. King and Black History Month

On Sunday, January 19, in memory of the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., I had the opportunity to experience another joy in the ministry as I and my good friend, Rev. Johnnie Monroe, swapped pulpits, as an attempt to bring greater interaction in Pittsburgh between congregations of differing cultural backgrounds. When I met with Johnnie a few weeks back to plan this arrangement, he asked me if Allegheny is an all-white congregation. Pretty much so, I muttered, somewhat sheepishly, always wishing I could answer that we were a thoroughly multi-cultural, multi-ethnic religious body. Well, Johnnie replied, I’ll be speaking to an all white congregation and you’ll be speaking to an all black church! That’s the way it is. Maybe someday it will be different, but, as I’ve/we’ve discussed many times over my nearly 14 years as a friend/member/advocacy director/minister at Allegheny, thoroughly integrated congregations in any denomination are still pretty rare in Pittsburgh or anywhere else. I asked Johnnie what he thought it would take to integrate a congregation, if, indeed, that was the congregation’s goal? He replied that several years ago a white Presbyterian church asked him the same question and his response was to bring in an African-American minister/leader and make sure (s)he has equal status as the current minister of European decent. In his mind, that was really the only way most congregations would have a chance to integrate.

At any rate, years ago I came to the conclusion, with the help of many local African-American friends and theologians such as UU Dr. Bill Jones, that the real issue was not integrated congregations so much, but any/all congregations working in the community to overcome racism and to do organizing and advocacy on issues that affect the African-American community. For that reason, I've tried to involve the congregation in a number of efforts over the years that involve the black community – One Voice Against Racism, The Black and White Reunion, The Young Men & Women's African Heritage Association, Northside Tenants for Fair Housing and PIIN. In each of these relationships, we've worked on issues, provided space and education, and developed rich relationships. Such work and relationships have not always been easy or successful, but I think each has been a good decision and has squarely placed Allegheny on the side of justice for our sisters and brothers of color. I hope others in the congregation can say something to that effect as well. Though I believe there have been advances in our country on acknowledging and partially overcoming the devastating effects of racism, the recent debacle with Senator Trent Lott and struggle over affirmative action regarding the university of Michigan's admission policies, tells us that we have much work to do.

Through our relationships with persons of color, I believe we create the opportunity to come down on the side of justice and racial equality.

Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network

Our four Task Forces – Youth Recreation, Education, Civil Rights and Economic Equity – are working hard to focus our issues and get commitments from public officials to make our city and county more responsive to the needs of its less well-off residents. We are committed to a major public meeting for **Thursday, February 20, 7:00–8:30 at Wesley Center AME Zion Church, 2701 Centre Avenue.** Greg Dietz, Jeanne Zang and I would like to have 35 AUUCers at that gathering. It is so important that we have a big showing in order to demonstrate the strength of PIIN and to encourage us all in this difficult, painstaking struggle to bring justice to the community. We have a sign-up

sheet and we would ask that you put your name on it and try to commit. We are working on having the Governor there, as well as many local figures. We may go to the wire getting commitments and nailing down our issues. Stay tuned.

Anti-War Efforts

There is a tremendous coalition building here in Pittsburgh to oppose the potential war against Iraq. As you read this the regional convergence of January 24–26 will be over, but the activities to oppose the policy will surely continue and, hopefully, grow. Even the polls, which we all take with some amount of skepticism, seem to be changing by the week. And, it is clear, the U.S.

Administration still has almost no support for its bellicose position. Local religious leaders have drafted a document to be forwarded to President Bush in opposition to the war. Please consider signing it. The document can be found on the table in the Emerson Room.

Homelessness and Doing Right

Most of you are aware that there is an attempt on the part of some city officials to pass legislation which would prohibit religious institutions from doing certain service projects involving the homeless without getting permission from the city. Such an ordinance is already in effect in other cities, e.g., Albany, N.Y. Nevertheless, a downtown Albany church decided to open a program without seeking such permission, as it viewed the legislation as an infringement on its ability to exercise its ministry to the neediest. Read about this case on the bulletin board downstairs. Thanks to DZ for this “hometown” report.

Death Penalty Commutations

Before leaving office, Governor Ryan, a conservative Republican from Illinois, commuted all death penalty sentences because he was of the view that the process is so deeply flawed. This is a major victory for anti-death penalty activists. Although his decision may be challenged by the newly-elected governor, it seems to some of us that there is momentum building to re-think death penalty policies in the U.S.

Peace and Blessings to all, Art



**Sign-up for the PIIN
public meeting on
20 February. Let's get
fifty folks from
Allegheny!**

CONTACTS

The *Allegheny Advocate* is published monthly (except August) by Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church. Submissions must be received by the third Friday of the month preceding publication. Contributions or inquiries may be directed to Donald Zeilman

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Universalist Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church
1110 Resaca Place
Pittsburgh PA 15212

February 2003

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 Anti-War rally at church — Noon Chinese New Year
2 Choir 9:30 a.m. Giant Eagle certificate sign-up	3 Fund Raising 6:00 Board of Trustees 7:00 p.m. NA 7:00 p.m.	4 Program Committee 7:30 p.m.	5 Seminar: <i>Your Money or Your Life</i> 7:30 p.m.	6	7	8 Anti-War rally at church — Noon
9 Choir 9:30 a.m. Finance 9:30 a.m. G.E. cert. delivery	10 Women's Group CNNC Meeting 7:00 p.m. Arch Ct NA 7:00 p.m.	11 RE Committee 7:30	12 Communion Service 7:30 p.m. 	13 PIIN Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. Wesley Center AME Zion	14 St. Valentine's Day Newsletter Deadline!! Winter Institute	15 Anti-War rally at church — Noon <i>The Down Under</i> Coffee House 7:30 p.m.
16 Choir 9:30 a.m. St. Valentine Celebration and exchange (RE)	17 Presidents' Day NA 7:00 p.m.	18	19	20 Shelter Meal PIIN Public Meeting 7:00 p.m. Wesley Center	21	22 Anti-War rally at church — Noon
23 Choir 9:30 a.m. Member Orientation 12:30	24 House Comm. 6:30 p.m. NA 7:00 p.m.	25	26	27	28	

March 2003

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						1 Anti-War rally at church — Noon
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16 Choir 9:30 a.m. St. Patrick's Day Celebration (RE)	17 St. Patrick's Day NA 7:00 p.m.	18	19	20 Pleasant Valley Shelter Meal	21	22 Anti-War rally at church — Noon
23 Choir 9:30 a.m.	24 NA 7:00 p.m.	25	26	27	28	29 Anti-War rally at church — Noon
30 Choir 9:30 a.m.	31 House Comm. 6:30 p.m. NA 7:00 p.m.					