

April 2019

IN SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS CHURCH OF HOT SPRINGS

Welcoming Congregation for Religious
Liberalism

100 Norwalk Street P.O. 3125, Zip 71901



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our congregation! We as Unitarian Universalists welcome you, whomever you are, regardless of race, creed, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical or mental ability. We strive together as a community to celebrate diversity and to investigate together the spiritual questions that concern us all.

Who are Unitarian Universalists? They can be Christian, Jews, Buddhists, Agnostics, Atheists, Muslims, Pagan, or Other. The one thing we all have in common is that we respect each other for who we are, where we come from, and our reasons for seeking spiritual connectiveness with each other. We believe in making this world a better and just world for everyone.

WELCOME!

GUEST SPEAKERS FOR APRIL

April 7th- Audrey Smelser will speak on “Heroes” anecdotes on students with differing disabilities as she reflects on her time as Disability Counselor at UALR and NPC, and what we all can learn from their experiences.

April 14th- Jessica Dicus will speak on “Love the Person, Hate the Sin?” It will be about the contradiction that doesn’t really follow the whole love your neighbor ideal.

April 21st- Joe Sturgill will lead “An Easter Singing”.

April 28th- Jesse Davis will speak on “Climate Change”.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Religious Exploration will begin at 9:00 am to 10 am the first and 3rd Sunday of each month. Join us to discuss various Ted Talks. Feel free to bring Ted Topics that you would like to recommend for discussion.

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Wisdom Seekers meet on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month from 9:00 to 10:00 each month. The book currently being studied is “Fantasy Land, How America went Haywire.”

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

YOGA

Bryan leads yoga classes on Wednesday nights beginning at 6:00 pm. It is a very fun, relaxing time for our church members. Bryan accepts donations for his instruction. Please check updates on Facebook UU Open Group for the dates in February that he will be able to teach class. Come join us and feel your worries dissolve!

CHOIR PRACTICE



This Photo by Unknown

The “Birds” Choir Group meets most Thursday nights at 5:15 pm at the church. Singing is good for your soul! If you have a singing experience (or not) come join the group. We practice for Sunday Service.

POTLUCKS



This Photo by Unknown

The Hot Springs UU Church will host a potluck on the last Sunday of each month. If there are five Sundays in a month, it will be the 5th Sunday. This will be a regular scheduled time and expect for the church to have one except in a case of an emergency or bad winter weather. We enjoy everyone bringing a dish and assisting with clean up. An email will be sent out to all church members the week before reminding of the potluck and what each person will be bringing.

Good food and good conversation. Get to know your church members better. They are fun!

LBGT ALLIANCE



The LBGT’s activity will be hosted at the Hot Springs Unitarian Church on Sunday, April 28th beginning at 3:00 pm.

The movie showing in April will be the Peter Toscano movie “Doing Time in the Homo Nomo Halfway House”. Everyone is welcomed!

STREET CLEANUP

Since Dee Marion will be leaving us soon, we need someone to take up the Street Cleanup for our environmental justice activity. Please contact Jesse Davis, board president, if you are interested in taking over this very important activity. We are all, of course, suppose to assist keeping our environment cleaner daily. Thanks, Dee, for your service and hope your new adventure brings you great joy!

SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT

BY Casey Wylie

The Social Justice Committee will keep collecting items for the Garland County Humane Society. We are collecting pet food, old towels or blankets, and other pet items. If you would like to make a monetary contribution, you can submit a check to Casey to purchase pet items. Thank you.

WORDS OF WISDOM

COMPASION

BY: Ann Hair

An article I read defines Unitarian Universalism as a sort of “high humanism”, in that we covenant not with God, but with each other to try to uphold our seven principles. Although we have no dogma or specific things people must say they believe to be members, and although we may have different ideas about the nature of spirituality or its nonexistence, we all do agree to

the principle of justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

We have all heard that charity begins at home, but where does compassion begin? I think it starts at home in many homes, but sometimes it gets lost along the way when we focus only on ourselves. We as Unitarian Universalists feel proud of our ability to be compassionate. We are members of a liberal religion after all. We make lunch for needy folks occasionally. We give what we can to different local charities. Maybe we feel we don't have to think about what compassion means in our everyday relationships because of this. So, does compassion relate to what we experience in our little church?

Compassion starts with empathy. I can confess to a time I didn't feel much empathy for my fellow UU's. Several years ago, someone found the maracas and drums and got them out into the sanctuary. I became really annoyed with the rattling and beating during the hymns we sang. It just was not what I had been used to, and it was not done when I joined the church in 2006. I went so far as to put the instruments away after church. But they found their way out again. Finally, I had to say to myself, "It is not just my church." over and over again. It worked. I realized that not everyone who comes to our church thinks about the music just like me. That gave me the way to accept what others were enjoying. Perhaps I learned a little about empathy.

Mine was a small thing compared to the true compassion of Jesus or Mother Teresa or Dr. Albert Schweitzer. But it was something which has helped me get out of my head and into a better acceptance of others who are my friends but who think differently than I do.

If it is hard to accept others we know with compassion, and I am thinking of others at church, or family members who argue politics or religion from a different viewpoint, imagine how

hard it is to be truly compassionate with people who are different from ourselves.

This may be why we still have institutional racism embedded in our culture. Or why some of us do not have compassion for women who make a difficult decision to have an abortion. Or why some of us do not care about families separated at our southern border. Or why some people bully others. Or why we are just getting around to prison reform. Clearly there is a lot of work to be done in the compassion department!



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April Showers Bring May Flowers!

SPOTLIGHT ON CHURCH MEMBER



This month's spotlight is shining on Linda Griffin Puckett. Linda has done outstanding work for The Hot Springs Unitarian Universalist Church as a board member and as the master of ceremonies for the SWUUW Conference that

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was held in Hot Springs during last February 2019. Her organizational skills and personal expertise made the conference OUTSTANDING! She is letting us know more about her by writing the biography that follows.



by; Linda Griffin Puckett

Linda Pippin Griffin Puckett grew up in central OK. She married young and flew away in 1970 to CA with her husband, John, who was a career Navy man. Consequently, their three children were born in OK, CA, and TN. She was a stay at home mom running an in-home child care business in the early 80's, then went to work in the electronics industry in the mid 80's. While working in Community Relations for Intel in CA she completed an undergraduate degree in business from University of Phoenix. The career she developed in Environmental Transportation Development in the 90's led her to work for the City of Anaheim, and the University of CA in San Diego in the early 2000's. In 2004 she returned to Oklahoma to help her aging parents and shortly thereafter met Charlie. They married in 2008 and retired to Hot Springs Village in late 2013. They became

members of UUCHS in early 2014 after attending twice and falling in love with the little congregation. About the time they started feeling like part of the UUCHS family, Charlie surprised everyone by making his final curtain call in August 2014. During her five years here, she has come to love and appreciate Unitarian Universalism and the people who choose to affiliate themselves with it. She participates in just about everything the group does and has served on the board since 2014 as secretary, membership chair, and vice-president.

Like many who are drawn to UU, Linda was formerly involved in fundamental Christianity. In the mid 80's she walked away from structured religion and began studying various religious and spiritual teachings and seeking her own truth. She is a certified Laughter Yoga Leader, Emotional Freedom Therapist, Life Cycle Celebrant, and Oneness Blessor. Meditation is at the core of her daily life. Linda stays busy keeping in touch with her children, grand and great grandchildren. She is active in many social groups, likes the outdoors, entertaining, cooking, learning, and adventure travel! This year she will visit St. Maarten in the Bahamas, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Batswana, Italy, Croatia, Sicily and the Greek Islands. Time permitting, she may end up in a few other places too.

Life has presented many difficult challenges. Probably the most difficult was losing her dream home, two cats, mother, and sweetheart Charlie, learning her best friend was dying of brain cancer and undergoing chemotherapy all in a span of 10 months. She says, "Faith in something loving and mighty, of which I believe I am a part, allows me to keep smiling and moving forward on this journey we call life."

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Thanks, Linda, for all you do for our church!



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I know we have all been tired of the rainy winter that we had. Look forward to more sunny days!