

# Off Court Street



the newsletter of **ucm: center for spiritual growth & social justice**  
at ohio university

● February 2006

## finding each other...finding our voice

AN INTERFAITH & ECUMENICAL MINI-CONFERENCE FOR PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE OF FAITH  
DESIGNED TO HELP DEVELOP A PROGRESSIVE RELIGIOUS VOICE AND PRESENCE IN OHIO.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2006**

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER RON BUFORD

We are very excited and pleased to announce that **Ron Buford** will be our keynote speaker. Ron Buford hails from Cleveland, and he is the principal architect of the United Church of Christ's "God is Still Speaking" publicity campaign, proclaiming UCC as an open, affirming, and inclusive denomination committed to listening for the new ways God is speaking to us in this time. Ron is acclaimed as an energetic, inspirational, and engaging speaker, with a timely message to share.



**STREET THEATER:** This guerrilla street performance will deal with the war in Iraq, racism, classism and how these issues intersect through dramatic, physical, and lyrical scenes acted out on the steps of Baker Center. The performance has been created as her senior thesis by UCM's own **Sarah Michelson**, who will graduate from the OU School of Theater this spring.

**PANEL DISCUSSION:** We'll move to OU's Baker Center for conversation with a panel of religious activists from all over Ohio. Panelists will present their activities and engage in conversation with the audience about important needs, initiatives, and opportunities in the Ohio faith world. Panelists include **Debra Hirshberg**, Tikkun organizer; **Katy Heins** of the "Let Justice Roll" campaign for a fair living wage in Ohio; **Dr. Tarunjit Singh Butalia**, Chair of the National Interfaith Committee of the World Sikh Council – America Region, member of the Board of Directors of the North American Interfaith Network, and member of the Executive Council and Steering Committee of Religions for Peace – USA; **Gwyn Stetler**, Deacon in Residence at Methodist Theological School in Ohio; others TBA.

*Co-sponsored by UCM; Ministers for Social Justice, a Columbus-area networking organization for progressive clergy (and the Central Ohio chapter of the Network of Spiritual Progressives); and the Gault Center for Christian Leadership at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Campus co-sponsors of Ron Buford's appearance include the LGBT Programs Center, the OU Democrats, and Students Teaching About Racism in Society (STARS).*

### FINDING EACH OTHER... FINDING OUR VOICE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1:00 - 3:00 pm	Keynote Speaker Ron Buford, followed by Q & A
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Guerrilla Street Theater
3:30 - 3:45 pm	Coffee Break & Networking, Baker Center Lobby & 1954 Room
3:45 - 5:30 pm	Interfaith Panel Discussion, featuring Ohio progressive spiritual activists, Baker Center
6:00 pm	Dinner & Entertainment, Baker Center

finding  
each other...  
finding  
our voice

REGISTRATION  
DEADLINE:  
Friday, April 7

REGISTRATION  
FEE:  
(payable to UCM)  
\$15 - \$25  
on a sliding scale,  
dinner is included

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION:  
Please contact  
Melissa at  
ucmcf@frognet.net  
or call 593-7301

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## UCM CALENDAR:

### SUNDAYS...

**INTO-WORSHIP** - interfaith service & potluck dinner, open to all, 5:30 pm ➤

### TUESDAYS...

**SOUP FOR THE SOUL** lunchtime discussion series, Feb 14 & 21, noon - 1:00 pm

### WEDNESDAYS...

**A GIRLFRIEND'S GUIDE TO ACTIVISM** - discussion series, Feb 22, Mar 29, 6:00-7:30 pm

### THURSDAYS...

**THURSDAY SUPPER** - weekly free meal open to all, no questions asked, 5:30 pm

## FEBRUARY 13

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION** - video and panel discussion, 7:30 pm, Scripps Auditorium (see p. 3)

## FEBRUARY 25

**MARDI GRAS PARTY** - to raise funds for spring break trip, 7:30 pm, UUFA (see p. 4)

## FEBRUARY 28

**"SEX AND THE CITY AND ISSUES OF CHOICE,"** video and discussion, 7:30 pm, Scripps Auditorium (see p. 3)

## MARCH 10

**AROUND THE WORLD & BACK AGAIN** - international taste-o-rama to benefit UCM

## MARCH 18 - 25

**UCM ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK TRIP** - Hurricane Relief in St. Bernard Parish, LA (see p. 4 for details)

## APRIL 29

**FINDING EACH OTHER... FINDING OUR VOICE** UCM Spiritual Activism Mini-conference for progressive people of faith (see p. 1)

## JUNE 2

**SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDS**

## UCM PROGRAMS: Winter Quarter

### INTERFAITH NONTRADITIONAL TIME OF WORSHIP (INTO-WORSHIP)

It's new, it's interactive, it's open to people of any faith or none, it's at 5:30 on Sundays, at UCM! Join us for a spirit-filled, participatory, casual worship service every other Sunday (on the between Sundays we meet to plan the next week's service), and stay for a potluck dinner. If you're a student, or a friend of UCM, or a friend of a student, or (your affiliation here), come and worship with us!

✚ Sundays, 5:30 pm: February 19, March 5, March 19, April 2

### SOUP FOR THE SOUL: THE ROOTS OF "-isms"

Where do our prejudices come from? *Soup for the Soul, The Roots of "-isms,"* continues to discuss the contexts of negative -isms, such as sexism, racism, ageism, heterosexism, and classism. We look at the historical roots of systems of oppression and explore how various religious traditions both perpetuate and challenge them. Open to all; free light soup lunch.

✚ Tuesdays, noon - 1:00 pm, downstairs at UCM

- Feb. 14 Rabbi Danielle LeShaw, Hillel
- Feb. 21 Najee Muhammad, Assoc. Prof., Educational Studies

### HOT NEW PROGRAM: A GIRLFRIEND'S GUIDE TO ACTIVISM

UCM's new monthly discussion series, *A Girlfriend's Guide To Activism*, fosters intergenerational dialogue, encourages networking, and provides inspiration in a comfortable, informal setting. Each gathering will feature a local activist in a brief interview and a lively question-and-answer session. **Susan Burgess**, Department of Political Science and Women's Studies Program at OU, will moderate. This month, **Carol Kuhre** (see below) will appear on **Wednesday, Feb. 22, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** Light refreshments will be provided.

Our inaugural *Girlfriend's Guide to Activism*, on January 25, was a rousing success – more than 25 girlfriends (and a boyfriend) showed up to hear local environmental and human rights activist **Susan Heitker** reflect on the people and events that inspired her to a life of activism, the legendary 30-day prison stint, and the overall trials and tribulations of being a woman activist. Many thanks to her for her candid accounts and gracious response to all of our questions. Good luck to her as she leaves Athens for Massachusetts this spring; the trees and everyone else there will be lucky to have her! Thanks also to the following Susans (it was way COOL to be a Susan that night): **Susan Burgess** for giving us her best Terri Gross impersonation; and **Susan Roth**, board member extraordinaire, for coming up with this great program idea and helping to organize it. We can't wait 'till the next one! Can you?

### ✚ GIRLFRIEND'S GUESTS

**FEBRUARY 22: CAROL KUHRE** - *As Executive Director of Rural Action since its inception, Carol applied principles of sustainable development at a local level. Rural Action is committed to engaging citizens in knowing, valuing and preserving the region's environmental and cultural assets. One of Carol's major accomplishments during her tenure there involved development of a mural corridor that includes twelve murals and spans five counties. She also oversaw creation of the traditional music CD Fine Times At Our House and the Lights In The Darkness video about teen depression and suicide prevention, in addition to oral history collections, interactive theater and the Countdown To The Millennium project. Carol retired from Rural Action in January 2004, but remains active in peace and justice issues both here and abroad. She is also a former Co-director of UCM.*

## **VIDEO AND PANEL DISCUSSION IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

In honor of Black History Month, UCM, the OU African American Studies Program and the OU African Studies Program will present the documentary, *The Letter: An American Town and the 'Somali Invasion,'* on **Monday, Feb. 13, at 7:30 p.m. in Scripps Auditorium.** A panel discussion will follow; this event is free and open to everyone.

*The Letter* explores the impact of Somali refugees on a small town in Maine during the emotionally-charged wake of the 9/11 tragedy. A firestorm erupts when Mayor Larry Raymond of Lewiston, Maine sends an open letter to 1,100 newly-arrived Somali refugees advising them that the city's resources are strained to the limit and asking other Somalis not to move to the city. White supremacist groups across the United States interpret the Mayor's words as a rallying cry. When the ensuing crossfire of emotions and events culminates in a public "hate" rally, convened by the World Church of the Creator, 4,000 Lewiston residents counter with a "peace" rally in support of ethnic and cultural diversity.

### ***"SHOULDA, COULDA, WOULDPA"***

UCM and Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Ohio present an episode of **"Sex and the City,"** on **Tuesday, February 28 at 8:00 pm in Scripps Auditorium.** This episode, "Shoulda, Coulda, Woulda," follows Samantha, Carrie, Miranda and Charlotte as they each grapple with their own decisions about their fertility and abortion. Following the video, PP field organizer, Alyssa Jerzyk, will facilitate a discussion to help foster understanding and inspire dialogue among differing viewpoints of this highly controversial issue.

## **WOMEN'S HERSTORY CELEBRATION**

A special celebration to honor Women's Herstory Month is planned for **Sunday March 5, at OU's Walter Hall Rotunda from 2:00 to 4:30.** The celebration will feature awards for Outstanding Women of Southeastern Ohio, poetry, drama, art, music, and refreshments. Admission is free; donations accepted to help fund next year's event. Children are welcome or a child care subsidy is available on request. For more information see [www.herstorycelebration.org](http://www.herstorycelebration.org) or contact Gail Hecky at 593-3410 or [gailh@columbus.rr.com](mailto:gailh@columbus.rr.com).

*Sponsors to date include UCM, Athens Area NOW, Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home Women's Land Trust, Hocking College Women's Center, OU Women's Studies Dept, OU Office of Institutional Equity, Feminist Action Together, OU LGBT Programs Center, and American Association of University Women.*

## **WOMYN'S SURVIVOR ART SHOW**

In conjunction with the Women's Herstory Celebration, the Womyn's Survivor Art Show will be displayed **March 6 - 31 at the Athens County Public Library, Athens Branch.** Powerful, intimate, and raw, Survivor Art speaks about recovery from challenges to mental, emotional, and physical well being.



## **AREA EVENTS:**

### **MONDAYS...**

**PEACE VIGIL** - 11:30-12:30, Athens County Courthouse

**PEOPLE FOR PEACE & JUSTICE** - bi-weekly meeting, 4:30 - 6:00 pm, at UCM

**OUT & ABOUT: THE COMING OUT GROUP** -share & learn in a safe & confidential space, 7:00-9:00 pm, South Pole, garage level of Nelson Commons; contact Mickey Hart, LGBT Programs Center, 593-0239, [hartm@ohio.edu](mailto:hartm@ohio.edu)

### **WEDNESDAYS...**

**ATHENS FRIENDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS [AFIS] COFFEE HOUR** - 11:30 am-12:30 pm, Voight Hall Lobby, Contact: Jane Palmer, 597-1567, [palmerj@ohio.edu](mailto:palmerj@ohio.edu)

**OPEN DOORS** - weekly meeting (while OU is in session.), open to all, 8:00-10:00 pm, at UCM

### **MARCH 5**

**WOMEN'S HERSTORY PROGRAM** - awards for Outstanding Women of Southeastern Ohio, music, drama, poetry, refreshments; free admission/donations accepted, 2:00-4:30 pm, Walter Hall Rotunda at OU

### **MARCH 6 - 31**

**WOMYN'S SURVIVOR ART SHOW** - Athens County Public Library, Athens Branch

### **APRIL 23**

**CALLIOPE FEMINIST CHOIR SPRING CONCERT** - 4:00 pm, Stuart's Opera House in Nelsonville, details TBA

# UCM ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK EXPERIENCE

## Hurricane Relief Work in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana

**TOSS OUT** your ideas of what OU students do during spring break, because this year UCM will send a group of student volunteers down to St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana, near New Orleans, to assist with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Participants in this eight-day service trip will depart from Athens on the morning of Saturday, March 18, and will return in the evening on Saturday, March 25.

Our dedicated volunteers will be helping Emergency Communities serve three hot meals a day to over 1,100 people. Emergency Communities is dedicated to re-establishing community connections and a sense of normalcy to St. Bernard community members.

While our lodging and food will be provided by Emergency Communities, our transportation costs, including van rental and fuel, will be close to \$2,000. Our hope is to defray as much of this cost as possible for our volunteers. If you are interested in sponsoring a student, or would like to make a donation to support the trip, please call UCM or contact Lindsey at ld238299@ohio.edu. Donations are tax deductible; checks can be made payable to UCM with "spring break trip" in the memo.

*Thank you so much for your support and I look forward to sharing the experience of the trip in a future edition of Off Court Street.*

*-Lindsey Daniels, UCM Social Work Intern*



A poster for a Mardi Gras Party. At the top left, a star is next to the date "Saturday February 25, 2006". At the top right, a masquerade mask icon is next to the time "7:30—11:00p.m.". The main title "Mardi Gras Party" is in a large, stylized font, with "to Benefit" underneath it. Below that, it says "UCM Alternative Spring Break Trip And The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens". A star is on the right side of this line. The text "Chase away those midwinter blahs with a healthy dose of Mardi Gras Joie de Vivre! At the" is in a smaller font. Below that, "The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens" is written in a bold font, with "184 Longview Heights" underneath. A star is on the right side of this line. The bottom section contains the text: "Tasty Cajun Food, plenty of potables, live entertainment, Zydeco music, dancing if the spirit moves you, A raffle for cool stuff, and much more!" followed by "Minimum donations gladly accepted Maximum donations are warmly welcomed! Raffle tickets 5 for \$5.00" and "On site parking available but limited, carpooling is encouraged". There are stars on the left and right sides of the bottom section.

Saturday February 25, 2006 7:30—11:00p.m.

# Mardi Gras Party

to Benefit

UCM Alternative Spring Break Trip  
And  
The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens

Chase away those midwinter blahs with a healthy dose of Mardi Gras Joie de Vivre!  
At the

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens  
184 Longview Heights

Tasty Cajun Food, plenty of potables, live entertainment, Zydeco music,  
dancing if the spirit moves you, A raffle for cool stuff, and much more!

Minimum donations gladly accepted Maximum donations are warmly welcomed!  
Raffle tickets 5 for \$5.00

On site parking available but limited, carpooling is encouraged

# PHOTO OPS ...

We owe an awful lot to these two women...



Joe with volunteers at "Jonathan Does Thai"

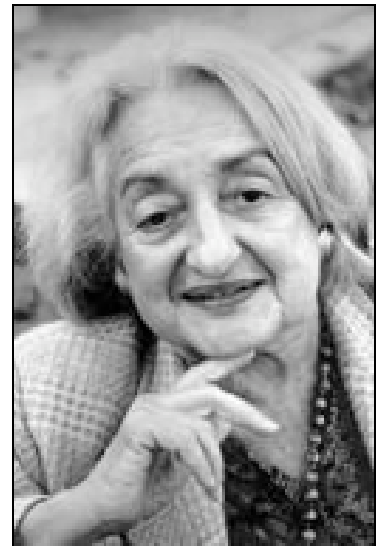


Joe                      Lindsey                      Sarah  
 ♥ OUR SUPER-FANTASTIC INTERNS ♥  
 Cherrelle                      Angelina



**CORETTA SCOTT KING**  
 1928 - 2006

*The US and the world lost a great activist on January 31. Coretta Scott King lived a life dedicated to many social justice issues including civil rights, peace, women's rights, lesbian and gay rights, anti-apartheid activism, and AIDS/HIV prevention. Among her many achievements, she founded the King Center in Atlanta in 1968 and was instrumental in establishing a national holiday in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



*Feminist pioneer and author of "The Feminine Mystique"*  
**BETTY FRIEDAN**  
 1921 - 2006

*"Man is not the enemy here, but the fellow victim. The real enemy is women's denigration of themselves."*

# To Serve the Spirit

by Evan Young, UCM Spiritual Director

Listening to the State of the Union address, wondering what it is that makes me so uneasy in this post-9/11 world. And the more I think about it, the more I'm troubled by my sense that there's some disconnect between what we say we believe and what we do.

Foreign policy in this country today seems driven by a desire to keep a tight hold on our privilege, to amass resources for ourselves at the expense of others. That's a scarcity model. But there's another way: understanding ourselves as temporary parts of a permanent and ongoing process, and committing to serve that process as best we can, that others might profit from our lives. That's an abundance model, and it's based on an assumption that energy given to the community (and here I mean the global community) improves the common lot of all and contributes to the community's robustness.

Put simply, the abundance model says, "If I can give to others, then I am surrounded by healthier and more successful others who think well of me." The scarcity model says "If I give to others, then I have less to take care of me and mine." Both are true. But one is constructive of community and one is not.

It's important to chase down the theological implications of these ideas, too, to understand the beliefs of those who embrace them. The person who embraces the scarcity model looks at others as competition for limited resources; sees others as ultimately less worthy, less human, and so less deserving of those resources; and therefore is able to justify acquiring disproportionate shares of resources at others' expense. The person who embraces the abundance model views others as, not just equal to herself, but as radically interconnected and interdependent, as, in some sense, an equal part of the same greater whole.

To me the most compelling message of the Christian faith--and it's a message I find in many faith traditions--is the call to understand our own fate as inextricably bound up with the fate of "the least of these"--those on the margins of society: the widow, the orphan, the sick, the stranger. And yet, as a people and as a nation, we embrace policies that perpetuate ills like racism, nationalism, imperialism, classism, ageism--all essentially just different criteria for drawing that us-them boundary marking off the favored and privileged "us" from the disfavored, less than human, oppressable "them."

This is against my religion. And because I agree with my more conservative colleagues that religion belongs in the public square, and that our systems and structures of government inevitably bear some stamp of our collective faith, I think it's important to speak this faith, this inclusive and interdependent vision, out into all my communities. My ministry here at UCM offers me this opportunity. That's why we're holding the April mini-conference; that's why *Soup for the Soul* in winter quarter explores negative -isms; that's why we take students to places where they can see for themselves the consequences of privilege. I think that's why you support us. And I'm thankful, and awed, that you do.

*This page and next: Happy revelers at "Jonathan Does Thai" on January 27 →*

## REFLECTIONS ON THURSDAY SUPPER

BY LINDSEY DANIELS,  
UCM SOCIAL WORK INTERN

During the past four weeks I have had the privilege of attending Thursday Supper as well as helping the Thursday Supper coordinator, Joe Buzzelli, organize the weekly free meal. While I have previously volunteered for the Goods Works Friday meal, my experiences with Thursday Supper have been vastly different. On the organizational front I have been pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the number of volunteers we receive each week. What has impressed me the most is the number of regular volunteers and people who just randomly show up wanting to help. Everything has gone smoothly, there has always been enough food, and, most encouraging, spirits have always been high.

From a community perspective, we have some regular attendees and, to me, that shows there is something about Thursday Supper that must be good in order to keep people coming back. There is always a lot of conversation in the dining area, and meeting new people has been a very rewarding experience. While community is there, I think there may be things we can do to make Thursday Supper more inviting, and to develop a stronger sense of community. Currently I am soliciting ideas from the people who attend in order to make Thursday Supper even better than it is now. My goal is to strengthen Thursday Supper and to build upon the solid base that already exists.



STUDENTS FOR PEACE & JUSTICE, INTERACT,  
POSITIVE ACTION AND SAC PRESENT

**APPALACHIAN POVERTY AND HUNGER  
AWARENESS MONTH**

FEBRUARY 17, 5:30 PM, FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
*Experience Hunger in the World Dinner*

FEBRUARY 18, 2:00 PM, BAKER ALUMNI LOUNGE  
*Community Action Summit*

FEBRUARY 4 & FEBRUARY 25, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
*Food Drive at Kroger Foods in Athens*

MOVIES & DISCUSSION: 8:30 PM, BENTLEY HALL ROOM 110  
FEBRUARY 15: "Appalachia: Rich Land, Poor People"  
FEBRUARY 22: "Matewan"

MARCH 2, BAKER CENTER FRONT ROOM  
*Benefit Concert, details TBA*

For information about these events, Contact:  
SPJ President Kelsey McCoy at [peaceandjustice@ohio.edu](mailto:peaceandjustice@ohio.edu)

**A DAY ON... NOT A DAY OFF**

On January 16, **Joe** and **Lindsey**, our Dynamic Duo of Thursday Supper, coordinated the MLK Community Service Workday here at UCM. They gave our kitchen a thorough cleaning with the help of some wonderful volunteers from **Kappa Delta Pi**, including **Matt Carlyle**, **Sarah Childers**, and **Gabriel Macaluso**. Thank you so much!

**JONATHAN DOES THAI FLIES HIGH**

That man outdid himself with yet another luscious feast at our January 27 benefit dinner, "Jonathan Does Thai," and UCM raised \$850 to support our programs and activities. Many, Many thanks to The Maestro, **Chef Jonathan Milo Leal**, of Gourmet Your Way Personal Chef Service and Milo's Whole World Gourmet, for his magnificent work and his ongoing dedication to UCM. We really appreciate it, JL! We're very grateful, also, to those who volunteered their time and labor to make this yummy event happen: **Assistant Chef Kristi Hewitt**, and students from **Alpha Phi Omega**, **Kappa Delta Pi**, the **OU Chapter of Habitat for Humanity**, the **Global Leadership Center**, and the **Staff of Brown/Pickering Residence Life at OU**. Thank you all for your invaluable help!



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Lindsey Daniels  
Angelina Johnson  
Sarah Michelson  
Cherrelle Turner

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**PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A  
CONTRIBUTION TO UCM...**

We depend on individual donors like you for a large portion of our annual operating budget. UCM is a registered non-profit organization.

Contributions are tax-deductible and will finance operating, facilities and programming expenses.

**THANK YOU.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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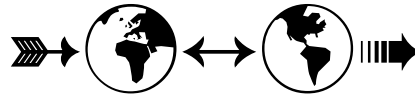
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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to UCM*

*AROUND* the *WORLD*  
*and BACK Again*



*international taste-o-rama to benefit ucm*

**FRIDAY, MARCH 10 @ 5:30 PM**

→ *Socialize with your friends and ours while you enjoy  
tasty treats inspired by a variety of international cuisines!*

➤ *mark your calendar now* ↔ *more info is on the way* ➤

**UCM: CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH & SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**18 NORTH COLLEGE STREET**  
**ATHENS, OH 45701**

**OTHER AGENCIES HOUSED AT UCM:**

**APPALACHIAN PEACE & JUSTICE NETWORK**

**592-2608 • APJN@FROGNET.NET**

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**CHRISTIE TRULY, DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR**

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