

Neshoba Church- FEBRUARY 2012 Newsletter

7350 Raleigh LaGrange Road
Cordova, TN 38018
901-266-2626 - www.neshobauu.org



The purpose of Neshoba Church is to provide a caring community that fosters spiritual growth through free thought and respect for personal beliefs. This church seeks the wisdom of many religious traditions and encourages the expression of our ideals in service to all people.

Neshoba Church: A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

February 2012 Worship Calendar

Sunday Morning Worship begins at 11 a.m.

February is Black History Month

- 5** *You Don't Have to Believe to Serve*
(Bring a Friend Sunday) We will also be recognizing our new members during the service.
- 12** *Must You Be My Valentine?*
- 19** *Bending Towards the Light*
Pulpit Guest: Lynne Shulz
- 26** *Rosa Parks and the Power of Quiet*

In the Interim: *Take the Liturgical Mission Statement Challenge!*

By Rev. Cynthia Prescott



In October 2012, the Neshoba Board ratified a new congregational mission statement: *To foster the search for answers to life's important questions in a safe, supportive, inclusive environment, by affirming Unitarian Universalism's religious heritage of respect for human dignity and social justice.* Prior to ratification, a draft mission statement was posted in anticipation of comments from you, the congregation. None were forthcoming. Taking (or mistaking?) silence for enthusiasm, the Board took a vote and the draft became fact.

A mission statement is a declaration of an organization's reason for being. The underlying idea and hope is that those who inhabit the organization will rally around the mission statement as a means of focusing the decisions they make and the deeds they do in the name of—in this case—Neshoba Church.

Some congregations recite their mission statement every Sunday as an affirmation. This can be a fine thing to do if one's mission statement also works as liturgy. Neshoba's statement is elegant. I say this not only as one of the people who drafted it (with Will Batts and Ralph Chumbley), but also as a person who appreciates concise, direct language. Concise and direct indeed, but liturgy? Not so much.

Liturgy is a catch-all word for just about everything in a Sunday service that is not the sermon. Liturgy is the chalice lighting and the Peace candles. It is the responsive reading, the prayer, the benediction, even sometimes the music. Liturgy is the "affirmation of covenant" Neshoba recites every Sunday in a classic expression of Unitarian Universalist faith that's been around in much the same words since I was a child.

What if Neshoba could recite two affirmations? Not both in the same service, of course, but on alternate Sundays?

Here's where you come in...

I'm looking for a few people interested in collaborating with me to liturgize Neshoba's new mission statement into an affirmation. The affirmation can, and should, be longer than the original statement, making use of images and word-pictures, while retaining the same message. There is no rush. We'll take as much time as we need, but we will assign ourselves a deadline.

Liturgy (from the Greek) translates roughly to *work of the people*. In traditional parlance it refers to fully-scripted ritual, such as a Catholic mass, in which the people participate but which they did not actually *create*. In contemporary religious communities, including some Catholic ones, members of the congregation are often invited to create *words for worship*, a less starchy synonym for liturgy.

Consider this column my invitation to you. Call or email within two weeks of receiving this newsletter and we'll set a date to get started.

Blessings,

Rev. Cynthia

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee meets every 2nd Wednesday to help plan upcoming services and to discuss how to make worship meaningful at Neshoba. In addition to Sunday services, we have begun to offer a Wednesday evening Vespers service on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Join us for this shorter, reflective service as we search for a moment of peace in our hectic mid-week. If you are interested in helping make worship meaningful (on Sundays and/or Wednesdays), we are looking for story tellers, pulpit guests, and guest musicians. Join us at our next meeting (Wed, Feb 8th) at 6:30 at Neshoba. Come early to eat with the Wednesday Night Live regulars! For details, contact Chrysti Hogan at worship@neshobauu.org.

Director of Religious Education
Sarah Osborne, DRE



How do you teach Unitarian Universalism? A newcomer to our faith asked me this question recently. She was concerned about whether her children had the opportunity to learn about our values and what it exactly means to be a UU. I responded to this question by saying, the people of Neshoba are our curriculum, first and foremost. How we conduct ourselves, the compassion we show, the encouragement we share to do what's right for each is the living embodiment of Unitarian Universalism. We try to lead by example. We also strive to present information and hands-on experiences in our religious education classes using carefully constructed curricula.

In every classroom, our wonderful volunteer staff presents stories, games, and activities that express our faith. In our elementary class, the curriculum is called *Spirit of Adventure*. In this fun program each week, the children learn about famous UUs and their contributions to our world. It is our hope that the children will understand how to apply their values in a meaningful way. And we hope to inspire them to greatness. In our pre-K class with the curriculum *We Are Many We Are One*, the children are invited to a story time, where they listen to a tale that expresses our UU values. In this easy to comprehend approach, our youngsters are absorbing our faith. The children are given the opportunity to play games or do crafts that serve as a reminder of the lesson shared that day. Our youth class has been exploring the meaning of our faith, by looking at our history, our hymns, and pop culture with the curriculum *Traditions with a Wink*. What can you learn about faith by watching *The Simpsons* cartoons? The show has provided some rich conversation. Soon, our youth will embark on a program to learn more about our faith by listening to the stories of various Neshobans.

Our adult RE program continues to grow. This past month, participants were challenged to think about the ways they live our Principles in everyday life. Our goal with adult RE is to clarify our faith, to share what works for us, and to challenge us to greater living.

Unitarian Universalism is a faith of action. We are guided by our seven Principles and inspired by our six Sources. Teaching Unitarian Universalism is rather simply really. As Lauralyn Bellamy so aptly said, "If here, you have found freedom, take it with you into the world. If you have found comfort, go and share it with others. If you have dreamed dreams, help one another, that they may come true!"

If you have known love, give some back to a bruised and hurting world." That is what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist AND how you teach it!

In faith,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah".

Director of Religious Education

Adult Religious Education:

Faith Like a River explores the dynamic course of Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist (UU) history—the people, ideas, and movements that have shaped our faith heritage. It invites participants to place themselves into our history and consider its legacies. What lessons do the stories of our history teach that can help us live more faithfully in the present? What lessons do they offer to be lived into the future? Join Rev. Cynthia Prescott for this adult RE course on Sundays in February (the 5th through 26th), from 9:30am-10:30am in the Susan B. Anthony classroom at Neshoba. Childcare will be provided. For more information or questions, please contact Director of Religious Education, Sarah Osborne dre@neshobauu.org

Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts are back! Any girls who would like to join the Neshoba Girl Scout troop please contact Janet Eich, janet@feldenkraismemphis.com, 901-359-3972

And--the cookies are coming! We will have boxes for available for purchase beginning February 29th.

January Board Meeting

The Neshoba Board of Directors met on Tuesday, January 10, 2012. Topics of discussion and actions taken included the following:

- Finance-related matters:
 - Board members decided that future Board meetings should be held on the third Tuesday of the month instead of on the second Tuesday. The added time will allow the previous month's Treasurer's Report to be much more complete and accurate.
 - Board members discussed the Board's January 2012 Letter to the Congregation, which focused on Neshoba's financial situation, and determined how the upcoming Congregational Meeting on January 22 should be conducted.
 - Board members agreed that a policy needs to be developed regarding "directed donations" given to Neshoba Church.
- Board members discussed each item in the "Interim Ministry Third Appraisal," and Cathy Chapman compiled their comments. Rev. Cynthia will add her comments and submit this final appraisal.
- Neshoba's Gaia Garden Group received permission from the Board to apply for a grant to develop a garden, on church property, that is based on permaculture principles.

All church members are invited to attend the monthly Board meetings, which are held at the church at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month (please note that Board meetings have been moved from the second Tuesday of each month to the third Tuesday).

Connection Council Meeting

ATTENTION all committee chairs and members as well as other interested Neshobans. The Board of Directors will sponsor a, "Connection Council" meeting to plan and coordinate upcoming efforts between the different committees. The meeting will be held at Neshoba on Saturday, February 25th from 9 AM to 12 PM. A light breakfast & childcare will be provided.

Ministerial Search Committee

The Ministerial Search Committee is still hard at work screening, interviewing and reference-checking potential ministerial candidates who are interested in Neshoba. The thing we have found is that there are some great ministers who are searching for the right congregation. The ones who might not be the right fit for Neshoba will certainly find a congregational home in our vast UU world. And hopefully, that one who we feel is the yin to our yang, will see us the same way. It's a lengthy and involved process, but one that we have faith will be successful. Feel free to contact any member of the Search Committee with comments or questions you may have.

Nominating Committee

At our regular congregational meeting in May, Neshoba will hold its annual election to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors. As our by-laws direct, the Nominating Committee will nominate candidates for each vacancy; and at the meeting, the floor will also be open for additional nominations as well.

The positions to be filled are –

President (the remaining year of a two year term)

Secretary (a two year term)

Treasurer (a two year term)

Board position 2 (a two year term)

Board position 4 (a two year term)

So, in the coming months, the Nominating Committee will be seeking out members with an interest in serving as an officer or board member. As we seek you out, it would help if you'd seek us out. If you have an interest in serving on the Board or know someone you'd like to recommend, please let us know. The Nominating Committee are Linda Holmes, Sharon Roehrig, and Bill Siler. It would help very much if you would let us hear from you by the end of February. Please leave a message with the office at 266-2626 or e-mail us at bill.siler@neshobauu.org.

A word from our Admin

I'll be stepping down as your acting Office Administrator on February 6th to take a full-time job with Regus Group as they open a new office at Southwind. I'm so happy to have had the opportunity to work in the Neshoba office and I hope my successor feels just as lucky to serve this church and this wonderful community.

Lots of love,
Lorena K. Rostig

In Appreciation

Dennis and Westley King would like to thank all of our Neshoba friends and family for your thoughtfulness and support during Ann's illness and especially during the recent weeks since her death. A special thanks to Merilyn and the WOW (Women Of Wisdom) for all you have done including the group phone call and the reception after the memorial service. In appreciation and recognition of her love for Neshoba we will be making a donation to the endowment fund.

Items Needed:

When you are out shopping think about picking up items that may be used at Neshoba. These items are always used and we never have enough!

- Roll paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Pinesol cleaner
- Dishwashing detergent
- Hand sanitizer
- Liquid hand soap
- Copy paper (white and colors)
- Pens and pencils

Paper towels for bathroom dispensers (C-fold - available at Costco and Sams)

March Newsletter Deadline:

Friday, February 17th at 4pm

If you would like your article included in next month's newsletter, you must submit "cut-and-paste-ready copy" of 100 words or less to office@neshobauu.org by 4pm on the 3rd Friday of each month. If you have any questions, please call 266-2626.

Wednesday Night Live

Join us every Wednesday night for social time, inspiration, and learning opportunities from 6-9pm. Childcare is available. Dinner is served from 6-7pm with a \$5 per person or \$15 maximum donation. Programs, games and a movie are available each week, beginning at 7pm. (See list of activities below) Please call the office at 266-2626 or e-mail office@neshobauu.org for more info.

February WNL Programs:

Feb 1st: COFFEE HOUSE Neshoba Church is full of talented people. Join us tonight as we let several Neshobans showcase their musical talents for us. Enjoy a relaxed coffehouse atmosphere and share in the joy their gifts bring us. If you would like to share your talent please email Lorena at office@neshobauu.org

Feb 8th CUUPS Workshop

Feb 15th VESPERS SERVICE A Vespers service or Readings and Reflections will offered this evening at 7:00PM, led by Rev. Cynthia.

Feb 22nd CUUPS Workshop

Feb 29th WNL Bright! On months with a 5th Wednesday, **Wednesday Light Live goes "Bright."** This means that no official programs have been planned, but we invite you to join us for a bright & lively discussion. For more information, please call the office at 266-2626.

WOW (Women of Wisdom)

We'll be exchanging Valentines at the WOW meeting, on Wednesday, February 1 at Cheryl Cholavchuk's. We gather at 6:30 and potluck dinner begins at 7:00. Bring Valentines to distribute—a classroom package, home-made, whatever tickles your fancy. Address them to a particular individual with a personal message, or write in a "fortune cookie" message and leave the envelope blank for a Valentine surprise. Just be sure to sign them. For more info, contact Linda Woodbury at wow@neshobauu.org or the Neshoba office.

Women's Retreat 2012

"Celebrating Our Spiritual Journeys", our annual Neshoba women's retreat, is scheduled for the weekend of April 27th through the 29th at Brigadoon Farms in Olive Branch, MS. All women, age 18 and older are invited to join us for what promises to be a fun and meaningful time together. As in the past, there will be a lighted labyrinth, drumming, a Red Tent room, craft activities, and lots of time to relax, reflect and enjoy the company of other amazing women. We hope you'll join us.

The fee for the weekend is \$120 for two nights lodging and meals on Saturday and Sunday. There will be a reduced fee for women who come just for the day on Saturday – but we encourage you to spend the weekend with us – you don't want to miss anything! There is a discount for early registration and partial scholarships will be available. We are working on the brochure and it will be available soon.

We are in the process of planning activities that will help you explore and celebrate your spiritual path so that each of you will have the best possible weekend. Anyone who would like to help with the organization of this event is encouraged to contact Sue Hand – there is room for you on our planning committee!

Book Club

The Neshoba Book Club meets for discussion, potluck and fun the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 in the Neshoba kitchen. A list of upcoming selections is posted on the activities bulletin board. February's discussion will be "A Prayer for Owen Meany," by John Irving. If you haven't read it, you'll be glad you did. In March we'll discuss "The Feminine Mystique," and its impact through 50 years of the feminist movement. And in April we'll read the 2011 bestseller, "Pym," by Mat Johnson. Come for one or all discussions and discover the best chalice circle at Neshoba.

Membership Summit

**Sunday, Feb. 12 at 12:15-2pm
Florence Nightingale Room**

Membership Chair Stephen Guenther and Rev. Cynthia Prescott will be co-hosting a "membership summit." The goal of the meeting is twofold:

1. To identify the basic tasks of welcoming and nourishing new members and delegate people to take responsibility for them. You must be present or otherwise accounted for to do this. No fantasy volunteers, please.
2. To explore suggestions for strengthening the membership function at Neshoba, these to be taken up in greater depth at regular Membership Committee meeting on another date where they can't be folded immediately into something Neshoba is already doing.

This is not an attempt to ensnare you to join the Membership Committee, although if you are so moved we'd be delighted to have you join us.

In accordance with what was said at January's congregational meeting, I hope everyone will come prepared to say "I will" rather than "Someone should".

For additional information, please contact Rev. Cynthia or Stephen Guenther by e-mailing membership@neshobauu.org

Gaia's Garden at Neshoba!

Newspaper: We are currently collecting newspaper in a large box in the northeast corner of the sanctuary.

Compost: Please bring us your kitchen scraps: vegetable/fruit waste, eggshells, coffee grounds, teabags, nut shells (but NOT any sort of meat or fish, bones, oils, peanut butter, or dairy)

Thank you!

A huge thank you to Sue Hand for leading the Spirit Doll Workshop on Sat, January 21st. We sure appreciate all of the hard work you put into this workshop and it was a wonderful experience for all!

The Crisis Center Needs Volunteers

The Crisis Center, a non-profit organization, United Way agency and partner with the University of Tennessee Health Science Center is in need of volunteers for our solely volunteer powered 24/7 Crisis hotline.

Founded in 1970, the *Crisis Center* is over 40 years old. We are committed to strengthening community stability through telephone intervention; promoting community awareness through outreach and partnerships; and encouraging community involvement through volunteer recruitment, training, and participation.

The *Crisis Center* serves as an emotional lifeline through compassionate, non-biased, 24-hour live telephone support. Our trained volunteers-using a combination of empathic listening, risk assessment, collaborative problem-solving, and crisis intervention-assist callers with immediate problems and link them with the long-term resources they need to cope and overcome. Along with the volunteer-powered **Crisis Line**, the Crisis Center also administers the **Call-4-Kids Hotline**, the **Senior-B-Safe Line**, the **Ryan White HIV Care Line**, and is the local affiliate of **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**. All of our programs are free, safe, and confidential.

Also the contact information for those interested in volunteering is volunteers@crisis7.org or 901-649-8572.

Grocery Connection

Do you shop at Kroger? If your answer is yes, and you don't have a Neshoba card, please see Victor Lendermon after church or call the office at 266-2626.

Ink Jet Recycling

Neshoba can earn \$3 for each undamaged **HP, Dell or Lexmark ink or toner cartridge**. The cartridges can be dropped off in the green box on the shelf immediately to the left of the entrance by the office. For more info, please contact Markus at markus.rostig@neshobauu.org

Parent's Time Out (PTO)

Parent's Time Out is a great opportunity to catch a movie, have a quiet bite to eat, or run errands while your kids pester someone else for a change! You deserve a break, and your kids deserve a chance to create lasting relationships with other mini-Neshobans.

Participants are expected to volunteer to watch the kids for an afternoon in the near future & might need to chip in for lunch/snacks (this might be up to \$5 per child & not more than \$10 per family).

The next event is **February 12th from 12-4pm**. Please sign up at least one week in advance of each event. For more information, contact Melissa Mann at office@neshobauu.org

Family Friendly Circle Suppers!

Interested in getting to know other families at Neshoba with young children? Starting in January Neshoba will begin a trial period of Circle Suppers geared towards people with elementary school aged kids and younger.

Gatherings will still be on 3rd Saturdays, however the start time will be earlier to allow parents to get their kids in bed at a reasonable hour.

The next gathering will be on February 18th and we're looking for a host, either in your home or at the church. Signup on the bulletin board across from the church office.

For more information or to sign up to host a Circle Supper please contact Trish MacCabe at circlesuppers@neshobauu.org. Thank you!

Mental Health Art

The Mental Health Art Group is for anyone with a mental illness who likes to draw or paint. Members provide their own art supplies. This is an opportunity for mental health consumers to socialize and expand their art skills. It is not a class, just a group of artists who like to share. We meet at Neshoba Church on Mondays from 2pm to 4pm ONLY WHEN IT IS NOT RAINING. Space is limited, so please contact Ellen at 758-3130 if you plan to come.

Communication Committee

The Communication Committee would like to thank Shirley Nunley for leading an extraordinary workshop on Social Media on Sunday, Jan. 29th. If you missed it, here are a few of the highlights:

1. A reminder that it's very important that every Neshoba event be posted to the church website. If you are a group or committee chairperson, there are instructions on how to do this in your committee notebook. If you need additional assistance, please contact Lorena at communication@neshobauu.org

The reason the calendar is so important is because we use this information to:

- Prepare the 10-Day Forecast that goes out each Friday;
 - Upload to the website so visitors know what's going on & when;
 - Alert the Sextons so they know when they should expect cars in our parking lot; and
 - To book private venue rentals like weddings.
2. The Neshoba Facebook Page currently has 249 "likes." This is a great tool for promoting Neshoba meetings and events.
 3. Neshoba policy for posting photos on Facebook is please don't "tag" anyone but yourself.
 4. It's important not to post your personal contact info. Please use the office phone # 266-2626 or email office@neshobauu.org
 5. Neshoba policy regarding "friending" minors is that we request that you also have at least one parent of the minor on your "friend" list.



Writers Group

The Writer's Group meets on the 3rd Sunday of each month in the couch room from 12:15-2:00pm.

Writers of all levels of ability and all genres are welcome to attend. You need not plan to present on original work to attend the meeting. For more information contact Sue Hand at writers@neshobauu.org

Surtsey

I want to live where the earth is newest,
where the extravagant odor of creation
still hangs in the misty air,
and my every footfall sinks
into rich, black soil.

I want to live where the earth is newest,
where surprised ocean waves
carelessly crash against craggy
cliffs, and meadows open to the
edge of the sky.

I want to live where the earth is newest,
where mountains are still rising
in the west, and the rumbling
voices of gods, raucous in
revelry, can still be felt.

Written by David Gale Wright
Member of the Neshoba Writers' Group

“This I Believe”

By Sharon Roehrig

Note: During the October 16th service, four members of the Adult RE Class titled, “This I Believe” (led by Bill Siler) shared their statements with the congregation. Thank you to Sharon for sharing her statement this month.



I believe that all people, adults and children, even the most turbulent souls and the most repulsive outward appearances, have in the midst of all of their flaws, something true, ingenuous, and natural, which is of infinite value, and is entitled to dignity and respect (adapted from a quote from Felix A. Dupanloup). I value honesty and trust above all else. I believe it is important to take the time to listen: to people, to nature, to your heart. I believe that everything happens for a reason, even when that reason is not readily apparent or intellectually acceptable.

In Jan., 1989 I brought 2 little girls into my home to create what we then called a Forever Family. Over time I came to realize that what we were more capable of creating was a dysfunctional family and I adjusted my value system to realize that a dysfunctional family was better than no family at all. The 15 years following that life-changing event were the best of times and the worst of times. I'm grateful that we all survived, as that was no small accomplishment, and grateful for how much I learned in the process.

I learned:

- that a sense of humor is essential!
- that things aren't always what they seem and that it is important to keep an open mind to the possibilities.
- to frequently adjust my dreams as new data/reality came into the equation.
- that little things do matter and moving forward in small steps is more successful and leads to longer lasting change/progress.
- to appreciate small pleasures.
- that finding people you can count on doesn't always come from where you think it will.

I am grateful for all that I learned.

I believe in paying it forward and that when I am the one in need, it will be provided, whether I have helped others previously in need or not. It is important to replenish yourself if you expect to nurture others. My experiences have created who I am and what I believe; it is important to take time out periodically to reflect. I believe in reincarnation insofar as I will either return to learn more through another incarnation as a human or advance to becoming a guardian angel to guide others. I believe in hope, always, even when all seems hopeless. I believe, above all else, that I will survive. Amen.



Producer Artemis Joukowski Joins Us for Film Screening of *Two Who Dared*



Join us and producer Artemis Joukowski to preview excerpts from the film *Two Who Dared*, which tells the story of Waitstill Sharp, a Unitarian minister from Massachusetts, and his wife Martha, a social worker. They helped feed and shelter thousands of refugees and assisted anti-Nazi dissidents and Jews as they escaped to safety, first in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia and later in France. The evening will include a conversation with Joukowski, who is also the Sharps' grandson. The Sharps' compelling story reveals a largely unknown chapter of Holocaust history and provides a new perspective on America's relationship to it. Our interactive module to accompany the film will offer students a rich multimedia experience that includes archival documents, images, and video interviews. Both the film and the module will be vital complements to Facing History's collection of classroom resources that focus on rescue and resistance during the Holocaust.

Date & Time: Wednesday, February 15, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

Location: Christian Brothers University, Buckman Hall – Spain Auditorium,
650 East Parkway South, Memphis TN 38104

Fee: The event is free and open to the public.

To RSVP: Please go to www.facinghistory.org/events or call 901-452-1776, ext. 221.

This event is being co-sponsored with The Church of the River and Neshoba Church.



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Neshoba Church

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**Neshoba
Church**

A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Do you receive the 10-Day Forecast and Monthly Newsletter by email? If not, please visit our website to sign up. The 10-Day Forecast is our most comprehensive reminder of events coming up at Neshoba. A hard copy is posted each Friday on the Communications Committee Bulletin Board in the hallway (near the nametags.) For more info, please call the office (266-2626) or e-mail Lorena at communication@neshobauu.org

Neshoba Church

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To keep our newsletter mailing list updated, please call the church office, 901-266-2626, to let us know if you wish to have your name deleted, added, or your address changed.