

**THE MEMPHIS
UNITARIAN**

**THE
CHURCH
OF THE
RIVER**

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November 16, 2009
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STONE SOUP THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

SERMON: “ Pilgrims’ Progress”

Do you know the inside story of the Pilgrims? Come on Stone Soup Sunday and inhabit those pews that directly connect you to Plymouth Colony, the first Thanksgiving and the foundations for democracy in North America.

The Rev. Burton Carley will deliver the sermon at the eleven o'clock service

**Church of the River Calendar
Quotation of the Week**

“The Holy cannot be bound to an image of God. God dies to us so that the Holy can rise again.”
bc (20-21st century Unitarian Theologian)

Tuesday, November 17

7:30 p. m. Choir Practice in the Sanctuary

Saturday, November 21

2:30-4:30 p.m. Knitting etc. at the home of Jeane Umbreit,
158 S. Rose Rd. All knitters, crocheters, cross
stitchers, latch hoopers etc. are welcome.

Sunday, November 22

9:30 a.m. The Quest Group will meet in the Beacon
Room to consider “The Bible-Down & Dirty.”

10:00 a.m. Questions of Faith will continue discussion of
The Evolution of God by Robert Wright.
The High School Class will meet for Popcorn
Theology.

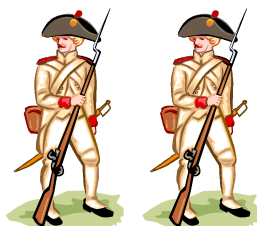
11:00 a.m. Worship Service in the Sanctuary
Childcare for infants and preschoolers
Kindergarten will go to their classroom for treasure
hunting. River Explorers (1-6) will go to their
workshops after the Chalice Service.

Noon Stone Soup will be served in the Mississippi River
Room.

12:30 The Lunch Bunch will meet at the home of Greta
Coger, 1433 W Crestwood. For directions or
suggestions, call Greta at 682-7046.

November 25

7:30 p.m. Choir Practice in the Sanctuary.



Announcements from the Children’s Ministry

Mary Park and Elizabeth Turner welcome infants and preschoolers to their classroom on Sunday mornings. Childcare is available 10-12:00. *Treasure Hunting* for four and five year olds, at 11:00, is open in the kindergarten classroom led by Kathy and Jerry Moore. Treasure Hunters will learn about the value of gratitude and Stone Soup this week.

River Explorers, children in grades 1-6, begin their Sunday morning in the Chalice Room at 11:00 for worship led by Buss and Holly McCormick. Following the Chalice Service, all children will engage in special Stone Soup activities in their workshops this week led by Christi and Norm Shaw.

Our annual Stone Soup Feast will be celebrated on Sunday, Nov. 22. Children are asked to bring sliced French bread to contribute to the meal. Adults are asked to bring chopped vegetables and fruit. “We shall never go hungry again, now that we know how to make soup from stones.”

Our Whole Lives will not meet this Sunday. Middle School youth are asked to serve on the Hospitality Junior Team to prepare for our Stone Soup Feast. Check in with Mrs. Billmeier in the Mississippi River Room when you arrive Sunday morning.

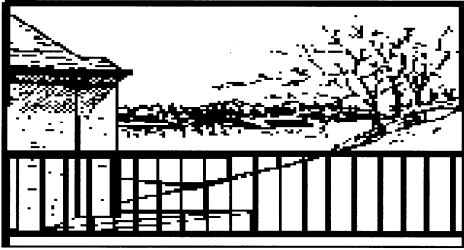
The YRUU will meet at 10 for *Popcorn Theology* with Cindy McMullen.

On behalf of the six youth and two chaperones who spent last weekend in New Orleans, a huge thank you for the financial support offered our Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. These youngsters were able to enjoy new cultural experiences, visit with Unitarians in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, see first-hand both the devastation and community recovery efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina flooding, and volunteer their time with the free medical clinic offered by C.A.R.E. in New Orleans last Saturday.

And more thanks to everyone who “made Halloween count” for UNICEF. If you didn’t get your coins in to the church, you can still donate directly to UNICEF at any Coinstar location. Other gifts to UNICEF may be made at their website. www.unicef.org. Thanks to your generosity and a successful Trunk or Treat Event, the Church of the River contributed \$650 to the United Nations International Children’s Relief Fund.

The Care Coordinator for November is Alice Fleming.
You can reach Alice at 755-3418 or
Fleming.Alice@gmail.com

REFLECTIONS FROM THE RIVER



Unitarians have a special relationship to our national celebration of Thanksgiving. The relationship is that Unitarianism in America is directly descended from the Pilgrims who landed in New England. They came across the Atlantic to seek religious freedom. Bradford tells us in his history how the Pilgrims received their Puritan name from the establishment church in England: "In order the more to cast contempt upon the sincere servants of God, they opprobriously gave them the name of 'Puritans,' which it is said the novations assumed out of pride." It is interesting to note that the Unitarians would later gain their name in a similar manner, used as a pejorative term to emphasize their anti-trinitarian attitude.

The Puritans became known as the Congregationalists (today they are merged into the United Church of Christ) because of their form of ecclesiastical organization which we continue to use today. In this system of polity, church authority is vested in the local congregation. We also learn from Bradford two other traditions we continue. He wrote that "as the Lord's free people joined themselves together by covenant as a church, in the fellowship of the gospel to walk in all His ways, made known, or to be made known to them..." So we also share in the affirmation that revelation is not sealed but can still be known to us.

In the 18th century, the New England Puritan tradition split between the evangelicals and the rationalists. This cleavage became pronounced in the early 19th century. The liberal party, the Unitarians, argued for the potential of human goodness and moral development. Many of those faithful to orthodox Calvinism withdrew from their congregations, and a legal ruling over such a split at Dedham, MA in 1820, served to give the Unitarians control of the church buildings and properties. Hence many original Puritan churches of Massachusetts became Unitarian, including the first Pilgrim church founded in 1620 at Plymouth. And that's our special relationship to the Pilgrim story and Thanksgiving.

bc

Outreach

Help keep our adopted school students toasty warm this Fall and Winter with your donation of new or gently used children's sized coats and jackets. Please leave them in or near the Shady Grove Elementary bin in the Mississippi River Room.



Shady Grove Elementary Rocks!

Last Thursday I spent a glorious morning with a group of second graders who had the opportunity to develop their academic and creative talents through projects showcased outside their classroom. As jurors for this exhibition, Jerry and I were asked to evaluate these works on three dimensions: Creative, Analytical and Practical. My group of children had learned about their neighborhood, their community amenities such as museums, parks and tourist attractions as well as the Universities in the state of Tennessee. I spoke with each child to find out what they had learned from this project and I was amazed at the level of comprehension attained through their participation. Some kids were shy, some were so proud to share and all were thrilled to be able to show what they had done to a member of the community.

Following the evaluations of our respective classes, Jerry and I walked through the building taking in the amazing projects these kids had produced. Subjects on the solar system, geology, farming and ecology, customs from around the world and even an ocean project (by kindergartners) with little crabs made from egg cartons.

Our adopted school is a real treasure filled with children from many countries who are academically engaged with each other, *This Exhibition of Student Work* will again be presented next April and I hope that many of you will serve as jurors as well as mentors to these deserving kids. You can learn more by going online to www.mcsk12.net and click on the Exhibition of Student Work Banner.

I sure hope many COR members will sign on to be a juror at our adopted school next spring to let these kids see how much we care. Dee Billmeier

The Welcoming Team is expanding to take an even more proactive approach to its mission —improving hospitality to visitors and integrating new members into the congregation. There are many different talents that we need to greet, call and shepherd— can you help?

Please contact Alice Fleming at fleming.alice@gmail.com or 755-3418 if you would like to learn more.

Among Our Members

Jeane Umbreit's Ghost series of pigment prints will remain on display at the Grove Grill. There are also a few from **Gondwanaland** and from **The Garden** hanging too. And Jeane says there is also a very nice **Pinkney Herbert** painting over the bar. Go for dinner or just walk in and look at the paintings.

Rachell Anderson is having a writer's workshop "**Turning Memories into Memoirs: School Daze**" on Sat. November 21st, 2009 from 1-3:30 p.m. at the Tunica Museum. Contact Rander5022@Wildblue.net

Stone Soup Next Sunday

Much like the traveling soldiers who convinced the villagers that they could make delicious soup out of stones and water, so shall we! And it will be shared by all for Sunday lunch.

Please bring one cup of cut-up raw vegetables and one cup of cut-up raw fruit and leave it in the Mississippi River Room before the service this Sunday. Then plan to stay and partake in the

delicious results of everyone's contribution to the boiling stones. Magic indeed!

OUTREACH NEWS Donations for our Soup Kitchen are needed and appreciated. Make checks out to the church and note it is for the "soup kitchen".

