



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

Counting Songs

I've been thinking about the folksongs and ditties many of us learned as children, songs that used either seriousness or silliness to teach numbers to children or used numbers, now mastered, to teach a meaningful series of cultural data points to people of any age. Remember "This Old Man"?

This old man, he played one,
He played knick-knack on my thumb;
Knick-knack paddywhack,
Give a dog a bone,
This old man came rolling home.

One: thumb. Two: shoe. Three: knee. Four: door.
Five: hive. Six: sticks. Seven: Heaven. Eight: gate.
Nine: spine. Ten: again. This could repeat
forever!

Delicious silliness with rhyming that helped little ones learn numbers through osmosis and then lingered as fun for children of all ages. Christian-dominant countries that speak English have "The Twelve Days of Christmas," with all those dang birds to count!

I remember years ago, getting ready to preach as a seminarian at Central Reform Congregation, my synagogue in St. Louis. In the preparatory study, I discovered that there are some great ones – less the music – in the Talmud. There were a few bits of the narrative that couldn't easily be explained without the idea of special creation, and so a list of ten things, or thereabouts, helped everyone remember these very strange things:

Ten things were created at twilight of
Shabbat eve. These are: the mouth of the

earth that swallowed Korach; the mouth of Miriam's well; the mouth of Balaam's donkey; the rainbow; the manna; Moses' staff; the *shamir*; the writing, the inscription and the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Some say also the burial place of Moses and the ram of our father Abraham. And some say also the spirits of destruction as well as the original tongs, for tongs are made with tongs.

I love that. Tongs narratively required special creation because you have to have tongs to work the metal to make tongs. You can't take any of these counting songs and lists literally. They do what they do – educationally and socially. And we are coming up on Passover, starting the evening of the 22nd. And Passover has multiple things that are numbered and counted. It is partly for the children, to be sure, helping them learn the key points of a longish home event with a liturgy in some aspects beyond their understanding.

This Sunday at our Passover Preview service, you will hear an instance of such counting songs. The enumerated lists don't tell you everything. They give a place for a foundation to be planted. A point of a connection to a deep tradition you don't apprehend all at once. Who knows 13?

Peace and Blessings
Rev. Paul

There's a New Team on the Block

After several planning and discussion meetings, the new Adult Education and Enrichment Team has been launched.

A group interested in adult education within the Fellowship met with Rev. Paul to decide what the congregation needs in this area, what a team might be expected to accomplish and how it might support such a program under the minister's leadership.

The purpose of the team is:

To provide opportunities for adult learning within the congregation in areas of Unitarian Universalist history and theology, spiritual expression, deepening emotional expression, interfaith understanding, world religions, social justice, building community, humor, dealing with grief and other topics deemed helpful and appropriate.

The team's responsibilities include the following:

- To review curricula from a variety of sources, including the UUA
- To survey congregational needs and desires
- To create a curriculum calendar for the calendar year, with a goal of at least four learning opportunities per year
- To identify, recruit and provide support for teachers, facilitators, discussion leaders and speakers to carry out the planned curricula
- To disseminate program information to the congregation and encourage participation
- To evaluate classes in order to determine how to continue

The first 'building community' class has already begun. "Creativity and Conversation," which will meet weekly on Thursdays from 1:00 to 4:00 in the Fellowship Hall, invites people who enjoy handwork of any kind—sewing, knitting, crocheting, rug hooking, embroidery or any

other portable art—to meet for fellowship and sharing. It will encourage show-and-tell and helping others to learn a new skill or increase their knowledge and skill in the art of their choice. It will also be an opportunity to get to know one another at a deeper level.

Beginning May 7, Rev. Paul will offer a five-week class on the history of disability, both in the general population and at the Fellowship. Look for more information on the class or check the website calendar. Make your reservation early because there is both a minimum and maximum participation level.

Beginning July 20, Annie Foerster will facilitate a five-week discussion curriculum called Building Your Own Theology. Because we don't have a creed to tell us what to believe, individuals can find help in building their own Credo (Latin for "I Believe") with this classic UUA curriculum of discovery and evaluation. This is a great class for new UUs, but even long-termers will find value in its wisdom. More information on the class will be provided in June.

In the fall, Nancy Lay and Barbara Harrison will co-facilitate a Tapestry of Faith class titled Hindsight, Humor and Hope. No date has been set yet. During the winter, Annie Foerster will repeat her discussion opportunity on personal loss and grief as a healing tool.

If you have any suggestions for a class, or wish to facilitate one, Adult EE is here to help. For questions or suggestions, email adultee@uufw.org.

Members who participated in the planning of the new team include DRE Nancy Lay, Susan Clark, Tom Engle, Barbara Harrison and Annie Foerster, who has accepted the team leader role.

The Fellowship has three new members, Shannon Mills, Jean St. Clair and Daryl Salmons. Let's make them feel welcome.

