



Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Quarterly Newsletter

October-December 2017

Welcome to the new AUUF Quarterly Newsletter!



We are trying something new! Well, really, we are always trying something new. Every year brings fresh ideas—from long-time members, new AUUF members, and new AUUF Board members. In our community we have always benefited from mixing the “tried and true” with brand-new ideas to enhance Fellowship life. We have seen this in the growth and maintenance of our buildings and grounds, how we connect with new and potential members, our fund-raising efforts, religious education (RE) classes, and now...tah-dah! We present to you, the Quarterly Newsletter.

Why quarterly? One reason, very simply, is to utilize other media to get the word out about the usual information previously found in the newsletter. For instance, the monthly list of Sunday Services will be printed on a postcard you can pick up at the Fellowship. They will be highly take-able and post-able and, hopefully, share-able. Also, usually on Fridays, the information about Sunday Services for the current and upcoming weeks will be announced via the AUUF listserve. That change has already been in effect. Have you noticed all the information that Billye includes now in “The Week Ahead @ AUUF”? Fantastic! There will be other changes yet to come. A new feature in the newsletter, “Committee Happenings” explains the goals of some of these communications changes. Be sure to check it out (page 9)!

The second reason we are “going quarterly” is to make our newsletter content more variable. We’ll still have a note from the (currently interim-) Minister, the AUUF President, and the Director of Religious Education, but they’ll be oriented more toward big-picture overviews. For instance, as you’ll read on page 3, instead of announcing the specific sermon topics for the coming three months, Pam is letting us know the themes she’ll be working with over those months. We’d also be thrilled with more content from all of YOU! Submissions of poetry, prose, pictures, and essays, by AUUF members and friends—including from the children of the Fellowship—will give us the opportunity to hear from all generations (see Submission Guidelines on page 8). We’d love your input as we create a quarterly newsletter we’ll all enjoy. Since this is the first issue, we haven’t branched out too much yet. But, with your help, we will!

Whether you are submitting or offering feedback, we’d love to hear from you! communications@auuf.org



AUUF Ingathering, August 2017

AUUF MISSION



The Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is a community dedicated to affirming a reverence for life and enriching the spiritual lives of its members. Here we honor the one and the many; here we welcome a diversity of thoughts, beliefs and passions; here we speak without fear and listen with open hearts. We gather to care for one another, share our burdens and joys, and celebrate life's passages.

Strengthened by this fellowship, we bring a liberal religious presence to our larger community and work for a safe and just world.

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May your life preach more
loudly than your lips.

- William Ellery Channing

True religion is the life we live,



not the creed we profess.

A Message from the Minister

Dear members and friends,

Do you ever read the “wayside pulpit” messages in front of churches—sometimes a passage from scripture, sometimes an uplifting sentiment, sometimes a silly pun? Unlike the signboards in front of our Unitarian Universalist church and fellowship buildings, they usually do not announce the topic of the Sunday service. Perhaps the topic of the week doesn't influence people's decision to attend or not.

Many Christian denominations follow a “lectionary,” which specifies a passage from the Bible as the theme for all congregations on a given Sunday. Thus, all the preachers in that tradition have the same starting point for their sermons. In addition to providing an on-ramp for writing, this practice has the effect of uniting



all congregations by their focus on a common biblical theme.

Unitarian Universalists draw on a variety of sources for wisdom and inspiration, and we do not follow a lectionary. However, in recent years, sequences of monthly themes have been created, which our congregations may choose to follow. These provide a platform for collaboration among leaders of a congregation's programs and among UU worship leaders around the country. I have adapted some of these ideas for monthly themes to the traditions at AUUF, to help us plan music, storytelling, and readings as well as service topics.

The themes for October, November, and December are “courage,” “beauty,” and “hope,” respectively. Let me know what you think—and I look forward to seeing you on Sunday!

In faith,

Rev. Pam Gehrke, PhD
Interim Minister minister@auuf.org

Name Our Newsletter. Submit Your Suggestion. Win a Prize!

Our newsletter is changing. Let's give it a new name! What title do you envision on the masthead? Submit your suggestions via the AUUF Facebook page or by writing it down and dropping it in the suggestion box during Sunday Coffee Hour. The deadline for submissions is Sunday, October 29.

AUUF members and friends will be able to review the complete list of suggested titles and register their comments and preferences. The list will be posted on AUUF.org and the AUUF Facebook page, and in the sanctuary near the greeter's table. A decision will be made at the Board meeting on November 12 and announced shortly thereafter on AUUF.org and the AUUF Facebook page, and during announcements on November 19.

And the prize? A \$10 coupon you can apply to your winning bid at the 2017 AUUF Annual Auction.

In the Loop

Not long ago, I emailed everyone that our search for a “permanent” Minister (more accurately, a “settled” Minister) had slowed, on purpose. As laid out by the UUA, a proper search for a settled Minister is an 18-month affair. Now ours will be 30 months.

That sounds bad, right? It sounded bad to me when I first heard about the change! (What “caused” the delay?!! I wondered). The Search Committee wrote a report on the new turn of events, and presented it at the September 10th Board meeting (to the “Search Crew,” the Search Committee, the Board, and Pam). A remarkable thing happened. Unlike my kneejerk reaction to the news, there was no hand-wringing, no cries of “Woe is me!!” either in the report, or in the discussion that followed. There was no finger-pointing, no assignment of blame. Rather, the Search Crew focused on the future, asking only, “What comes next?” Eventually we discovered that the change in the length of the search was actually Good News, albeit wrapped in a box marked “Bad News.” Once we ripped open the box and threw it aside, we were glad we had received the package. It is a testament to the wisdom of all the individuals involved (with the possible exception of me) that we could do that.

Why is a twelve-month delay good news? The biggest “positive” is that we now have breathing room: enough time to move through all the many tasks before us in a calm and deliberate way. And there are a lot of tasks before us, many of which involve the entire congregation. But now we can do the search “right.” Another “positive” is the extension won’t cost us any extra money, I think.

Because Pam’s contract expires at the end of June, we will need to attract and hire a new Interim Minister to take over after Pam’s departure. The new Interim Minister will serve one year, until the new settled Minister arrives (in the summer of 2019). The new interim Minister is a “positive” in the following sense: we as a congregation get to experience a new Minister with a different style,

with different emphases...with different everything, probably. Most of us, I’d guess, have come to know only two UU ministers: Diana and Pam. Getting to know one more will give us all additional perspective to help us choose wisely when we call a settled Minister.

This would seem to be a good place to stop talking about The Search. But there’s more. It’s mainly just me thinking aloud. Sorry. This next bit is not the official Loop; it’s just a little loop in my head.

“Settled” and “interim” are adjectives that appear before the word “Minister” in the UU lexicon. There is another one: “developmental.” A developmental Minister focuses on either a particular, big project that doesn’t ever start or a knotty problem that doesn’t ever end. Does our Fellowship have a big project (one or more) that we need to begin? Do we have a persistent problem (one or more) that we can’t seem to move past? Maybe. I’ve thought about Youth Ministry and/or Young Adult Ministry for years. Is that a project we need to start?

Have you ever had thoughts that began, “What this Fellowship really needs (or really should do) is...”? Are these thoughts recurrent? Are we stuck in a rut? Is something missing at AUUF? Talk to me!! Or talk to any of your Board members (Greg Schmidt, Darrell Crutchley, Amy Phillips, Kristen Starr, Kitty Frey, Laura Kloborg, Marcia Rossi, and Shawn Jacobsen).

Do you have a picture in mind of what this Fellowship should be, what it can be? Whether or not we arrange for a developmental Minister to come here (and they’re very hard to get; the odds are long), let’s talk.

What do you want this Fellowship – your Fellowship—to be?



Until we loop again,

Peter Livant
AUUF President
president@auuf.org

On Religious Education

Our first day of RE was great. I had a chance to sit in with the youngest class while they began to learn the Spirit Play way. I stepped into the middle class for a couple of minutes and they were really busy in their Padawan training. Next week I will join the oldest class as we head out to do some water testing. Wow, I love my job! I only hope all of you take advantage of the opportunities you have to get to know these young people of AUUF.

We have made many changes this year. One change is that the RE calendar will be



accessible through Google Calendar. I will be sending teachers, parents, and youth a link and then everyone will have the calendar right in the palm of their hand. There will also be a copy on the website for those who want to access it the “old fashion” way.....Hahaha...How life is changing!

Enough about my perspective and those things that are changing. What is really going to make reading this RE article worthwhile is below.

Happy Reading!!
Julie Meadows,

Director of Religious Education
dre@auuf.org

A Glimpse from the Youngest Class (...with a new name!)

Spirit Play Manatees (3-6 year olds)

Our class is off to an exciting start this RE year! September 24th was our first class and 8 of our 10 “manatees” joined us for our very first Spirit Play class! Since Spirit Play is new for both the teachers and the children, we will spend the first few classes getting used to the new protocols: removing shoes and putting on softer, quieter



footwear; calming our bodies before joining the circle; paying attention to one another and the Storyteller during circle time; choosing a work mat and work tray to explore hands-on activities; and cleaning up after ourselves at the end of the class. Soon we will move on to the Spirit Play stories. After all our preparation, the children will be prepared to learn and begin practicing our “Promises” (UU Principles), as we continue to explore the existential questions of life in both our class and the larger world. Stay tuned for more information. and/or go to <http://www.spirit-play.com>.

A Glimpse from the Middle Class (read on to learn their new name):

Our first class introduced our Star Wars theme for the year. Jedi masters Billye Welburn and Lisa Nathan facilitated. We welcomed guest teacher Jolly Roberts who is on call to act as a substitute.

Jedi Master Conar Rochford called on his mobile phone from the massage therapy workshop he was attending. Conar face-timed with the class (common today but when Star Wars first appeared was very futuristic). We achieved consensus to name our class: **The Padawan Learners** after the Jedi-in-training padawans.

[RE: A glimpse from the middle class, continued on page 6...]

[RE: A glimpse from the middle class, continued from page 5...]

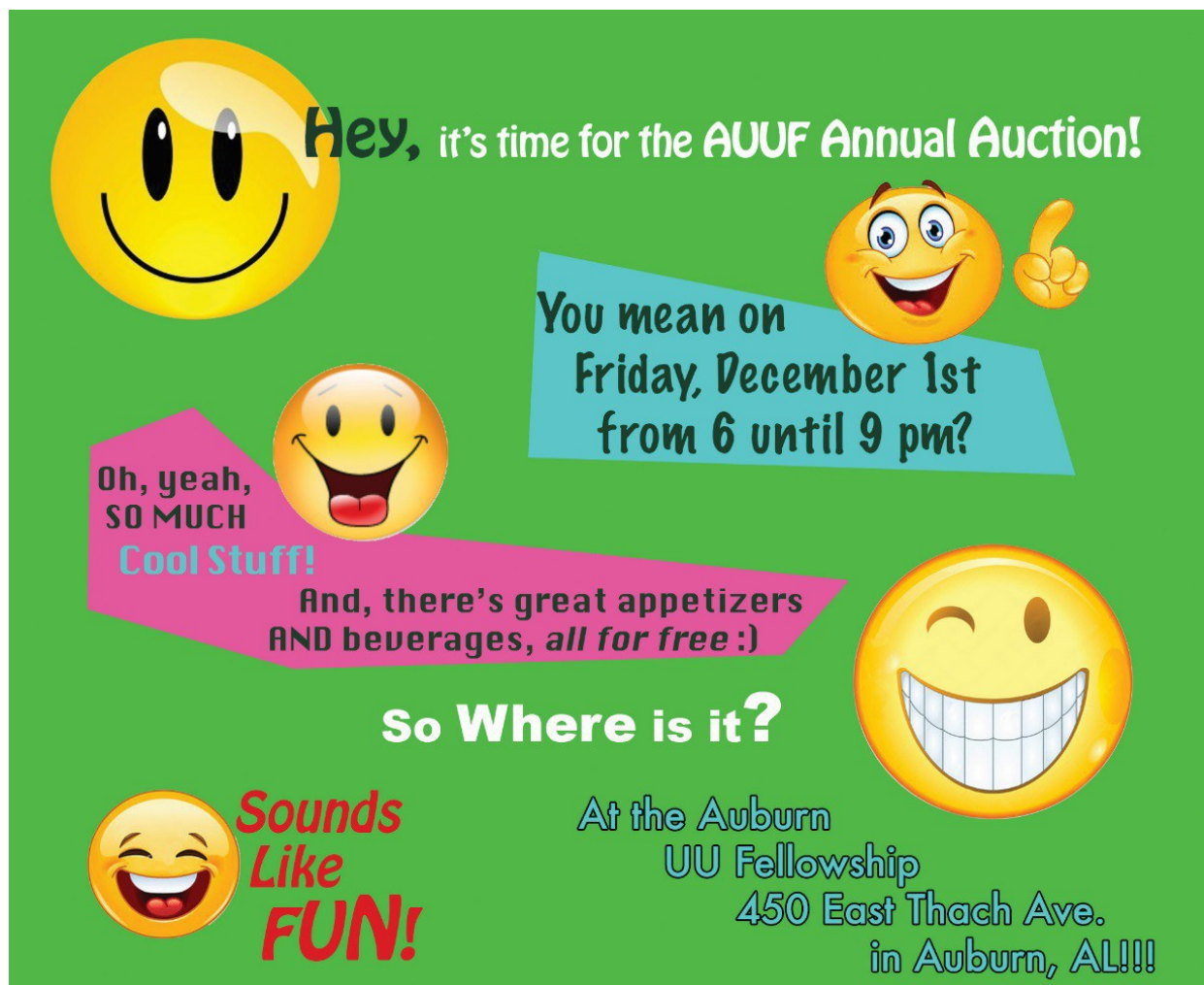
Our first activity was a mindfulness exercise using our breath to focus our mind for clarity. We each created a colorful CHAOS JAR filled with water, sparkles, sand, and food coloring as ingredients. When we shook our jars we saw an analogy to our chaotic minds full of scrambled and jumbled emotions. The particles clouded the transparency of the glass, analogous to all the Chaotic emotions we accumulate throughout busy days.

We were reminded that eliminating the chaos can be achieved with conscious breathing; when the sand and glitter fell to the bottom of our jars and we could see clearly through the glass. Clarity helps us focus and make more thoughtful decisions. Take a few deep breaths and breathe deeply ... find your focus before acting impulsively!

We also braided three strands of yarn in honor of the hair style of Jedi-in-training. All in attendance had fun and we look forward to future weeks of Jedi lessons.

A Glimpse from the Oldest Class (check out their new name!!)

Peace Train (the new name) is looking forward to saving the world through being kind to animals at the Humane Society, ending pollution through Alabama Water Watch, and making the world a more beautiful place by elaborately decorating our homeroom. We're going to have a great time getting to know each other.



Hey, it's time for the AUUF Annual Auction!

You mean on Friday, December 1st from 6 until 9 pm?

Oh, yeah, SO MUCH Cool Stuff!

And, there's great appetizers AND beverages, all for free :)

So Where is it?

Sounds Like FUN!

**At the Auburn UU Fellowship
450 East Thach Ave.
in Auburn, AL!!!**

The UU Service Committee and Hurricane Response

What does UUSC do when disaster hits? It looks to help those most at risk while also assisting UU congregations and members.

Its response to Hurricane Harvey shows how UUSC assists in disasters. It is joining with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) on a recovery and relief fund. Half of all funds raised will go to at-risk populations served by UUSC partners and the other half of the funds will support Unitarian Universalist congregations and members of those congregations most affected by the storm. Those funds will be administered by a group of leaders in the UUA's Southern Region, which includes the states across the southeast from Texas to South Carolina, and from most of Virginia to Florida.

Using their eye-to-eye partnership model, UUSC will work with and support local grassroots community partners on the ground in Texas serving at-risk populations who may not be able to access relief services and who are traditionally left out of mainstream response efforts. UUSC and their partners will work to bolster locally led relief efforts that are serving immigrant families in particular mothers and their children.

Working with partners to make funds go as far as possible and get to those in need as quickly as possible is typical of how UUSC operates. Learn more at <http://www.uusc.org/donate-in-response-to-disaster/>.

To donate directly to the Harvey relief fund, go to <https://giving.uua.org/harvey-floods>.

Consider becoming a UUSC member. Membership starts at \$40.00 dollars, you become a member for a year membership. Donations of \$125 or more are matched by the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock, NY. For more information on becoming a member go to <http://www.uusc.org/membership/>.

Cindy Reinke
UUSC Chair, uusc@auuf.org

Announcements and Events

From the Board of Trustees

To keep AUUF members informed about what is happening in matters of Fellowship governance, the Board of Trustees will be publishing a monthly list of Board actions taken. These actions will be listed in an addendum to the monthly meeting minutes and posted on the Auuf.org website. The link to the most recent addendum will appear on the AUUF homepage (www.auuf.org) under the heading "Recent Posts." Previous addenda (from September 2017 forward) can be found by clicking on the "About" menu, at the top of the homepage, and then on "Our Governance." Individuals who wish to read the full meeting minutes can request a copy from the Board Secretary (email: secretary@auuf.org).

New Facebook Group

Want to connect and share with people at AUUF? This group is for you!

facebook.com/groups/MembersAndFriends

Invite folks to community events, solicit volunteers, ask advice, get rid of stuff— do anything you currently do through the email list serve! Great for catching the attention of those who suffer from email-phobia.

Contact Billye Welburn (wdw0001@gmail.com) for help with Facebook, notification settings, or any other concerns. This group is private—people outside the group can't see content. However, the group's member list is public.

The Humanist Group

The Humanist group will hold its monthly potluck and discussion on Sunday, October 15th, 5:00 -7:00 p.m. in the AUUF Busch Center. Our topic for discussion is **"Presidential Pardon Authority?"** President Trump has contended that he might just pardon himself for all of his alleged crimes. Can he do this? Most legal scholars argue that he cannot. We will discuss the parameters of the Chief Executive's Pardon Authority and the arguments that support a limitation that is not in Article II.

Our speaker this month is Dr. Clif Perry who is a Hudson Professor in the Department of Political Science at Auburn University. He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the JD from Faulkner University, Jones Law School, as well as an LL.M. from Loyola University Chicago, School of Law in Health Law and an LL.M. from the University of Arizona, College of Law in Federal Indian Law. Dr. Perry has been admitted to the Bar in Alabama (1990), New Mexico (1996), Navajo Nation (1997), Jicarilla Apache Nation (1998), and Arizona (2004).

Automate Your Pledges!

Greg Schmidt, here, Vice President of Finance. Let's talk money. I'm writing to encourage you to consider automating your pledge payments to the AUUF.

Some people like the tradition of writing a check and placing it in the basket during the offertory. I get it. It's old-school and a good way to not feel awkward when the basket goes by. Others, like me, often have trouble both finding our checkbook and making it to the service in time for the offertory!

Are you interested in setting up a recurring pledge payment to the AUUF? I'll be happy to walk you through it! So will Darrell Crutchley! We both have enrolled in bill-pay and found it to be relatively easy and quite a convenience. Come talk to me or Darrell during coffee hour or over potluck! Or send me an email (finance@auuf.org). I would be happy to help you through it. I would be interested to know if you would like to see other methods made available for making pledges and donations to the fellowship.

Submission Guidelines

Articles for the AUUF Newsletter (max. 500 words) may be submitted to communications@auuf.org for consideration. (Contact the office if you have ideas for longer articles.) Poetry, photos, and art work are also welcome. Deadline for the next issue (covering January through March 2018) is December 1, 2017.

Announcements and events for the AUUF Newsletter and its website (www.auuf.org) may also be submitted at any time to communications@auuf.org. Please include a title, inclusive dates and times, location, blurb (max. 100 words), cost (if any), and contact information. Longer announcements may be considered with approval; contact the Communications Committee at the aforementioned email address. All submissions are subject to editorial discretion and revision.

It's Auction Time!

Our Annual Auction takes place Saturday, December 1, from 6-9 pm (see Terry's graphic on page 6). Start thinking now about what amazing items or services you have to contribute! Go to auuf.org/auuf-annual-auction to see last year's catalog for inspiration. Also, consider being one of the many volunteers needed to make the action a success. Talk with Laura Kloberg to find the task that best fits you. This night is a blast with food, drink, the live auction, and the silent auction. Fun AND fundraising for our Fellowship... what could be better!?

Committee Happenings: Communications

New in my role as Communications Committee chair, I emailed our President to ask what he and the Board would like for our communications to look like. *Don't be limited by "what is",* he replied. *Ask "what should be" and then answer your own question.* Darn! Not the answer I'd wanted! But I thought about that and then visited the websites of other UU congregations to get a sense of what was possible. Then I talked to a small, unscientific sample of AUUF members and friends about the information they were getting (or missed getting), what they wanted, and how they wanted to get it. Finally, I talked with people directly involved with what and how AUUF communicates inside and outside of our Fellowship. And, voila!

In a nutshell, the communications strategies listed below are meant to address two broad goals:

- Expand members' knowledge of and engagement in the activities of Fellowship life (beyond what happens on Sundays).
- Attract and encourage visitors and guests to learn more about AUUF.

The most visible change is moving from a monthly to a quarterly newsletter (issued in October, January, April, and July). But wait! Isn't that less communication about Fellowship life? Actually, it allows us to tell different kinds of stories about our community--its people and activities— for these purposes:

- Showing how we put our UU principles into action.
- Encouraging and inspiring active participation in the life of the Fellowship.
- Highlighting the many forms of ministry that serve our congregation and the community-at-large.
- Providing our members an outlet for creative self-expression and reflections on topics important to our communal lives.

We'll post the newsletter on the AUUF website, snail-mail hard copies to members who don't use the internet, provide printed copies to Sunday greeters to offer to visitors/guests, and leave copies on the entryway table.

Other elements of the plan include:

- (1) A monthly, oversized postcard listing Sunday Services info. Available via snail-mail for members who don't use the internet or at the greeter's table for members, guests, and visitors.
- (2) A weekly email entitled, "The Week Ahead @ AUUF". Summarizes at-a-glance 10 days of Fellowship activities. Appears via the AUUF listserve and is printed on the back of Sunday's "Order of Service".
- (3) A revitalized AUUF.org webpage. Content updated on a weekly basis, including columns written by our minister, president, and RE director, as well as posts featuring an AUUF committee, small group, or upcoming special event. Look for interviews with new and "old" members, committee activities, governance and search committee updates, new photos, and creative submissions by members.

We'll be learning as we go and tweaking appropriately. Many hands make light work, so if you have even a small contribution you could make to the Communications plan to enhance our storytelling about AUUF, or if you could help with snail-mailing or on-line tasks, please contact me.

*Communication leads to community,
that is, to understanding, intimacy, and mutual valuing.*
-Rollo May

Ellen Abell
Communications Chair
communications@auuf.org



Faith in Small Actions

By Tim Atkins

<http://www.uua.org/braverwiser/faith-small-actions>

"It used to be thought that the events that changed the world were things like big bombs, maniac politicians, huge earthquakes, or vast population movements, but it has now been realized that this is a very old-fashioned view... The things that really change the world, according to Chaos theory, are the tiny things. A butterfly flaps its wings in the Amazonian jungle, and subsequently a storm ravages half of Europe."

—Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, in *Good Omens*

When I first learned about the Chaos Theory during the summer before my 8th Grade Year, I never expected it to have such a profound impact on my spirituality.

Meteorologist Edward Lorenz first "discovered" the Chaos Theory when he realized that one infinitesimally small change can lead to a dramatically different result. And he proved it with math. In a complex system, one small change can lead to a result that hadn't ever been imagined.

Meteorologists dubbed this the butterfly effect, which hypothesizes that a butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the globe could cause a tornado in another. The weather system is too complex to ever fully be predicted – one small change, the butterfly flapping its wings, could lead to a dramatically different result in the end. The more complex the system, the more likely it is a small change can have a drastic impact.

Now, what system out there is more complex than life? If the Chaos Theory proves that in complex systems, small changes lead to



dramatic results, then it follows that the Chaos Theory also proves that in *life*, a small change can also lead to a dramatic result.

This is an incredibly empowering thought to me: small changes in my personal life can lead to dramatic improvements years down the road. And the small changes I try to make through engaging in social justice work have the potential to change the entire world.

So often I've felt overwhelmed about social justice. How can I change the entire world? It's too hard, too complicated to change the world — I'm just one person. How often have you felt something similar?

We have to have faith to take these small actions. We have to have faith that in the end our small actions matter, that our small actions will lead to the result we want. Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't. We can't predict what will happen when a small change has been entered into a complex system; the only thing we can predict is that we've changed the future in some way.

Every single one of us can make a change, today, that will change the future in ways we can't possibly imagine today. What change will you make?

In The Morning by the Sea

by Conrad Ross

Enjoy nothing
Sun lifts shadows across sand-paths
Honey in your coffee
Feelers from under shells
Sand scratching's from holes
Some small
Some mysteriously large
Chills because it's chilly
Sun rising from darkness
Another thing forgotten
Happy flashes in make dues
Did you make coffee?
One tablespoon per cup
Gobs of sunscreen
Sweater if chilled
Warm socks at the beach?
Found the sugar
Two packs per bowl
Its seven o'clock
Mumblings from the bedroom
Fishing is like finding shells
Found a big one; almost complete
Catches anew
Another anew
One step after the other
Are you having fun yet?
I found the knife.

Poem

by Monty Retzlaff-Taylor

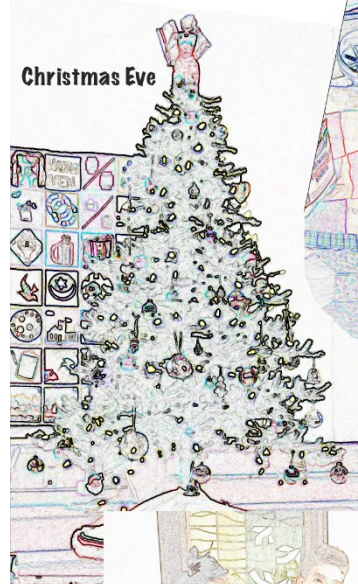
Clock tic-tock
half upon a-time
tic-tock tic-tock
the clock goes bing bang a-bash

***Look forward
to some
Fall Events...***

to feed your soul.



Day of the Dead



Christmas Eve



Bread Communion



Annual AUUF Auction

Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
P.O. Box 669
Auburn, AL 36831-0669

Location: 450 East Thach Ave.

Auburn UU

Who's Who

Interim Minister
Rev. Pamela Gehrke, PhD, 650-291-5539
minister@auuf.org

President Peter Livant,
president@auuf.org

Director of Religious Education
Julie Meadows, dre@auuf.org

Office Administration Billye Welburn,
OfficeAUUF@gmail.com

Minister Emeritus
Rev. Diana Jordan Allende, 334-501-8621
dallende1010@gmail.com

Connect with Us

Sunday Services always at 10:00 a.m.

Web Site: www.auuf.org

Email Listserv: Connect@auuf.org

To Subscribe: auuf.org/subscribe

Facebook.com/AuburnUUFellowship

Newsletter submissions:
communications@auuf.org

Volunteers are
the Heart of
AUUF

Please remember to
volunteer to help our
community thrive!!

www.auuf.org/signup