

~ The Prologue

August 18, 2008 ~

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

Congregation founded 1949
Welcoming Congregation since 1995
Green Sanctuary since 2007

Seeking the Spirit Building Our Community Changing the World



Sunday, August 24, 2008 9:00 and 11:15 a.m.
The Prophet and the King Reverend Bill Breedon
Reflections on a tragic Old Testament soap opera.

Wednesday, September 3, 2008 Dinner 5:30pm, Worship 6:15pm
Open Minds, Loving Hearts, Helping Hands Rev. Emily Manvel Leite
What does it mean to be Unitarian Universalist? Come and embody the UU spirit in this lively half-hour intergenerational service. Families with young children are welcome. 5:15pm craft, 5:30pm dinner (provided, with a vegan option), 6:15 worship. Join us whenever you can!

Sunday, August 31, 2008 9:00 and 11:15 a.m.
For What Shall We Labor? Reverend Bill Breedon
In search of solidarity. The Choir and members of the Heartland String Band will share some classic songs of the Labor Movement.



Chalice Circle Kick-off Event September 7

See details on Page 4.



Ramadan Dinner September 19

See details on Page 5.

We Welcome Our Newest Members

The following people signed our Membership Book on August 17:

Ann Robins, Janice Bagwell, Georgia K. Emmert, Phyllis Boyd, Jay Record,
Velda Kaune, Blaine Carrell, Chrisoph Irmscher, and Lauren Bernofsky.

We warmly welcome all these wonderful people to our church family!

MAM's Musings

On Sunday, August 17 we had our annual Water Communion Ceremony, in which we gathered once again at the river of our congregational life to share our summer journeys, travels and adventures. As I shared on Sunday, this poem entitled "Reunion" by Reverend Barbara Pescan speaks well of the re-gathering many of us feel within our congregational community at this time:

One of the old ones stood up
into the morning light
and spoke to those who had come
back to the river.

--Now we have come again to this place.
My life apart from you
is not as strong.
Yes, I have danced and
I have told the stories
at my own fire and
I have sung well, to all eight directions.

But when I am with you,
my friends,
I know better
who it is in me
that sings.

As we come back to the river of our congregational life, let us celebrate the reunion of our church adult choir and children's choir as they return from their summer absence, the reunion of our teachers and students as religious education classes begin again, and the reunion of our small group ministry Chalice Circle facilitators as they prepare for another year of matters of intimacy and ultimacy in small groups. Registration for Chalice Circles began August 17th and will run through the Chalice Circle Kick-Off September 7th at

4pm. Registration for our dynamic and varied Adult Religious Education offerings for the Fall starts August 20! See the Adult Religious Education Prospectus, enclosed in this issue.

A few of you asked me for the queries from cultural anthropologist Angeles Arrien regarding the four wisdom rivers; they are as follows: **River of Inspiration** (end of day reflections): *What made me happy today? (something not person-dependent) *Where did I experience a sense of comfort, balance or refuge? *Who or what inspired me? **River of Challenge**: Where am I settling for less? **River of Surprise**: What will happen next? **River of Love**: Who have been the teachers of my heart? What am I learning about love? What do I know about love? Where did my heart begin to shut down?

Of note, I will return to the Arizona desert for a second level of leadership training with Angeles Arrien in the latter part of October. The retreat is entitled: *Communication, Mediation and Conflict Resolution Skills for Personal, Professional, and Relational Growth*. I look forward to learning more from this wise teacher and sharing that wisdom with our congregation in the years ahead.

In the faith, MAM
(Reverend Mary Ann Macklin)

I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge -- myth is more potent than history -- dreams are more powerful than facts -- hope always triumphs over experience -- laughter is the cure for grief -- love is stronger than death.

-ROBERT FULGHUM

Religious Education Gets a Great Start

This past Sunday, August 17, was our first Sunday of the regular Religious Education program. It was wonderful to see so many kids, and to begin to work with our fabulous new teaching teams. Please thank your child's teachers whenever you get a chance. It is their work which makes our program possible!

*We are wrapping up the summer program and collecting **Read to Feed forms** and pledges. Please get these to Cindy Port as soon as possible.

*It is also time to **register** for this year if you haven't already done so. The registration table will be open between services and after second service on August 24 and August 31. Thanks!

Finally, we are looking forward to beginning our Family Worship services on Wednesday, September 3. These interactive half-hour services are an opportunity for people of all ages to enjoy worship together. Please consider coming with your family or on your own. Everyone is welcome. There is information about this month's service on the front page. We would be very happy to see you there.

Cindy Port, Director of Religious Education
dre@uubloomington.org
Rev. Emily Manvel Leite,
Minister of Religious Education
mre@uubloomington.org

UU Children's Choir Schedule

Thanks to all who sang on August 17 to kick off another great year of Children's Choir!

New singers, Kg-6th grade are welcome any

time! See upcoming schedule below. Unless otherwise stated, rehearsals are from 10:15-11:00am on the scheduled mornings, in the Library. For more info, contact Jill Courtney at jcourtne@mccsc.edu.

9/21 & 9/28: Rehearse

10/1: Sing @ Family Worship service, 5:30p
11/16 Rehearse;

Thurs. 11/20 rehearse 7-7:30pm

11/23: Sing both services

12/7, 12/14, & 12/21 Rehearse

12/21 evening: Sing @ Winter Solstice svc

Women's Alliance to Hear Reza Pishgahi September 4

The Women's Alliance will be meeting September 4 in Fellowship Hall. The meeting begins with a brown bag luncheon at 11:30 a.m.; beverages and desserts will be available. The program is from 12:00-12:30 with Reza Pishgahi speaking on "My Love of Art." Don't miss hearing from an award-winning artist! Hostesses will be Beth Hollingsworth and Edrice Baker. Guests are always welcome.

Social Justice Grant Applications Due October 1

Applications for members of the congregation for grants for social justice projects will be available September 1st. The deadline for applications is October 1st. For complete information read the article in the enclosed issue of *Common Ground*.

---The Social Justice Funds Committee:
Stephanie Estell, Jennifer Blankenship, Joan Caulton, Bob Taylor, Jan Neff, Jerry Neff





Campus Ministry Plans

Our active and growing campus ministry for college students has been busy! This Summer, we've gone on a camping trip to Yellowwood State Forest, helped out with the Interfaith Build, and adopted a trail at Griffy Lake. We also have lots on our calendar for the Fall!

Some Upcoming Events:

Friday, August 29: Game night! Join us at the church at 7 PM for a night of games and assorted hijinks! More fun than a barrel of monkeys, and probably more fun than your new roommate, too!

Sunday, September 7: Lunch! We'll be going out to an as-yet-undisclosed but vegetarian friendly local restaurant. Meet us in the foyer after second service!

Friday, September 12: Lock-in! 6 PM – morning. We promise to make sleeping on the floor more fun than it sounds! Also, did we mention hijinks?

We hope that you can join us for some of these events! For more information, contact Susan Blake, Campus Ministry Coordinator, at blakes@indiana.edu.



Call for Volunteers! Ramadan Iftaar Celebration Friday, September 19

Our Annual Ramadan Iftaar Celebration of the breaking of the fast (Iftaar in Arabic) is one of the most enjoyable and powerful ways we connect with our new and old friends

from other local religious communities. We will join with members of the Islamic Center for Iftaar, prayer, and dinner during the evening of Friday, September 19 this year. Please help if you can by volunteering to fill one of these needs:

Set-up team 5 - 7:30 p.m., Java Team 6 - 8:30 p.m., Greeters team 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Clean-up team 8 - 10 p.m.

Please contact Erin Hollinden, ehollinden@bluemarble.net, 812-837-9978, to volunteer. Thank you.



Next Veggie Potlucks: Sept. 28 and Oct. 26

Join us for the next Green Sanctuary Task Force-sponsored vegetarian potluck, Sunday, Sept 28th @ 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share (no meat products of any kind, no seafood, no poultry; dairy and egg products ok; vegan dishes welcome, too), a recipe/label for your dish, and your own reusable, non-disposable place settings. If you need childcare during the movie viewing following supper, please contact the church office, admin@uubloomington.org, two weeks in advance. Following the September and October veggie potlucks at 6:15 pm will be a showing of four segments of "Renewal," (about one hour), a documentary on the vitality and diversity of today's religious-environmental activists, co-sponsored by the Bloomington Friends congregation.

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Chalice Circle Sign Up Time

On Sunday, August 10th,
Chalice Circles were

reintroduced for the third year. Everyone should have received a letter and brochure in the mail or by email to help clarify what Chalice Circles are. Chalice Circles is a program of small group ministry which enables us to know others and ourselves better by deep listening with an open heart. The groups are guided by a facilitator who uses written session plans. This year we have many new session plans available.

This is a great way to meet new people from our church community and get to know yourself and others better.

There are 10 different Chalice Circle times offered. If you need childcare, sign up for the group that meets on Thursday evenings at the church and indicate that you need childcare. Sign up sheets are posted in Fellowship Hall and will be available through **Sunday, September 7th**. There are groups meeting during the day and in the evening, and a group may meet once or twice a month or even every three weeks. A Chalice Circles executive committee member will be available before and after services to answer your questions.

The next step after sign up is to attend the **Chalice Circle Kick Off on Sunday September 7th, 4-6pm** in the **Meeting Room**. This is crucial, and will be the orientation meeting of your Circle. **Please mark your calendar**. If you do not attend you will be contacted to attend a make-up session. Questions or problems please contact Anne Haynes at 336-3221 or Judy Bennett at 331-4181, Chalice Circle co-chairs.

UU Board of Directors

(Creating Policy, Envisioning our Future)

GK Rowe, President,

pres@uubloomington.org

Andrea Murray, Vice President,

vicepres@uubloomington.org

John Lawson, Treasurer,

treasurer@uubloomington.org

Chris Haynes, Secretary,

secretary@uubloomington.org

At Large Board Members: David Cox,

Amy Taylor, Shari Woodbury

Program Team

(Coordination with Committees and Task Forces)

Mark Burton, Ministry and Pastoral Care

Patty Callison, Congregational Services

Diane Gregory, Fellowship and Affiliated Groups

Jackie Hall, Membership Journey

John Woodcock, Social Justice

Kevin Woodruff, Lifespan Religious Education

Amy Taylor, Board Liaison

Management Team

(Daily Management of Church Operations)

Rev. Mary Ann Macklin, Co-minister

Rev. Bill Breeden, Co-minister

Carol Marks, Church Administrator

Attendance

Sun, Aug 10, 9:00: 123 11:15: 168 RE: n/a
Total: 291

Sun, Aug 17, 9:00: 101 11:15: 173 RE: n/a
Total: 261

Sunday Offering

Sun, Aug 10 non-pledge offering: \$ 576

Sun, Aug 17 non-pledge offering: \$ 468

Total to Volunteers in Medicine: \$ 261

UUs Changing the World

HELP FEED



**OUR HUNGRY
NEIGHBORS**

**HELP FEED OUR HUNGRY
NEIGHBORS**

**Next Bounty-Full Sunday is
September 7**

Current Needs:
powdered milk,
crackers,



canned fruit, desserts like jello and pudding mixes, peanut butter and jelly (no expired food please). Thanks to everyone for donations in August: 89 lbs. of food. Remember to bring some fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs which are surplus from your own gardens. Collection area is in the Commons each Sunday between services and will be delivered to Mother Hubbard's Cupboard the next day. Questions? Contact Mary Blizzard at 333-8957 or mary_blizzard@hotmail.com.

Another Opportunity to Feed People

Monroe County United Ministries needs 200 volunteers to help at the community food drive to be held on August 23rd and 24th. Volunteers will be provided with snacks and water, and a boxed lunch will be available for volunteers working a double shift. Children 15 and younger are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult.

The greatest need is for people to collect donations at local grocery stores from 10:00 to 1:00 and 1:00 to 4:00 on Saturday.

Volunteers are needed to sort donations at MCUM on Saturday from 12-3:00 and 3:00-6:00 and also Sunday from 12-3:00.

Also needed are people to ride with drivers to transport donations from stores to MCUM on both days 9:00 to 1:30 and 1:30-6:00.

This task requires heavy lifting. →

To volunteer contact Mary Blizzard at mary_blizzard@hotmail.com 333-8957

Katrina Relief Task Force Invites Your Support for Rebuilding in New Orleans

The Social Justice Committee's Katrina Relief Task Force will be taking about 15 volunteers to New Orleans to help rebuild homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, from September 13-20. Most of the volunteers are contributing the \$500 estimated trip costs, but a few are able to contribute only their time. Donations are sought to support the efforts of those few. To contribute, please write a check to the UU Church of Bloomington with "Katrina Relief" in the "memo" line. Mail checks Attn: Carol Marks, Ch.Admin, UU Church, 2120 N. Fee Lane, Bloomington IN 47408. Questions, David Parkhurst, 333-2945. Thank you.

Lunch with a Minister Bring a brown bag lunch and have lunch and conversation with Rev. Bill Breeden and others, Tuesday, September 9 at 12 noon in Fellowship Hall.

Our Folks...

Our sympathy and prayers are with Lori and Mark Carmichael Howell and their family; Lori's mother, Mary Garrard Carmichael, died August 6. A memorial service was held August 8 in Martinsville, with Rev. Breeden assisting.

Congratulations to Kathy Barton who recently won "Best of Show" at the Gallery North -Sycamore Land Trust Benefit show "Art For All Seasons." Her photograph "Fence Row In Fog" will be up through August 28th.

Community Connections

Our faith in action in the community

RSVP/Area 10 Agency on Aging is in tremendous need of volunteers right now to

- (1) deliver meals in their Mobile Meals program,
- (2) deliver food pantry food to low-income homebound seniors,
- (3) serve as receptionists at the Ellettsville office,
- (4) serve as Job Coaches for low-income individuals of all ages seeking employment. If you would like to help, contact Christine McKenna at cmckenna@area10agency.org, 812-876-3383 or 800-844-1010

Unitarian Universalist Church Seeks Office Assistant

Position is available August 25. The Office Assistant for our liberal religious community is a 12-month, 19 hrs/wk M-F position, integral to the functioning of our busy church office. One or two Sunday mornings per month are included in the schedule. Starting pay \$8.50/hr.

This job can work well for college students who remain in Bloomington year-round. Work schedule can be adjusted depending on class schedule. Applicants should have knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, good keyboarding skills, good attention to accuracy, and a sense of discretion. Send letter of interest and resumé to Carol Marks, admin@uubloomington.org or Attn: Carol Marks, Church Administrator, UU Church, 2120 N. Fee Lane, Bloomington IN 47408, by August 22. Info, call 332-3695.

Team Ministry

Our congregation is served by a ministry team: Rev. Mary Ann Macklin and Rev. Bill Breeden. Each minister serves the entire congregation; each has specific areas of focus.

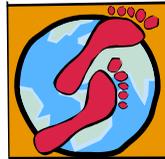
Ministers' Availability

Rev. Macklin's regular day off is Tuesday.

On call M, W, F afternoons, and Thursdays
macklin@uubloomington.org
mobile phone: 322-0205

Rev. Breeden's regular day off is Thursday.

On call M, W, F mornings, and Tuesdays
breeden@uubloomington.org
mobile phone: 360-1779



Green Spaces

Initiative is working with architect Steve Miller on our building renovation and courtyard redesign project.

We can create a more welcoming and usable space while reducing our carbon footprint. Recently the committee started considering improvements to the library façade in addition to the Fellowship Hall windows and façade. All of these windows are old and the seals are deteriorating. An energy audit funded by the Green Sanctuary Taskforce has been conducted and will be used as a guide for the project.

Several issues are being considered by the committee such as shape and size of Fellowship Hall windows as well as window coverings for darkening the room. Aesthetics, ease of use, effectiveness, expense, and energy conservation are all factors that need to be considered just to make decisions about the window coverings. The Green Spaces committee welcomes new members who want to get involved with this exciting project.

Contact us now or look for us at the Getting Involved Fair on September 21st at 10AM and at a forum on October 12th at 12:45 PM. Cynthia Lindman Port
cport@epi.umaryland.edu.

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The Prologue

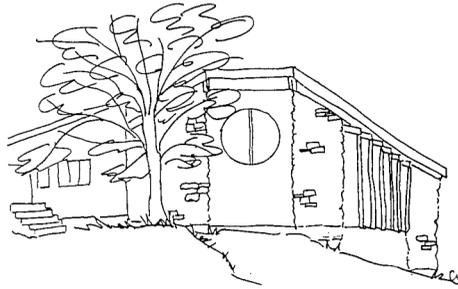
Unitarian Universalist Church of
Bloomington
2120 N. Fee Lane
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812-332-3695

www.uubloomington.org

The Rev. Mary Ann Macklin, Minister

The Rev. Bill Breeden, Minister



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August 18, 2008 (mailed on August 19)

TIME VALUE! Please deliver by August 20

Return Service Requested



DATE	TIME	EVENT	DATE	TIME	EVENT
		UU			
08/20/08	7:00 PM	Board	08/28/08	6:00 PM	5&6th Grade OWL Orientn
08/21/08	1:30 PM	Web Database Cmte		7:00 PM	Earthkin Organizational Mtg
	7:00 PM	5&6th Grade OWL Parent Meeting		7:00 PM	UU Choir
	7:00 PM	RE Class: OWL Grades5-6 2008	08/29/08	10:30 AM	Lifestory
		UU		12:00 Noon	UU Staff
	7:00 PM	Choir		6:00 PM	Camp Ministry Games Night
	8:30 PM	String Band	08/31/08	9 & 11:15	Worship and Rel Ed
08/22/08	10:30 AM	Lifestory	09/01/08		Labor Day: Ofc Closed
	12:00 Noon	UU Staff	09/02/08	10:00 AM	Deadline for Sept 2 Prologue
08/23/08	9:00 AM	RE Class: Childcare 2008-2009			
		Worship and Religious Education		6:00 PM	7&8th Grade OWL
08/24/08	9 & 11:15	Martinsville & Ellettsville		6:30 PM	Paganism Adult Rel Ed Class
	10:00 AM	progressives support group		6:45 PM	Bloomington Chbr Singers
08/25/08	6:30 PM	Religious Education Committee		7:30 PM	Quarryland Men's Chorus
	7:30 PM	Voces Novae	09/03/08	5:30 PM	Chal Cir Exec Team
08/26/08	6:00 PM	7&8th Grade OWL		5:30 PM	Family Dinner and Worship
	6:30 PM	Paganism Adult Rel Ed Class		7:00 PM	Bazaar Cmte
	6:45 PM	Bloomington Chamber Singers			
	7:30 PM	Quarryland Men's Chorus			

Introduction to the Psychology of C. G. Jung

Six Thursday sessions, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., in Room 105: Oct. 16, 23, 30;
Nov. 6, 13, 20. Facilitated by Bob Taylor

Carl Jung, contemporary of Freud, continues to offer a practical and theoretical base for people interested in practical and depth psychology. The class will review bits of Jung's writing and apply his thinking to the lives of today's readers. The content will be an approach to the unconscious, archetypes, shadow, the Self, and persona.

Required Reading: To be announced.

Enrollment: minimum - 5; maximum – 10

Run to One Hundred

Six Saturday sessions, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a. m., in Room 105: Oct. 18, 25;
Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22. Facilitated by Alfred Strickholm

There have been major advances in understanding the physiology and biochemistry of aging. This class is to learn that UUs are still raising XXXXX in activism, although at age 100, and enjoying life. Class format will be lectures and discussions.

Reading materials: The facilitator will provide handouts, with a requested donation of \$5 to cover copying costs.

Enrollment: minimum – 6; maximum – 25

Creating UU Family Rituals

One Sunday session, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., in the Library: October 19.

Facilitated by Rev. Emily Manvel Leite

Unitarian Universalism can seem short on rituals, though our congregation is stronger than many in their creation. This course will offer an opportunity to explore our needs and desires for rituals in our home lives as UUs, and will begin the process of developing rituals in response. We will consider both simple everyday rituals and more elaborate rituals relating to holidays and life changes as the interest of the group dictate.

Enrollment: minimum – 5, maximum – 20

Questions? Contact Adult Religious Education Chair, Bob DeVoe,
devoe@indiana.edu



Adult Religious Education Prospectus

Fall 2008

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

Registration: Register for classes beginning

Wednesday, August 20, by signing up on the bulletin board at the Courtyard entrance. You may also register by calling 332-3695 or e-mailing Carol Marks, Church Administrator, at admin@uubloomington.org. Please note that in some instances class sizes are limited, so register early.

How to purchase required texts: Some class offerings require a book. Our Booktable no longer orders books for ARE courses. Please order your book yourself, from Amazon.com, Better World Books (betterworld.com), Howard's Bookstore--336-7662, or others.

What About Child Care? Child care can be arranged for most events if parents reserve at least 10 days in advance of the first class meeting. Reserve on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, or to indicate that you will need child care, call 332-3695 or email admin@uubloomington.org.

Exploring Paganism

Eight Tuesday sessions, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.: in the Library: Aug. 26; Sep. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Oct. 7; In Room 210: Oct. 14. Facilitated by Beckie Wagner and Jerry Nees

Earth-centered religions form the sixth source of spirituality recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association. Spiritual teachings of earth-centered, or Pagan, religions celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of Nature. The class will feature a mix of lectures, discussions, journaling, guided meditations, and other activities. Topics covered include the earth-centered sacred year; Pagan perceptions of the Divine and attitudes toward belief; Pagan holidays and worship styles; the concept of a living, conscious interdependent universe; what magick is and how it works; and ethics. The course will also give students a taste of the kind of self-inquiry Pagans encounter in their studies of Paganism, as well as offer tools to help students identify their personal values and goals.

Required Reading: *Exploring Paganism*, by River and Joyce Higginbotham.

Enrollment: minimum - 6; maximum - 12

Silent Theft, the Private Plunder of our Common Wealth

Seven Saturday sessions, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., in the Library: Sep. 6, 20; Oct. 4, 18; Nov. 1, 15, 22. Facilitated by Jim and Tomi Allison.

This beautifully written, carefully argued book shows how little we learned from the past. Free and open resources have always been central to creativity and growth. Bollier shows how in a range of important contexts, free and open resources are being enclosed, to the benefit of the corporate class, and to the burden of Americans generally (Lawrence Lessig).

Required Reading: *Silent Theft, The Private Plunder of our Common Wealth*, by David Bollier.

Enrollment: minimum - 6; maximum - 25.

UU Tapestry of Faith 2008: Spirit of Life Workshop

Nine Thursday sessions, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in the Library: Sep. 11, 18, 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6. Facilitated by Kevin Woodruff and many others.

- 1) Spirit of Life: Exploring Spirituality for Unitarian Universalists
- 2) Sing In My Heart: Celebrations and Rituals
- 3) The Stirrings Of Compassion: Caring for one another
- 4) Blow In The Wind, Rise In The Sea: Nature and Spirit
- 5) Move In The Hand: Living our spirituality in our day-to-day lives
- 6) Giving Life The Shape Of Justice: Loving your neighbor and yourself
- 7) Roots Hold Me Close: Tradition, Teachers, and Spiritual formation
- 8) Wings Set Me Free: Dreams and Expanding vision
- 9) Come To Us: Closing and Continuing on

Suggested reading: this curriculum may be downloaded free from <http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/spiritlife/index.shtml>

Enrollment: minimum – 4, maximum – 30

Deepening our Permaculture Practices

Three Monday sessions, 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in the Library: Sep. 15, 22, 20. Facilitated by Rhonda Baird.

Permaculture is an ethical system of design that helps us to learn to live more simply and abundantly in our communities. This course will facilitate an exploration of how the principles of permaculture might apply to your home, your neighborhood, and the congregation. Expect to put your hands in the dirt and to be creative with your heart and mind.

Enrollment: minimum – 5; maximum – 15

Tolkien and Religion – Or, How to Create Your Own Mythology Without Losing Faith

Five Wednesday sessions, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., in Room 210: Sep. 17, 24; Oct. 1, 8, 15. Facilitated by Rich Janda

Tolkien's Middle-earth has been called world of "sanity and sanctity" in which "some sort of faith seems to be everywhere without a visible source." So we will start by exploring how Tolkien, a devout Catholic, imbued his tales with a visible "natural religion." This leads us to consider Tolkien's views on contemporary inventions of myths and "fairy-stories," which he praised as acts of "sub-creation" representing perhaps the greatest accomplishments achievable by humans. Accounts of cosmological origin (as in *The Silmarillion*) initially claim our attention: within such tales, Tolkien saw issues of power and (im)mortality as central. In this regard, we compare Tolkien's story-telling theories and story-telling practices, especially insofar as the former are revealed in his letters. That brings us to the subject of good vs. evil – in particular, whether evil is just the absence or perversion of good, or whether it has a substantial essence of its own. Given that an appreciable number of UUs continue to find wisdom in *The Lord of the Rings* amidst the evils and dilemmas of today, it may be that the opportunity to meet and talk about faith, myth, and religion in Tolkien could represent one rewarding choice to be made when, as Gandalf says, we "have to decide...what to do with the time that is given us."

Required reading: *J. R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*, by Tom Shippey; *The Tolkien Reader*, by J. R.R. Tolkien. Additional material will be available from the facilitator for \$7 to cover copying costs.

Enrollment: minimum – 3, maximum – 26

What Can Science Tell Us About Religion

Eight Monday sessions, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., in Room 210: Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24. Facilitated by Noretta Koertge

Many of the "new atheists" use science to criticize religion. But other scientists try to understand how different religions work, why they persist, and how they are related to human nature. In this course we will read from two recent books. One is *Religion Explained*, by Pascal Boyer, a cultural anthropologist. It is fun to read and gives lots of examples of the religious beliefs of indigenous peoples. The other is *Darwin's Cathedral*, by a philosophically-minded biologist, David Sloan Wilson. A reviewer describes it as "lucid and entertaining" but nevertheless we'll want to take it in small bits. It includes case studies on Calvinism, Judaism and Early Christianity. The guiding question for our discussions will be: How well do these scientific perspectives fit our own experiences of UUism?

Required reading: see above

Enrollment: minimum – 5, maximum – 12