



HEARTLINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE HEARTLAND UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST DISTRICT • AUTUMN 2003

Extension Works to Meet Changing District Needs

By *Rev. Nana' Kratochvil*,
Extension Committee Chair

The Extension Committee of the Heartland District is being reorganized to meet current realities. The UUMA Extension Department is using all national extension resources to fund and develop new intentionally large congregations. The pilot for this project is a new start in Texas. Districts are now responsible for starting small and medium-sized new congregations, as well as supporting current congregations with their growth projects.

The Heartland Extension Committee has added members and a new chair, **Rev. Dr. Nana' Kratochvil**, of Muskegon. Continuing members are **John Miller**, Louisville; **Steve Scott**, Bowling Green; and **Derek Parker**, Earlham Theological Student sponsored by Epiphany Church in Fenton and serving the Eldorado Church part time. New members are **Jo Ann Mullen**, Lafayette and **Judy Pickett**, Dayton.

New Mission and Vision

The committee met in May to develop mission, vision, and covenant statements to reflect the current needs of the district. They also developed specific plans for the current fiscal year. The first step was to purchase a demographic study of the district and its projected growth hot spots. This study is almost completed. When received, it will help the committee to develop a plan for planting new congregations by FY05.

ChaliceLighter Dates Set

In a recent conference call to discuss ChaliceLighter calls and policy, the committee set deadlines for the coming year. Grant requests for the fall call were due September 1, the committee will

make a decision by October 1, and the call will be submitted by October 15. The respective dates for the winter call are December 1, January 1 and January 15; for the spring call they are March 1, April 1 and April 15.

We are receiving more requests now than in previous years and cannot guarantee that all will be granted. We are developing guidelines to make the process easier for congregations. ♦

Heartland Congregations Welcome New Ministers

By *Mary Andrus-Overley*,
District Executive

Five of our congregations in the Heartland District are welcoming new ministers this fall. New settlements include **Peter Boullata** at **Epiphany Community Church** (Fenton, MI) and the **Rev. Leonetta Bugleisi** at **Paint Creek Church** (Southfield, MI). Interim ministers include the **Rev. Edward Harris** at **UU Congregation of Indianapolis** and the **Rev. David Parke** at **People's Church** (Ludington, MI). **Dennis McCarty** and the **Rev. Doddie Stone** each are providing consulting ministry services to the **UU Church of Columbus, IN**.

In addition to these new starts, the **Rev. Jill Terwilliger** is continuing for a second interim year with **UU Church of East Liberty** (Clarklake, MI), and the **Rev. David Johnson** is continuing for a second interim year with **UU Community Church of Southwest Michigan** (Portage, MI).

We extend our good wishes to all in these new beginnings and continuing transitions. ♦

Medical Costs Fund Invites Your Contribution

Since early July, Heartland District Executive **Mary Andrus-Overley** and the Board have been working to support our office administrator **Barbara Hamilton**, who was diagnosed with breast cancer during what were supposed to be routine medical exams to qualify her for medical insurance. She has no insurance, but it was imperative that she undergo surgery, which was Aug. 4, and begin chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

Our emotional support and the quick and kind offers of volunteer office help received from UU Church of Indianapolis have helped Barbara cope with her difficult situation, but the most important support we can give her right now is financial. She has been told to expect the costs to total from \$100,000 to \$200,000.

Everyone in the Heartland District is invited to contribute to a medical costs fund authorized by the District Board. We are researching whether these contributions can be counted as tax-deductible contributions to the district. If the contributions are found to be tax-deductible, we will inform all donors.

To contribute to help our valued office administrator meet the crippling debt of treatment for her life-threatening illness, please send a check to the Heartland District Office, 445 N. Pennsylvania St., Suite 330, Indianapolis, IN 46204-1889. Make the check out to Heartland District and indicate that it is for the District Employees Health Care Expenses Fund in the memo line. ♦

Heartline by E-mail!

To receive the *Heartline* newsletter as a PDF file via e-mail (viewable and printable using the free Acrobat Reader utility), contact **Barbara Hamilton** at office@heartlanduu.org.

Comments from Our UU Trustee

By Charles Redd, UUA Trustee

As the Heartland District's representative to the UUA Board of Trustees, I am receiving orientation and doing a lot of reading. **Diane Olson**, UUA Moderator, has appointed me to the Committee on Committees, which has as its responsibility the screening of potential candidates for Board-appointed committees such as the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the Committee on Social Witness. As your Trustee I encourage UUs from the Heartland to consider becoming UUA Committee members, especially people from small churches.

The UUA, as most of you know, continues to grow (the rate is .06%),

which is better than several other religious faiths. Other news that you may have heard is that our income has been reduced, due mostly to a reduction in philanthropic giving because of the economy.

I attended a Committee on Committees meeting from September 15 to 17, and will attend a UUA Board meeting in October. Please let me know if there is anything that I should bring to the attention of the Board (credd@verizon.net). ◆

Mailing List Updates

Please be sure your congregation sends mailing list updates to the District office on a regular basis—all *Heartline* address changes are handled there, *not* by the editor!

Heartline

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Next newsletter deadline: November 1, 2003

Dr. William F. Schulz to speak in Bloomington, IN

Dr. William F. Schulz, Executive Director of Amnesty International and former President of the UUA, will speak at the **UU Church of Bloomington, IN** on **November 22** at 7:30 p.m. His topic will be his forthcoming book *Tainted Legacy: 9/11 and the Ruin of Human Rights*. The presentation is part of the Bloomington's Chalice Series and will include a book signing. Tickets are \$7.00 for regular admission, \$5.00 for students.

A well-known champion of social justice causes who appears often on TV and is widely quoted in the daily press, Dr. Schulz is a frequent and popular speaker on college and university campuses. He is the author of several books, including his latest work: *In Our Own Best Interests: How Defending Human Rights Benefits Us All*. He has been the recipient of many honors and was named one of the World's 365 Most Influential People by the Pray 365 Project and chosen Humanist of the Year in 2000 by the American Humanist Association. ◆

Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

Creating a Just Society—Developing Strategies for Local Action, a regional conference for churches, agencies, organizations, and individuals, will take place in Lafayette, IN on Saturday, Oct. 25, 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. The event is sponsored by the UU Church of Lafayette in cooperation with the UU Service Committee.

Facilitators with expertise in the areas of aging, children, education, the economy, environment, and criminal justice/prison reform will lead small group discussions. Duncan Tanner of the UUSC will conclude the day's activities with an "Organizing for Action" session. John Krull, Executive Director of the Indiana Civil Liberties Union, will be the keynote speaker.

The registration fee of \$15 includes lunch and an afternoon snack. To register and for further information, call 765-742-0460. ◆

News from Our Congregations

*What's happening in your congregation? Send your news to **Tiffany Taylor**, editor, HeartlineNews@aol.com.*

News from Birmingham

Beginning in September, **Birmingham Unitarian Church** (Bloomfield Hills, MI) will be giving away its plate offerings each Sunday to a designated charity or to a specific worthy cause. This action followed the suggestion of visiting UUA consultant **Mike Durall** who stated that generous congregations get generous support from their members. BUC took his message to heart and voted at its Annual Meeting to adopt the recommendation.

BUC is proud to announce that **Celia Thurston**, wife of our minister **Doug Gallager**, is now Dr. Celia Thurston. Dr. Thurston received her final fellowship from the UU Fellowship Committee at the recent General Assembly, where she "walked" in the Service of the Living Tradition. Although affiliated with BUC, Rev. Thurston is a hospital chaplain, serving as Manager of Child and Family at Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit.

Bricks and Mortar in Danville

The **UU Community Church of Hendricks County** (Danville, IN) is wrapping their church in scaffolding in the fall for a long-awaited restoration project to the historic church's exterior. After 120 years of battling the elements, the bricks on the church, now crumbling and in need of attention, will be getting a facelift complete with restored brick and mortar and new guttering. Once the project is completed, hopefully the church building will be set to do battle with the wind and rain for another 120 years.

Miami Valley UU Fellowship Has a New Home

After five years of soul searching, discussion, voting, organizing, fundraising and construction, the **Miami Valley UU Fellowship** (Dayton, OH) held the first service in their new building on Sunday, August 31. The month of August involved a large volunteer effort to complete the packing and moving.

While celebrating the move, members reflected and reminisced about their years in the old building. This building housed the congregation after they split off from the First Unitarian Church of Dayton in the 1950s. Forty years later, they welcomed the members of First Church into a new, merged congregation. The proceeds from the sale of First Church served as the seed money for the new building.

Over the years the building was expanded to the maximum extent possible. There were hundreds of weddings, memorial services, dedications and celebrations. Members separated for summer and then rejoined in the fall, until the church grew to year-round services. The church was lay-led and then minister-led. The building has been patched, painted, planted, fixed, and decorated through ice storms, parking issues, and cottonwood snow. The yard has been full of music, laughter, children, picnics, Maypoles, and celebrations. The congregation truly lived in and with this building. It was difficult to say good-bye.

Members enjoy the new amenities, including ample parking, air conditioning, handicapped access, and enough room to go back to a single service on Sunday morning. Another special feature at this site is the approximately two acres of wetland. Instead of it becoming a deal breaker, the congregation chose to embrace and enhance this endangered habitat. There are plans to reintroduce native plants in order to attract birds and other wildlife.

"Honor the Children" Will Spruce Up RE Space

The **Harbor UU Congregation** (Muskegon, MI) is undertaking a major project to remodel the Religious Education space downstairs. Funded by grants and generous donations from its members and friends, the congregation hopes to spend \$15,000 on improvements such as new carpeting and lighting in the hallway, classrooms, offices, and nursery, and a master dehumidifier.

HUUC has taken a unique approach to asking for donations from the congregation. Instead of just asking for money for the entire project, the Honor the Children committee has asked individuals to provide money or much-needed labor to fund specific tasks. In this way, those tasks that get funded

with the necessary money or labor are assured of being completed. Six of the fifteen projects are already completely funded. The remodeling began August 1. (Bill Wright has the board on which the projects are listed. One more project was completely funded last Sunday.) HUUC hopes to complete all tasks by January 1, 2004.

Internship Crosses States

Two congregations that were both founded as Universalist churches in 1859 have joined together to help train a new UU minister. The **UU Church of Muncie, IN** and the **UU Church of New Madison, OH** are working together to create an internship for a UU ministerial student.

Paul Britner, who resides in Richmond, IN and who is a student enrolled in Earlham School of Religion, will be traveling between the two congregations over the next nine months. His internship committee is composed of people from both congregations, and those people will visit each other's congregations several times over the internship. Because New Madison has no full-time minister serving them, the **Rev. Thomas Perchlik** of Muncie will serve as the "senior" supervisor of the internship.

In many ways this is quite a non-standard internship. No one remembers if members of these two congregations have worked together on any project over the past 144 years, but now they are cooperating, sharing money, space and energy, to further the education and training of a new UU minister. Rev. Perchlik reflects that "Perhaps this joint venture will open up possibilities for future ministry or programs that cross state borders and connect our congregations closer to one another." ◆

Take a Spring Tour of Civil Rights Sites

Have you ever wanted to see some of the sites of the civil rights movement—the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma, 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, the store in Money, Mississippi, where Emmett Till allegedly “talked fresh” to a white woman? These sites and many more are included in a tour being offered this spring by the **UU Fellowship of Elkhart, IN**.

The March 27-April 4, 2004 tour has been planned and will be led by the **Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson**, Elkhart’s minister, who was involved in the early stages of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and was the UU minister in Mississippi 1969–84. The tour, by luxury motor coach, will include all admission charges, overnight accommodations, and most meals. Videos on the bus and visits with 1960s activists will supplement the site visits. The tour will begin and end in Nashville, TN.

For full details on cost and schedule, you can go to the Elkhart Fellowship’s web site at www.uufe.org. You can also request a printed version by writing UUFE, P.O. Box 584, Elkhart, IN 46515 or e-mailing judygibson@juno.com. Registration is on a first-come basis with a maximum of 40 spaces. ◆

Heartland District Calendar

Oct 25 “*Creating a Just Society*”
Conference, Lafayette, IN (see p. 3)

Nov 14-16 *Heartland District Board Meeting*

April 2-4, 2004 *Heartland Annual Meeting & Conference, Detroit*

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