



Spring 2006

Heartline

Newsletter of the Heartland Unitarian Universalist District

7th Annual Heartland District Annual Meeting & Spring Conference held in Indianapolis

by Lisa Presley, Interim District Executive

What an exciting Annual Meeting we just had! It was great to get the chance to see some of you, to learn what's going on in your congregations, to attend workshops and worship, to break bread together, and to have conversation about the future of the Heartland.

And it is fitting to do that, too. For as I am here as the Interim District Executive for these two years, it is important to look at who the Heartland is, and who you want to become. (And just in case you're paying attention—yes, the one-year interim period has been extended to two, and I have been asked and agreed to serve for the second year.) It is a betwixt and between time. In the fall the board will have a new search committee up and running, and trying to choose well for the future of the Heartland.

But even beyond that, there is a betwixt and between-ness in Heartland that I'm sure echoes many things happening in our congregations. The shift in how we do things here has not fully taken place. The "pastoral" model of both Ohio Valley and Michigan, where you expected the District Executive to always be the one who came in answer to your calls—a daunting and impossible task—is migrating to a "program" model, where services and programs are offered by a variety of people—an exciting possibility that builds on what can be done—and yet that migration has not fully taken place. The teams of individuals who were trained in small church consulting, conflict engagement, transitions, and other things have diminished in size and participants to the point where some of them are not functioning in the way designed. Recruitment and training needs to be done—if this is

(continued on Page 2.....)



*Angela Merkert
Annual Meeting Keynote Speaker*



*UU in Training
UU Church of East Liberty
Clarklake, MI*

Photos in this issue of the Heartline were taken during the Heartland District Annual Meeting & Spring Conference held in Indianapolis, IN on April 7-8, 2006.

Our volunteer photographer, Lori Stone Sirtosky from UU Church of Indianapolis, has made these, and more, available on the district website at www.heartlanduu.org.



*Barb Hadden, DRE
St. John's Unitarian Church, Cincinnati
joins the Banner Parade*

7th Annual Heartland District...*(continued from Page 1)*

what is decided should be the face of the Heartland. And our congregations need to know that members of these consultant teams are not "second rate," and that they are not being disrespected if a talented, trained and efficient lay person comes to work with them on their issues.

For as I shared with delegates at the Annual Meeting, the image and understanding of what it means to be of the Heartland has not taken full root in our congregations and individuals in the Heartland. Individuals join a congregation, and congregations join the UUA, but rarely do they intentionally join a district—that's a structure of service delivery and connection that's not quite understood. People might have known what it meant to be in the Michigan and/or Ohio Valley Districts, but the culture and presence of the Heartland has not yet fully emerged to take the place of its predecessors.

It gets down to the heart of the information that I learned at the Midsize Church Conference in Phoenix. We all make changes all the time—there are events that happen that change the nature of life. But the "transition"—the emotional and spiritual and psychological shifts that must occur in tandem with the change—the transition doesn't always get made at the same time, or to the same degree. The Heartland is in transition. It changed the way it was, and the way it will be, but the transition to being this new district, larger, where the "pastor" (read District Executive) doesn't do everything, and where the "people" (read all of you) now must (and can!) take a more active role, hasn't quite happened.

It is this transition that will be the focus of the remaining part of this year, and the work of next year, too. Transition to a stronger identity as the Heartland, transition to a more clearly understood supportive relationship between the Board and

the District Staff, transition to a smoother way of "service delivery" to the congregations, transition to knowing more about what the Heartland is all about—all of this is the work of the interim period, and I invite you to join me in that work. Call me: 317-525-2808 is my cell. Email me: de@heartlanduu.org is my email. Let me know what transition work remains in your eyes. And let me know what you want, what you dream, what you can offer to the Heartland.

UU Church of Flint Welcomes New Minister

An entire weekend of celebration heralded the installation of The Rev. David Carl Olson as the new minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Flint.

Saturday, Feb. 4 saw a tamal workshop with chef Luis Alonso Guzman. That evening a large crowd enjoyed a concert by Emma's Revolution (Pat Humphries and Sandy O) who also sang at the Sunday festivities. A song they wrote, "If I Give Your Name", was the 2002 Grand Prize Winner in the Folk Category of the prestigious John Lennon Songwriting Contest. A concert café enhanced the evening.

At the Sunday morning service the Rev. Laurie J. Auffant preached on "Radical Hospitality". Rev. Auffant is the first openly transgender person and the first Puerto Rican woman to be fully settled as a Unitarian Universalist minister.

The afternoon of Sunday, Feb. 5 was the installation service itself with special guest the Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa. She is a leader in the area of increasing diversity in the ranks of Unitarian Universalist ministers.

The installation banquet which followed featured the festival tamales made in the Saturday workshop.

Diversity celebration and excitement about the future of the church characterized this important event in this year which is also the 75th anniversary of the church in Flint.

Heartline

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Heartland District of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
445 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 510, Indianapolis, IN 46204-1893
(888) 948-HUUD (4883) • Fax (317) 634-5385 • www.heartlanduu.org

Interim District Executive..... Rev. Lisa Presley (888) 948-4883..... de@heartlanduu.org
Office Administrator..... Barbara Hamilton (888) 948-4883..... office@heartlanduu.org
Lifespan RE Program Consultant Nancy Combs-Morgan (859) 276-1585..... pc@heartlanduu.org

Heartland Leadership

President..... Connie Haas Zuber (260) 456-4132 chzuber@comcast.net Fort Wayne, IN
VP-Finance Susan Bookout (812) 976-9790 sbookout@juno.com Bloomington, IN
VP-Admin Steven Thompson (937) 626-5325cell sthompson7@woh.rr.com Springboro, OH
Secretary..... VACANT
At Large Rev. Todd Eklof (502) 899-1337 todd@cliftonunitarian.com Louisville, KY
At Large Markie Oliver (765) 282-1366 moliver@bsu.edu Muncie, IN
At Large Leigh Robertson (269) 342-9372 arobertson57@yahoo.com Kalamazoo, MI
At Large Laura Spencer (734) 665-6158 Laura@uuaa.org Ann Arbor, MI
At Large VACANT
DYSC Youth Observer Becca Brown (317) 255-0208 u_u_youth@hotmail.com Indianapolis, IN
UUA Trustee Rev. Douglas Gallager..... (248) 647-2380 douglas.gallager@bucmi.org Bloomfield Hills, MI
Annual Meeting VACANT
Communication VACANT
District Youth..... Samantha Dewald (513) 245-2378 entucara151@yahoo.com Cincinnati, OH
..... Jason Keller (513) 293-2289 Jason-Keller@earthlink.net Cincinnati, OH
Extension Rev. Nana Kratochvil (231) 755-2931 huucmusk@verizon.net Muskegon, MI
Leadership Dev..... VACANT
Lifespan RE Barbara Weber (937) 435-5046 blw622@yahoo.com Dayton, OH
Social Justice VACANT
YA/CM Sustainability Corp.. Kelly Rauch (812) 876-4312 kellymrauch@yahoo.com Bloomington, IN
Nominating..... Rev. Elwood Sturtevant (512) 425-6943 elwoodrs@aol.com Louisville, KY
UUMA Rep..... Rev. Thomas Perchlik (765) 288-9561 dharmarev@hotmail.com Muncie, IN
MUUC Rep..... Veronica Smith (313) 824-2702 vsmith508@aol.com Grosse Pointe, MI
MUUC Rep..... Susan Porter..... (317) 251-7346 msrporter@aol.com Indianapolis, IN
UUMN Anne Littlefield anlitt@comcast.net Fort Wayne, IN
UUMN Lois Hitchcock mw4@juno.com Southfield, MI

Send submissions to Heartland District office at the above address or email to office@heartlanduu.org
Deadline for articles for next issue: June 15, 2006

Heartline is now available electronically via email or on the Heartland website at www.heartlanduu.org.
Contact the district office at office@heartlanduu.org to have an electronic version emailed to you.

REvision

by Nancy Combs-Morgan, Heartland LRE Program Consultant

Many of you may have already heard this news...I am now serving the Heartland District as your half-time Program Consultant and also am now serving the Thomas Jefferson District half-time, as well. Our hope is that in 18 months the Program Consultant position will be able to return to full-time.

This has been done to address some pretty serious financial issues here in the Heartland, but with the help of our Interim DE, Rev. Lisa Presley and our Heartland Board, we hope to turn these challenging financial issues around.

In the meantime, I hope that any congregation who is in need of Lifespan Religious Education support will not hesitate to contact me. I am working closely with our wonderful team of RE Consultants (Diane Melvin, Kalamazoo, MI; Teresa Putnam, E. Lansing, MI; Kathy Silver, Farmington, MI; Barb Weber, Dayton, OH and Lisa Minor, Bloomington, IN). We are ready and able to provide you with: RE Mission and Vision workshops; RE Start-Up workshops for your new Religious Educators; RE Committee Retreat workshops; Safe Congregation's workshop; and many others.

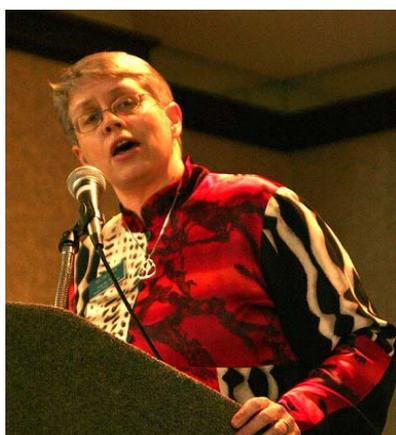
Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth

We have had our first Congregational Cluster Conversation on the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth at St. John's Congregation in Cincinnati, OH on March 18th. Many thanks to the Ohio congregations who participated (Hopedale, Northern Hills, Heritage, St. John's, First UU, Cincinnati, OH). This was an important event in the process of deeply reflecting on how we "do" youth ministry in our UU congregations. We are asking that many of you consider having one of the Congregational Conversations from April – May. If you would like to have more information, please feel free to contact me. It was the first in our series of youth ministry opportunities which we are filming to create a creative response to the process of the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth. Our District Youth Steering Committee is involved in this process and has agreed that our ongoing film will continue at our upcoming Bridging/Election CON in Dayton, OH, May 5-7th.

Young Adult Presence at Annual Meeting

Our Young Adult/Campus Ministry Sustainability Corps (our district YA/CM SC committee) demonstrated a very special worship service on Friday evening, April 7th at our Annual Meeting.

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Rev Lisa Presley, Heartland District Interim District Executive, delivers opening worship sermon.

Resource for Congregations

The UUA has produced an updated Congregational Handbook -- and the beauty of it is that it is available at no cost, on line! You can search the document, find what you're looking for, be referred to best practices, all without leaving the comfort of your own keyboard! It is available at <http://www.uua.org/cde/handbook/>.

How to Develop a Healthy and Vital Unitarian Universalist Congregation edited by Margaret L. Beard and Susanna Whitman, Copyright 2005, UUA, Boston, MA



Rev Bill Gupton & Cori Yeager-von Birgelen accept Chalice Lighter grant check for Winter 2006 Call

Steve Scott Remembered

On March 14, 2006, Steve Scott of the UU Church of Bowling Green, KY died suddenly of massive heart failure. Steve was well known throughout the Heartland District for his unwavering dedication and passion to Unitarian Universalism. Steve's life-long partner, Greg Willis, and the UU Church of Bowling Green have established the Steve Scott Memorial Fund. Funds will be used to continue Steve's goal of acquiring a minister for their church. Donations can be sent to the church at 2033 Nashville Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42101, or to Greg Willis at 2841 Hwy 185, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

Indiana University Commission on Multicultural Understanding (COMU) Presents 2005-06 Awards

On Tuesday, April 4 in the Leo R. Dowling International Center in Bloomington, IN the Commission on Multicultural Understanding presented the 2005-06 award for Community Member to The Reverend Bill Breeden and The Reverend Mary Ann Macklin of UU Church of Bloomington.

Awards were presented in five categories to people who by their actions have significantly contributed to improving campus climate and promoting understanding with regard to a wide range of diversity issues. Winners in other categories were: Undergraduate Student-Stacey Jones, Graduate Student-Kevin Earl Colbert, Staff Member-Barry Magee, Faculty Member-Raquel T. Anderson, and Outstanding Program-Katrina Relief Trip.

**“Raising the Roof”
The Pastoral-to-Program Size Transition**

A Growth Workshop for UU Congregations Moving into “Mid-Size”

Led by:
Alice Mann
The Alban Institute

Sponsored by:
Heartland District Extension Committee

October 13-15, 2006

(Registration Deadline: June 30, 2006)

This conference may be cancelled if sufficient registrations are not received by June 30th.

Register by credit card online at:
www.heartlanduu.org

Program schedule:
Begins: Friday, Oct. 13 @ 7:30 p.m.
Ends: Sunday, Oct. 15 @ 2:00 p.m.

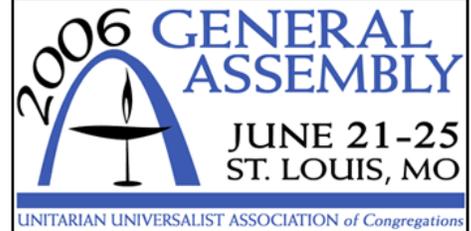
Conference Location:
Potawatomi Inn & Conference Center
Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN

CONFETTI!!!

Bridging/Election Con
May 5th 7:00pm
May 7th 9:00 am
Miami Valley UU Fellowship
8690 Yankee St
Dayton, OH 45458

- THE MOST FUUN YOU'LL HAVE ALL YEAR!!
- Say goodbye to the magnificent bridgers
 - Help elect new DYSC members
 - Be included in awesome workshops and discussions
 - Eat yummy yummy food
 - Meet people from all over the Heartland District

Register online by credit card at
www.heartlanduu.org
Email Jessi Muni at
dark-bluedancer1354@yahoo.com



Toward Right Relations

The UUA's General Assembly will take place from June 21-25 in St. Louis, Missouri, and registration is now open! If you're an active youth, young adult or adult member of a UU congregation, plan now to join us in St. Louis for GA! You'll want to be present for the rousing ingathering program with its banner parade and terrific music, the Ware Lecture delivered by award winning poet Mary Oliver, and the Sunday morning worship service led by the Rev Gail Geisenhainer, minister of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach, FL.

You'll have the opportunity to attend hundreds of valuable programs and workshops, meet Unitarian Universalists from across the United States, and worship and celebrate together at GA. Visit the GA web page (www.uua.org/ga/) for further information and registration and housing information!



*Kelly Rauch, chair
Young Adult/Campus Ministry
Sustainability Corps
Heartland District - Young adults
doing big things in the district.*

**ConCoction
Jr. High Election
Conference**

April 28-30, 2006
\$30 registration fee

First Unitarian Church
809 South 4th Street
Louisville, KY

6th to 9th graders are welcome, but only youth that are considered Jr. High aged by their congregations can attend.

Registration forms available at
www.heartlanduu.org,
or your church DRE/office



**A Gathering of Leaders
Before General Assembly**

**Tuesday, June 20
& Wednesday, June 21, 2006**

**America's Center
St. Louis, MO**

Current and Future Congregational Presidents, Financial Leaders, and Membership Leaders are invited to attend the first biennial gathering of congregational leaders dedicated to increasing their knowledge and capacity to serve their congregations.

General Assembly will begin the afternoon of June 21; UU University programming will not conflict with GA events.

Registration

Program registration fee is \$95.00

Registration closes May 31, 2006.

For more information go to:
www.uua.org/DIST/uuuniversity/



*Couldn't resist sharing this one
- editor*



Way More Than Leadership

Unitarian Universalist Association's
2006 MidWest Leadership School
at the beautiful Beloit College Campus

in

Beloit, Wisconsin

One Session
July 15-22, 2006

**Experience a whole
new level of Unitar-
ian Universalism!**

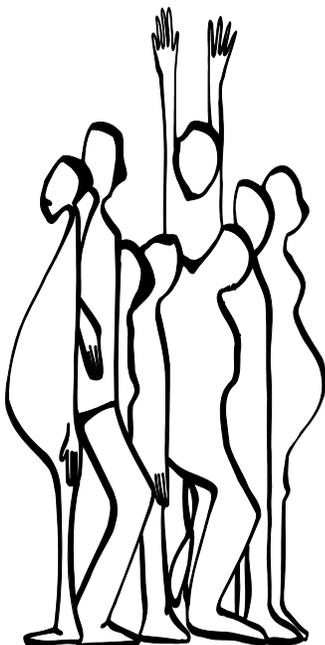
***"UU University" offers learning for lay leaders
before General Assembly!***

A great learning opportunity for lay leaders will debut directly before the start of the UUA General Assembly in St. Louis this year. "UU University" will offer a day and a half of specialized training designed primarily for current and future congregational presidents, financial leaders and membership leaders, though all lay leaders involved in congregational leadership are welcomed and encouraged to register and attend!

The Rev. Dr. Peter Steinke will be the keynote speaker for congregational presidents. Dr. Steinke will discuss congregations as emotional systems and leadership in emotional systems.

Financial leaders will learn about the language of generosity, gain a solid understanding of effective stewardship, and build knowledge about managing your congregation's money. The Rev. Jeanne Pupke (UU Fellowship of Central Oregon, in Bend) and Cecilia Kingman-Miller (Wy'east UU Congregation in Portland) will be the dynamic presenters of "Let's Talk Stewardship!" Dan Brody and Larry Ladd, current and former financial advisors of the UUA, will provide the financial management workshop.

Membership leaders will learn how to "Repel Fewer Visitors!" and close the invisible 'revolving door' in their congregation, while exploring effective means of moving visitors to enthusiastic membership. This tract will be led by the Rev. Peter Morales, Annie Hedberg, and Dea Brayden, all of Jefferson Unitarian Church in Golden, Colorado, a congregation well-known for its success in welcoming, assimilating, and retaining its ever-growing congregation.



*First stop, Annual Meeting Registration Table
John Murphy, All Souls Unitarian Church, Indianapolis
Aron DiBacco, UU Church of Indianapolis
Diane Vack, UU Church of Flint
Hooray for volunteers!*

The Anne Miller Award for Excellence in Lifespan Religious Education

The Anne Miller Award for Excellence in Lifespan Religious Education is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to religious education for children, youth and adults over the years. It was originally established by the Ohio Valley UU District Lifespan Religious Education Committee in 1989 and was last given as an OVUUD award in 2000. Now a Heartland District award, it is given at the annual meeting each April.

The award is given in recognition of Anne Miller's 25 years of dedication to religious education. Anne is a member of the First Unitarian Church in Louisville, Kentucky.

This year's recipient, Karen Brown, began her career as a Religious Educator about 15 years ago in the New England area. After moving to the Heartland, she was involved with Religious Education at the Oaklandon congregation before becoming Director of Religious Education at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis about seven years ago. She has shepherded the RE program there with deep care and dedication.

Karen joined the District Lifespan Religious Education Committee shortly after starting at UUI. She has tirelessly organized trainings and other activities for Religious Educators in our District. She has been persistent in convening the Indiana RE Cluster, as well as serving as either host or registrar for many events.

Karen has a deep and abiding sense of the sacred and has often served as a spiritual guide to the Religious Educators in our District. She has organized countless inspiring worship services for us and frequently facilitates Wisdom Circles to feed our souls. She is active in our new Liberal Religious Educators Association chapter and is currently organizing our LREDA Spring Retreat.

The area where Karen's passion has perhaps most often been seen in recent years is in her support of our District youth. She has served as the liaison between the Lifespan Religious Education Committee and District Youth Steering Committee, but has gone far beyond her expected duties. She has attended countless Youth CONferences, mentored youth on DYSC, been instrumental in the

development of Heartland's Safe Congregations Policy and advocated for ministry to our teens in innumerable ways.

Not content with the usual avenues of training for Religious Educators, such as Renaissance Modules, Karen is pursuing a Masters Degree in Religion and Special Studies at Christian Theological Seminary. She often brings her learning to our Religious Education discussions.

Karen's encouraging smile, kind heart, thoughtful vision, deep commitment, and hard work have contributed greatly to Religious Education at her church, in the Heartland and beyond. She is well deserving of this year's Anne Miller Award for Excellence in Lifespan Religious Education.



Votes are counted; the motion is passed.



*Karen Brown, DRE
UU Church of Indianapolis
2006 Anne Miller Award recipient*

RE Vision

(continued from Page 3)...

Also, they provided a workshop on "Alternative Worship," which should be very engaging and responsive to young adult needs in our congregation.

Our YA/CM network is really growing in the Heartland. If your community is interested in expanding or even creating from scratch a Young Adult ministry in your congregation, contact the District Office at office@heartlanduu.org, or me at pc@heartlanduu.org for more information.

Nurturing our Children and Youth

Dr. Tracey Hurd, from the Lifespan Faith Development staff group in Boston led a 2-part workshop at our Annual Meeting as well. Religious educators, parents, ministers and anyone else interested in the cognitive, social, moral and faith development of our children and youth should request more information by contacting the District Office or me.

In growing faith,
Nancy Combs-Morgan

What ever happened to holding the district annual meeting in less expensive locations like member congregations?

It never fails to happen that we, at the District, get questions about the Annual Meeting, and its logistics. Including questions about why we hold it in one place, and not another, and why it costs what it costs, instead of something else. So it seems appropriate to respond to some of these questions now, when it is high in some people's minds.

In the beginning, when very few people came to District meetings, they were held in congregations. That was a wonderful thing, because it meant that we got to see how other congregations "lived," and were able to hold meetings that cost less than they do now. But one of the wonderful pinches that happened when the two districts became the Heartland is that the size of the meetings grew, and with that, the ability to hold it in congregations diminished.

Right now, we have to count on having somewhere between 175 and 225 people at our meetings. We try to have at least 8-10 workshops in each workshop slot to ensure that there is a wide variety of offerings from those that respond to personal and institutional needs. And we provide childcare for the younger of our UUs in the Heartland.

So this means that we need a space that provides *all* of the following:

- A meeting room large enough to hold at least 200 people without any difficulty
- A minimum of 8-10 "break-out" rooms that can hold a minimum of 25 adults, and some of which can hold over 50 adults, all in chairs of the appropriate size, and hopefully with surfaces to write on
- At least a couple of rooms that can serve as appropriate spaces for children's programming
- A kitchen that is a reliable and appropriate space for preparing three meals and two snacks for 200 people, with all the accompanying service ware, ovens, refrigerators, and the like
- Adequate parking for all individuals
- All rooms and spaces accessible to people with mobility issues so that they may attend any and all events without difficulty
- Adequate restrooms for all, including handicapped accessibility
- Nearby hotel space so that transportation between sites is not difficult

Whereas we might have one or two or even three congregations that meet all of the above criteria, one of the other stated aims is to be able to move the Annual Meeting around the District so that the driving distances and time does not always disadvantage the same congregations. Earlier this year I polled our ministers to ask which buildings might be able to meet the above criteria, and at this point I have only heard back about one or two congregations that have the requisite space. Usually we try to have home hospitality as an option, but this year since there was no committee in place, that was beyond the ability of your District Staff to organize. If the committee is fully staffed for next year we hope to offer this possibility again.

What is also invisible to the eye are the underlying costs of the meeting. Hotels make their money off of the banquet service. Groups are not allowed to bring in outside food, or seek alternative caterers. The cost of food in hotels is almost always a bit more expensive, and when you add in the 20% service fee on top of that, it gets very expensive. A cup of coffee, soft drink, bottled water, and bottled juice come to somewhere around \$3-\$4 each. The wonderful chocolate chip cookies we had end up being about \$3 each, too. This is where the hotels make their money, and it is what they base the rent for the meeting rooms on, too.

This year, we received all our meeting space for free because of the fact that we bought food. I anticipate that the Friday night reception, Saturday lunch and two breaks cost about \$70 a person—and that's the going rate.

As a matter of course, we bid out the meeting, using the local visitors and conventions bureaus to help us do so. We had only three hotels in all of Indianapolis that bid for our service. One of them was way too small; another was downtown, and did such things as charge \$14 a day for parking. This year's Embassy Suites was the best of the three. We will be bidding out the meeting for next year, too, in Grand Rapids. Yet whereas we are too big for our own congregational facilities, we are, in the long run, also a small meeting for those who deal in conferences and conventions. It's awkward, but that's the facts.

I hope that this helps you understand the multiplicity of things that need to be considered for planning this 24 hour meeting. If you have any questions, feel free to be in touch: 317-525-2808 is my cell, and de@heartlanduu.org is the email.



Connie Haas Zuber, member of UU Congregation of Fort Wayne, Indiana and President of the Heartland District Board of Trustees, presides over annual business meeting.

Heartland District of the UUA
 445 N. Pennsylvania St., Suite 510
 Indianapolis, IN 46204-1893

DISTRICT *Calendar*

April through June 2006

(For details, contact the district office at office@heartlanduu.org, or log on to the HUUD website at www.heartlanduu.org)

April 7-9	Heartland District Annual Meeting & Spring Conference	Embassy Suites Hotel, Indianapolis, IN
April 17	HUUD OFFICE CLOSED - Patriot's Day	
April 19	DRE Cluster Meeting	Indiana
April 28-30	DYSC Junior High Election Con	First Unitarian Church, Louisville, KY
May 5-7	DYSC Bridging/Election Con	Miami Valley UU Fellowship, Dayton, OH
May 17	DRE Cluster Meeting	St. John's Unitarian Church Cincinnati, OH
May 29	HUUD OFFICE CLOSED - Memorial Day	
May 30 - June 5	LRE Retreat	Fatima Retreat House Indianapolis, IN
June 2-4	HUUD Board Transition Retreat	Potawatomi Inn, Angola, IN
June 21-25	UUA General Assembly	St. Louis, MO
June 30	HUUD 2005-2006 Fiscal Year Ends	

Bits & Pieces

Birmingham Unitarian Church in Bloomfield Hills, MI celebrated the new hymnal supplement, "Singing the Journey", the weekend of January 6 with a special workshop for the choir and a Sunday Service devoted to the music in "STJ"



Central Midwest District Upcoming Events

May 6 - Starting a New UU Congregation for Emerging & Forming Religious Communities - Eliot Chapel, Kirkwood, MO

May 12-13 - Stewardship Workshop for Emerging & Small Congregations - UU Church West, Brookfield, WI

For more information, go to www.cmwd-uua.org, or email cmwd@cmwd-uua.org