



SWUWWorld

*Women Helping Women
Lighting the Way to Possibilities*

Newsletter of Southwest UU Women

5202 Crawford Unit 19, Houston, TX 77004 swuuw@hotmail.com <http://www.swuuw.com>

Volume 2006 Spring Issue

DISCOVERING WHAT WE KNOW

SWUW LUNCHES at SWUUSI July 23-28

The SouthWest UU Women provide fresh, delicious, nutritious lunches at noon every day in the Multipurpose Building. Proceeds are used to help fund the organization and its projects. This year, for the first time, payment for 5 lunches is being included on the registration form (\$20 adult/\$14 child). Pre-paid lunches will be served first. Individual prices will be \$6.50 and \$5 at the door. Check the box marked SWUW lunches for the weekly rate.

Volunteers needed:

If you'd like to help out with this fundraising project, contact:

Elizabeth Muller,

president@swuuw.com

It started with a parade and only got better from there. The 20th Annual SWUW Conference, "Discovering What We Know," aimed to celebrate our past, present and future and packed a weekend full of proof of our strength and confidence.

Keynote speaker Rosemary Matson inspired us with stories of uppity UU women and gave promise of what can lie ahead for us. Rosemary continued to participate in all the weekend activities and led two more workshops.

Our Opening Ceremony started with a banner parade and set the stage for the weekend. The workshops featured dancing and singing, writing, talking, learning and inspiration. Many who had never seen The Vagina Monologues before both participated in the reading and enjoyed the presentation. Saturday night's Talent Show showcased our stars, especially the maidens dance and the Mardi Gras parade. The late night ritual raised a cone of energy from the spiral dance. The inspiring Closing Ceremony rejuvenated all of us to return to our lives refreshed and ready for anything.

All weekend the vendors tempted us with treasures we can't find anywhere else, and the Red Tent Room tempted us with luxurious space to relax and connect with each other.

For the future, we made astonishing quilt squares to create the Peace by Piece Quilt, to be continued at the Spring Conference and raffled off at GA. We also raffled off a beautiful stole (a Meryl Gunter creation) to raise seed money for scholarships.

Special thanks to all who poured in the hours to make the conference such a success: Brenda Baldwin, Myrtle McMahan, Lela Woods, Sue Young, Meryl Gunter, the women from Denton, First Jefferson, New Braunfels, Oak Cliff, and Westside, the entire board of SWUW, the workshop presenters, the vendors, and so many others. Thank you, and let's do it again next year!

- - - Amy Youngblood



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AN INVITATION TO JOIN A NEW SWUJW TASK FORCE

Created to develop resources and programs for UU women and women's groups in the district and to develop the means for exchanging the ideas and information about successful programming already in practice. Our immediate interest is in:

1. Creating the connections between our isolated groups that would allow for an active/free-flowing exchange of information between groups so that good ideas from one can be a light for another. We have some resources already available, and there is much more of value to be shared. Our web site could post this and serve as the hub, but what categories do we need? How to we get contributions? How do we get women to look at the website? Is there another venue for disseminating good ideas to inspire our separate groups?
2. Creating a guide to help individual groups host cluster meetings. I would like to see many day-long women's "conferences" that are geographically and financially friendly for a host of women who cannot come to an all district gathering. We need to make it easy for them to do this. If we have a resource that answers the question "Oh, my Goddess, how would we do that that?" then we can encourage cluster conferences much more easily. There may be some things like this happening already....there may be guidelines among you for doing such things. Can you help by sending information you already have or by sharing your experience in gatherings such as this?
3. Hearing what you think is most needed for our women district-wide that SWUJW could do something about.

Is this what you are interested in helping with? Have some ideas to contribute? I will look forward to hearing from you.

Julia Harris,
All Souls Unitarian
email: scotfiddle@aol.com
8637 S. 67th E. Ave., Tulsa, OK 74133

MEET NEW BOARD MEMBER REV. MARY McANALLY

Rev. McAnally, of Tulsa, was Oklahoma's first poet to receive the National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing award (1981-82), and the first woman to teach behind the walls at McAlester State Prison in Oklahoma (1978). She was also the first woman director of the first Women's Center in Oklahoma (Tulsa, 1978), the first State Director of the Oklahoma Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights (1982-90), and now on their board (it's now called the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice).

These firsts were among some others that got her listed in the 2006 *Oklahoma Woman's Almanac* published by the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women as one of Oklahoma's "Seventy Most Distinguished Women."

On page 6 you will find one of her poems, with more to follow in future issues of *SWUJWWorld*. Her newest book of poetry was just published in February 2006 by Partisan Press, and is titled: *Cosmic Rainbow: New & Selected Poems*.

*SWUW and UU Women and Religion
at General Assembly 2006
June 21-25, St. Louis*

This General Assembly SWUW has been working closely with UUA Women and Religion to plan a full program of *entertainment* and *challenging events* for women interested in **changing the world**.

Of special note this year are various events celebrating the 20th Anniversary of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*, the curriculum that changed the lives of so many women. Between now and GA in 2007, UU Women and Religion is working to revise and republish this life-changing program. They would like your input, both to help celebrate *Cakes* and to contribute to the new *Cakes*. For those of you participated in *Cakes*, you will also find a form to fill out on your experience and how it changed your life. Please send it to Shirley Ranck, the writer of that excellent curriculum. For those of you who have favorite images of the divine in female form, you are invited to nominate images to be used in the new *Cakes*; there's a form for that too.

For the two events held at First Unitarian Church in St. Louis right BEFORE GA begins—you must register ahead of time. Please use the form on page 4 to register for both events.

On Wednesday, June 21, UU Women and

Religion will hold its Annual Gathering, essentially an exciting think-tank that results in action planning. Anyone interested in helping formulate where they go from here is welcome to attend. The cost is on a sliding scale of \$50-\$25 and covers lunch and the use of the space.

Also you may register to attend the Tea & Cakes Celebration of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* to be held after the Annual Gathering. Here you are also welcome to show up at the door, but registering ahead of time would help us know how many scrumptious cakes to prepare. UU Women and Religion is requesting a \$10 donation and invites you to contribute more, as you are able. Donations for this event will help us create the new *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*.

We hope you will join us at our programs at General Assembly in St. Louis. If you cannot attend, we hope you will participate by sending us your stories and ideas for images.

In Sisterhood,
Laura Nagel,
Administrator

Women's Events in and Around General Assembly

Annual Gathering of UU Women and Religion

Wednesday, June 21, 11:00 a.m. –2:30 p.m. First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, 5007 Waterman Blvd.
Envision the future, plan for the coming year, and help develop our network. Open to anyone who is interested in women in the Unitarian Universalist movement. Includes lunch. Suggested contribution \$50-\$25. Register by June 1 at www.uuwr.org or send in registration form (page 4).

Tea And Cakes For The Queen Of Heaven

Wednesday, June 21, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Celebrate the 20th anniversary of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*. Honor author Shirley Ranck and all the women who made *Cakes* possible—those who trained the leaders, taught the course, participated in the classes, created new rituals and changed their lives. Help raise funds for the revision and republication of *Cakes*. Suggested donation \$10, \$100, \$1000, or more! RSVP by June 10.

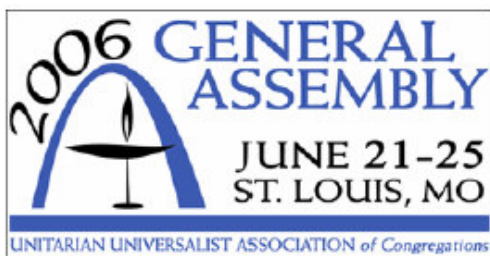
Supporting Women's Rights Worldwide: Model Programs For Empowerment

Thursday, June 22, 1:00 - 2:15 p.m. America's Center – 262
The lack of women's rights is a roadblock on the path to world peace, economic prosperity, and sustainable development. Panelists leading initiatives to empower women and improve the quality of their lives and those of their families discuss model programs for women's health and safety, education, economic participation, and political expression.

Queen Of Heaven Ritual

Friday, June 23, 10 - 11:30 p.m. Renaissance Grand – Majestic Ballroom D

(Continued on page 4)



This year SWUUV and UU Women and Religion will have a joint booth in the display area, sign the Birthday Card for Cakes, and add your contribution to the Altar for the Queens of Heaven, by a raffle ticket for a chance at winning the Peace by Piece Quilt.

REGISTER TODAY!
www.uua.org/ga

UPDATE ON THE PLANS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONVOCATION OF UU WOMEN February 2008 or 2009, New Orleans

SWUUV has just completed an application to the UUA Fund for Social Responsibility requesting a \$10,000 grant to provide seed money for the International Convocation of Unitarian and Universalist Women. We expect to hear the results of this round of funding by June.

Our panel of advisors has grown to include an impressive list of women from across the country:

Cathy Cordes, Executive Director, UU Partner Church Council

Rev. Olivia Holmes, Director of International Relations, UUA, 2000-2006

Rev. Carol Huston, Community UU Church of White Plains New York and co-sponsor of the Proposed Study Action Issue on Women's Rights Worldwide

Rev. Jill McAllister, Past President, International Council of Unitarians and Universalists

Rosemary Matson, Co-Chair, 1980 W&R Convocation

Elizabeth Muller, President, SWUUV

Dr. Christine Nielsen, Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, MD and co-sponsor of the Proposed Study Action Issue on Women's Rights Worldwide

Phyllis Rickter, Past President, UUWF

Misty Sheehan, Co-Chair, UU Women and Religion

Rev. Elvira Sienes, UU Church of the Philippines

Rev. Addae L. Watson, Consulting Community UU Minister, member UUA Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism Task Force, San Francisco, CA,

Rev. Dr. Helen Zidowecki, Co-Chair, UU Women's Heritage Society

Laura Nagel, SWUUV Administrator, *ex-officio*

One of the exciting new developments was the offer by New Orleans women to host our conference in 2009. The board thinks this will be an excellent site for the convocation. It has international draw, easy access for international flights, and our business can help with New Orleans recovery efforts.

Stay tuned for further updates!

FUTURE SWUUV CONFERENCE PLANS

- 2007 — MO Ranch, Texas
- 2008 — Little Rock, Arkansas
- 2009 — International Women's Convocation, New Orleans
- 2010 — Oakcliff, Texas
- 2011 — Galveston/Bay Area

POETRY
REV. MARY McANALLY

SOPHIA* MANDALA**

--for Mary Ann Lundy***

Those of us who line up too hard and fast
at one pole of the divine Circle
cannot know our own potential
rounded out in our compelled enemies. We
worship fragments, chopping off our own limbs
to fit our little image of Ultimate Beyond-Self,
not knowing we are never fully ourselves
til we reach into our far limits. Whatever
crosses borders is the breathing of time.
That breath, healing both ways, is God.
Godvoice wakes in virgin matrix,
limning fresh language from dark depths of self.
New begettings by women stirred by Spirit speech
bring new designs of mutuality, warm bodies
of thought and act, earth stretches of sky reaches.
We change the money-tables into altars
where no doves are garrotted, no lamb flesh burned,
but gifts displayed of thought and dream
arrayed in tongue and touch and tear.
With the final crucifix emptied, the last necessary
blood spilled, birth waters breaking from the side
of Lamb baptize a new beginning, amniotic blessing
of ancient essence new substance, how these wineskins
swell with birthings. These new motherings
spread the wings of soul past rainbow archings
into new lovings, jubilee**** of wisdom's daughters.

(This poem was written when I first affiliated as a minister with the Unitarian Universalist Association after being fired from a Presbyterian church and pastored the UU Church in Bartlesville, OK.)

**Sophia* is the Old Testament Hebrew feminine personification of Dame Wisdom.

***Mandala* is a Sanskrit word meaning "to have possession of one's essence." It is a sacred universal circular image of oneness and wisdom, with a center point out of which radiate diverse creativities. These symbols help draw truth out of our subconscious and connect our inner life to our outer life. At the "Re-imagining" conference in 1993 (part of the World Council of Churches Decade For Women) in Minneapolis, groups of eight women sat at round tables and drew communal mandalas. As a result of that conference's affirmation of women and commitment to lesbian women not to let the church persecute them, many women in several mainline denominations were "defrocked". I was "fired" from the Presbyterian church which I pastored at the time.

***Mary Ann Lundy, a Presbyterian clergywoman, helped organize the "Re-imagining" conference, and was the first clergywoman to be fired as a result of her participation in it. She was an executive with the Presbyterian Church USA.

*****Jubilee* is an Old Testament concept of an event signaling renewal to take place every 49 years, a time to forgive all debts and estrangements and start a new thing all over, fresh.

Meet New Board Member Mary Leggitt

Mary Leggitt has spent most of her adult life working in grass roots politics and supporting programs and activities to help women and children. She has also been a Unitarian Universalist since the early 1960's.

In 1975, she and a handful of other women in Fort Wayne, Indiana formed the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau to provide assistance and advocacy for women and their families. The agency is still going strong. Mary says she "admires particularly the Transitions program which helps women recovering from drug and alcohol abuse, and their children". She feels Transitions may be the most important program the Bureau has undertaken. "Though it is not designed for zillions of people, we really make a huge difference in the lives of these women and their kids." Leggitt served on the board of the Bureau at its inception and then again in 1999-2001, twice as president.

Mary has volunteered as manager of several political campaigns in Indiana, most recently for a person who was elected Mayor of a small town in that state. Prior to that time, she ran successful campaigns for two Fort Wayne City Council members and worked in campaigns for an Indiana State Senator and a U.S. Congresswoman.

Mary spent most of her working life in data processing and information technology. In the 1970's, she was at the University of Chicago Hospitals and Clinics (IL) as manager of forms and methods development, and in the nineteen years from 1974 to 1993, she was supervisor of systems development with the Fort Wayne (IN) Community Schools. She retired from the school system in 1993 and has used her retirement days to travel extensively throughout the world (on five continents!), as well as operate a desktop publishing business for several years.

When Mary lived in New York State in the early 1960's, she joined the Unitarian Church of Oneonta, New York. Each time she moved to another city, she joined the local U-U church. She was a member of Beverly Unitarian Church in Chicago, IL during her time there, and a member of the Fort Wayne congregation for twenty-eight years. She joined the U-U Church of Oak Cliff, Dallas in 2002 when she arrived in Red Oak, TX. Her priorities in a new town have always been: "Get a driver's license, register to vote and join the Unitarian church!" She has served on the board of the Oak Cliff church and is active in a number of efforts there, including the on-going development of a memory/meditation garden on the property.

Mary holds a degree in Fine Arts from Syracuse University (NY). Her reading tastes are eclectic, as well, and two of her major interests are gardening and birding. She has held a position on the Park Board in New Haven, IN and presently serves on the Park Board in Red Oak, TX. Additionally, she volunteers time each week to tutor third graders in reading at the local elementary school. "When you can read well, you can do about anything", Mary says. "And being there when the kids in my reading groups pass the TAKS test really makes my whole year!"

Mary grew up in East Orange, NJ and in Oneonta, NY. Mary has two children, three grandchildren, and two dogs and a cat. She is looking forward this year to her position as the new secretary of the SWUUW board.

LET'S RATIFY CEDAW

(Tune: "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean")

Slater Newman, June 1999 with last revision Oct. 2005

One hundred and eighty Stares Parties
Have ratified CEDAW so far,
Our country is not yet among them
So that women are still not at par.

The Foreign Relations Committee
Has held it for twenty-plus years.
We think it's a terrible pity
It's been hostage to Senators' fears.

Chorus:
Let's ratify CEDAW, CEDAW
Our country should ratify right away.
We're for CEDAW
It's good for the whole U.S.A.

We hope that the next time we gather
Our victory will have been won
And the ratification of CEDAW
Will no longer remain to be done.

Note: CEDAW refers to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is an international Bill of Rights for Women.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women

To join mail in the form below with your check to:Patti Clark, SWUUW Treasurer
710 D Bering Dr. Houston, TX 77057

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____

Area Code _____ Phone # _____

Fax _____

e-mail _____

Name of Women's Group _____

Name/City of Church or Fellowship _____

Please make check payable to :
SWUUW
SWUUW is a 501(c)3 organization.
Your donations are tax-exempt. If you need more proof of contribution than your check, please ask us to send you a letter.



Dues	\$	10.00
Amount Contributing to Scholarship		_____
Amount Contributing to Social Justice		_____
Total	\$	_____

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