

Sylvania United Church of Christ
Educational Offerings
Winter-Spring 2012



Vision Statement

Sylvania United Church of Christ, united by the bond of the Spirit, reflects and celebrates God's unconditional love as we accept the challenge and joy of discipleship.

Mission Statement

We are called to....

- Worship in ways that honor and strengthen our relationship with God
- Nurture our faith through a deeper understanding of Scripture, tradition and our experiences of God moving in and among us
- Develop and embrace our God given gifts in order to create a vital community
- Serve with love and justice, in partnership with others, that we may find wholeness in Christ and our lives and our world
- Offer hospitality with a joyful spirit to those within and beyond our doors



9:20 At A Glance

8-Jan Epiphany	<p>Open and Affirming Series: Sacred Conversations: a continuing dialogue about issues of sexual orientation</p>	
15-Jan		
22-Jan		
29-Jan		
5-Feb		
12-Feb		
19-Feb		
26-Feb Lent 1	<p>Entertainment Theology: Luke Lindon</p>	<p>Liturgical Art: Lou Ann Glover</p>
4-Mar Lent 2		
11-Mar Lent 3		
18-Mar Lent 4		
25-Mar Lent 5		
1-Apr Lent 6	<p>No Classes</p>	
8-Apr Easter		
15-Apr	<p>Gospel According to Disney: Luke Lindon and Andrew Black</p>	<p>Marcus Borg's Embracing an Adult Faith: Susan Rowland Miller</p>
22-Apr		
29-Apr		
6-May		
13-May		
20-May		

The Youth and Children's Sunday School as well as the Connections Fellowship will meet throughout the winter and spring during the 9:20 hour.

The Rest of the Week at a Glance

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Contemplative Prayer Group		David Andersen's Wednesday Study Group (1st and 3rd Wednesdays)	Prayer Group	
Tai Chi		Wednesday Night Bible Study	Taize (3rd Thursday)	
Monday Evening Book Study (1st and last Mondays)		Wednesday Night Book Study (4th Wednesday)		
Scientists in Congregations (after Drop-in Dinners)				

Sundays

Open and Affirming

Sacred Conversations: A Continuing Dialogue about Issues and Attitudes toward Sexual Orientation and the Implications for the Church

What does Scripture say about homosexuality? Is sexuality a gift? What does Open and Affirming mean? The members of the Open and Affirming Study Group invite you to join us in a series of Sunday morning conversations about issues and attitudes toward sexual orientation, gender identity and the implications for the Church. Join us **January 8 through February 19 at 9:20 a.m.** in the chapel to discuss these questions and more.

January 8: Open and Affirming (ONA): What, Why & How?

January 15: What Does Scripture Say?

January 22: Is Sexuality a Gift?

January 29: What is Heterosexual Privilege?

February 5: Building an Inclusive Church, guest speaker Rev. Michael Schuenemeyer, Executive of the UCC Office for Health and Wholeness Advocacy (see next page for bio)

February 12: All in the Family

February 19: The ONA Process: Where Do We Go from Here?

From January 8-February 19 in the Chapel during the 9:20 hour.



The Rev. Michael Schuenemeyer is Executive of the Office for Health and Wholeness Advocacy of Wider Church Ministries in the national offices of the United Church of Christ (UCC), as well as Executive Director of UCAN Inc, the United Church of Christ HIV & AIDS Network. Rev. Schuenemeyer provides leadership in U.S. and globally on HIV & AIDS and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender concerns.

Mike also trains facilitators of the UCC's sexuality education curriculum. He was an Executive Producer on the film *Call Me Malcolm* about a transgender person's journey to ordination in the UCC. He produced and anchored the UCC's DVD on marriage equality, *Sacred Covenants, Faithful Conversations*. Mike is a member of the Steering Committee of the National Religious Leadership Roundtable convened by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and was a founding member of the Board of Directors of Equality Ohio Education Fund.

With more than 25 years of involvement in HIV response, Mike has been a strong advocate for faith-based collaborations. Mike is a member of the HIV Strategy Group of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (based in Geneva Switzerland) and the National Faith in Action HIV & AIDS Coalition - USA. He published the online version of the United Church of Christ's (UCC) comprehensive HIV prevention curriculum, *Affirming Persons, Saving Lives* and produced educational videos such as, *Courage to Hope, Responding to AIDS in Rural China*.

Mike was ordained in the United Church of Christ in 1984. A native of Missouri, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music from the University of Missouri – Kansas City and a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

Entertainment Theology

Christians must "rethink the sacred" and enter global conversations about God--in film, literature, TV, and music--or face extinction, argues Barry Taylor in his book *Entertainment Theology*. This class will focus on understanding movies in a new way and how they can help us identify emerging philosophies. Pop culture in general can tell us about our society, where it's heading, what's emerging, and why it matters.

February 26: Christ in Cinema: Actively engaging movies for spiritual meaning

This is the original PowerPoint from last year's Lenten Series.

Movies: *Reign of Fire*, *Forrest Gump*, *Gran Torino*, and *Wall-E*

March 4: Re-Enchantment: Pre-modern, Modern, and Postmodern and what it all means

Movie: *Enchanted*

March 11: Typologies 1: Zen Culture

Movies: *Lost in Translation*, *The Fountain*

March 18: Typologies 2: Rational Mystics

Movies: *The Matrix*, *The Celestine Prophecy*, *What the Bleep Do we Know?!*

March 25: Typologies 3: Retrolution

Movies: *The Da Vinci Code*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Donnie Darko*

April 1: Typologies 4: Resistant Communities

Movies: *Fireproof*, *Courageous*, *Facing the Giants*

From February 26-April 1 in the Chapel with Pastor Luke during the 9:20 hour.

Liturgical Art Workshop

Participants will look at liturgical art from the past as well as what is current today. We will read, reflect and create art pieces and banners as a group to be used in the church. We will explore a variety of techniques and materials as we attempt to create inspirational art. No art experience is required, just a desire to share in the creative process. We may be painting, drawing, making assemblages or creating installations- we will see where the journey takes us.

We will also combine a few of our classes with the children's sunday school and make a meaningful multigenerational piece. Join us!

From April 15-May 20 in the Elves Den during the 9:20 hour with Lou Ann Glover.

The Gospel According to Disney

Andrew Black, a masters student in communication at BGSU, and Pastor Luke will explore the role that the movies of Disney have played in the moral and spiritual development of generations of children. They will take a closer look at the theology, communication style, and message of familiar movies.

April 15: The Wonderful World of Walt Disney

April 22: *The Little Mermaid*

April 29: *Beauty and the Beast*

May 6: *Aladdin*

May 13: *The Lion King*

May 20: *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and Wrap-Up

From April 15-May 20 in the Fellowship Room during the 9:20 hour with Andrew Black and Pastor Luke.

Marcus Borg's Embracing an Adult Faith

As Christians, we are offered a set of doctrines and beliefs passed down through the centuries. But at some point, as we deepen and grow in our relationship with God, we have to compare this Christian tradition with our own experiences of God and how we have lived out this faith in our lives. This series offers the space to reflect on what we believe about central facets of our faith – our understanding of God, Jesus, salvation, Christian practice, and community.

Each session will begin with viewing a video of Marcus Borg in conversation with a small group of participants. Our group will then pick up the conversation, sharing which comments from the participants resonated with us as well as our own reflections.

Marcus Borg is Canon Theologian at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, Oregon. He is the author of nineteen books, including *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* and *The Heart of Christianity*. Dr. Borg will be visiting our congregation September 28-30, 2012, as part of our Scientists in Congregations Lecture Series.

April 15: Introduction

April 22: God: What do *you* have in mind?

April 29: Jesus: What does Jesus tell us about God?

May 6: Salvation: What does salvation mean?

May 13: Practice: How do we shape our spiritual lives?

May 20: Community: How do we experience Christian community?

From April 15-May 20 in the Chapel with Susan Rowland Miller during the 9:20 hour.

Connections Fellowship

"**Connections Fellowship**" meets downstairs in rooms 2 & 3 (Music Room). The group is designed for those couples or singles wishing for a "come when you can" weekly adult Christian fellowship during the Sunday School hour while having the kids right next door. Empty nesters are also invited and welcome. We will take time to check in with each other weekly and raise prayer concerns. The balance of time can be devoted to a DVD series, Bible study, or whatever the group chooses. Join Pete and Janet Hildebrandt for a cup of coffee or tea and fellowship!

Every Sunday in the Ravine Level Rooms 2 & 3 during the 9:20 hour.

Bible Experience Stations

Sunday School for Preschool through 6th Grade

Each week, the children experience a Bible story or theme through different learning styles – story telling, science, art, computer, games, music, or cooking, to name a few. Teachers engage the children through a creative approach to each lesson by sharing their own personal gifts for music, art, drama or a multiple of other life experience. This multi-sensory approach recognizes that children learn differently and teachers enjoy sharing what they know and love. Children are encouraged through engaging with the material and in relationships with teachers and shepherds to grow in relationship with God and a community of their peers and adults.

Our topics for January – May will be The Great Commandment, The Beatitudes, Easter Go & Tell, Lydia, and Fruits of the Spirit.

Every Sunday in the Lower Level classrooms during the 9:20 hour. Various adults serve as teachers and shepherds throughout the year.

Children's Worship

Preschoolers through 6th graders leave the Sanctuary Service after the children's message to continue their worship experience with age-appropriate material. They have their own time of worship together sharing music, scripture, stories, offering and prayer through creative arts and active participation. On Communion Sundays, children (K – 6) will rejoin their families in the sanctuary for Communion and the remainder of the worship service. All other Sundays, parents may pick up their children in the classrooms after worship.

Every Sunday in the Lower Level classrooms from 11-11:40 a.m. Various adults serve as teachers and shepherds throughout the year.

Youth Faith Practices

This curriculum offers a unique way for our Youth (7th-12th grades) to grow in their faith. Being past the fundamental stage of understanding our stories, this curriculum teaches and allows our teens to practice the life of faith. Living out the faith, exercising our faith, practicing our faith is a lifelong process. "At every turn and in every stage of life, the stories of our biblical heritage take on new meaning, our relationship with God grows and changes, and discernment about our life's journey shifts and transforms as a result of both our physical and our spiritual maturation." (Gline Allen)

Please visit <http://www.ucc.org/education/practices/> for further information about this new resource.

Every Sunday in the Youth Room during the 9:20 hour.

Faith and Worship Gathering

Junior and Senior High youth attend worship with their families in the sanctuary on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays, youth gather for a time of worship and discussion of the lectionary texts in the Youth Room. This schedule allows the youth a monthly balance of their need for novel worship time and age appropriate lessons, and participation in the traditional worship setting.

2nd and 4th Sundays in the Youth Room with leaders Sheila Banerji and Mark Stender from 10:40-11:40 a.m.

Abiding in Faith

The class focuses on learning who God is and how we live as disciples in our daily lives. Through scriptures, activity, songs and sharing each other's stories we grow in our relationship with each other and with this community of faith.

The class and the curriculum are designed for intellectually impaired adults but all adults, of all ranges of functioning, are invited to attend. We begin the class attending 10:40 worship and move to the conference room at the close of the message for the whole family of God to continue our study.

During the 10:40 worship in the Conference Room with leaders Cathy Hunter, Barb Skinner and others.

Sunday Evenings

Confirmation Class

We continue the fun, learning about church history. Our focus this winter and spring will turn toward after The Reformation, UCC history and identity, Sylvania UCC membership, membership in God's world, and why those things help us better understand God in our lives. During this year, the students interview their mentors or adults in the church about their faith journey and membership, meet the staff and leaders in the various ministries in our own church and visit other churches to witness the variety of worship styles available to Christians.

1st and 3rd Sundays in the Chapel with Pastor Luke and Sheila Banerji from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Science and Theology Book Study

An informal book study dedicated to exploring issues related to the intersection of faith and science. In the fall this study focused on evolution as a sacred expression of the Creator. Beginning in January we will study Richard Dawkins book *The God Delusion*. This thought-provoking book will spark conversations about faith and religion in a modern world. *The Economist* noted "...theists will find few better tests of the robustness of their faith." All are welcome to come and join in what will be a lively discussion of a book that the *San Francisco Chronicle* called "a fine and significant book....irreverent and penetrating." For more information contact Nancy Wellman at mead-bakes@frenchtoast.net.

Every Sunday evening in the Fellowship Room from 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Mondays

Monday Night Book Group

Christ of the Celts: the Healing of Creation by J. Philip Newell

“Written by J. Philip Newell, one of the foremost experts on Celtic spirituality, this moving book offers a reflection on the “forgotten” Jesus, the Christ of the ancient Celtic tradition. Drawing on the gospels of Thomas and the Acts of John, and on the writings of Irenaeus, Eriugena, and Teilhard de Chardin, the author ignites us with the possibilities that can come from understanding this ancient spiritual tradition. The Celtic Christ offers new hope for achieving harmony, healing, and renewal for human beings and for all creation.

Newell connects the Celtic tradition with our more conventional Christian beliefs and offers a vision of concern for healing creation and the environment—for the presence of the sacred in nature and all creatures. This was the essence of the ancient Celtic vision of Christ. As an ever unfolding mystery of life rather than a on-time event, the Celtic tradition encourages us to reverence the matter of our bodies and the earth. Newell's Celtic Christ is interwoven with the creation—they share the same center, the same Heartbeat. The book also explores the notion of salvation in the sense of the oneness of the universe. This is salvation that comes from the well being of the whole rather than only the welfare of the individual. Christ of the Celts shows us a new picture of who Christ is today combined with the ancient reverence for harmony with God and nature.” (from the book cover)

About the Author: “J. Philip Newell is a poet, scholar, and teacher. Formerly Warden of Iona Abbey in the Western Isles of Scotland, he is now companion theologian for the American Spirituality Center of Casa del Sol at Ghost Ranch in the high desert of New Mexico.” (from the book cover)

First and last Mondays of the month in the Fellowship Room from 7-8:30 p.m.

Please sign up to receive a book.

Scientists in Congregations

The Scientists in Congregations Grant enables our church to address the supposed divide between science and faith. The program hopes to show that this divide is a false one and that faith and science can indeed co-exist. The speakers will present after the Monday Drop-in Dinners from January to May at 7 p.m.

The following are the dates and topics:

January 16: Reading Scripture: The scholarly view, modern criticisms, and how the canon came to be. What does it mean to say that the Bible is the inspired Word of God? Speaker: Professor Louis Stulman Professor of Religious Studies and Chair of the Religious Studies and Philosophy Department at the University of Findley. Moderated by Susan Rowland Miller.

February 20: Our faith, our scriptures and the big bang, stellar evolution, and the geological record; with Rev. Dr. Julian A. Davies and Dr. Al Compaan.

March 19: Our faith, our scriptures, and what Darwin and our DNA tell us.

April 16: What does it mean to be a human person? What the Bible says and what modern biology/medicine tells us.

May 21: What does it mean to be a member of human society? With Father James Bacik of Corpus Christi.

September 28-30: Marcus Borg (See next page for bio)

Marcus Borg: September 28-30



Marcus Borg is Canon Theologian at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, OR. Known in both academic and church circles as a biblical and Jesus scholar, he held the Hundere Chair of Religion and Culture in the Philosophy Department at Oregon State University until his retirement in 2007.

He is the author of twenty books, including *Jesus: A New Vision* (1987) and the best-seller *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (1994); *The God We Never Knew* (1997); *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions* (1999); *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* (2001), and *The Heart of Christianity* (2003), both best-sellers. His newest books are *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary* (2006), a *New York Times* Best-Seller; *Conversations with Scripture: Mark* (2009); three books co-authored with John Dominic Crossan, *The Last Week* (2006), *The First Christmas* (2007), and *The First Paul* (2009); his first novel, *Putting Away Childish Things* (April, 2010); and twentieth book, *Speaking Christian*, published in April 2011.

Described by *The New York Times* as "a leading figure in his generation of Jesus scholars," he has appeared on NBC's "Today Show" and "Dateline," PBS's "Newshour," ABC's "Evening News" and "Prime Time" with Peter Jennings, NPR's "Fresh Air" with Terry Gross, and several National Geographic programs. A Fellow of the Jesus Seminar, he has been national chair of the Historical Jesus Section of the Society of Biblical Literature and co-chair of its International New Testament Program Committee, and is past president of the Anglican Association of Biblical Scholars. His work has been translated into eleven languages: German, Dutch, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, and French. His doctor's degree is from Oxford University, and he has lectured widely overseas (England, Scotland, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Hungary, Israel and South Africa) and in North America, including the Chautauqua and Smithsonian Institutions.

In addition to the twenty books authored or co-authored, Borg is the editor or co-editor of:

- *The Lost Gospel Q* (1996)
- *Jesus and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings* (1997)
- *God at 2000*, co-edited with Ross Mackenzie (2000).
- *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (1994) is the single best-selling book by a contemporary Jesus scholar.
- *The God We Never Knew* was named "one of the ten best books in religion in 1997" by *Publishers Weekly*.
- *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, co-authored with N. Thomas Wright, a well-known British New Testament scholar from the conservative side of the spectrum. It won the "Best General Interest Book of 1999" award from the Association of Theological Booksellers.
- *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* (2001) made *Publishers Weekly* "ten best selling books in religion."
- *The Heart of Christianity* (Harper San Francisco, 2003) has been a group study book in hundreds of churches.
- *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary* is a *New York Times* best-selling book.

Wednesdays

Wednesday Morning Study Group

The focus of the Wednesday Morning Study Group is on the journey of faith - the inner wrestlings, the deep convictions, the sacred moments, and the connections of these experiences with every day living and with our life in the church. We meet the first and third Wednesday of every month at 9:30 a.m. A discussion format is always used.

The framework for each discussion is provided by an essay read by members of the group prior to the meeting. In January we begin a new series focusing on essays written either by church members or published articles from various media sources - newspapers, magazines, journals and internet. As an example, our first article in January is an essay written by a church member on her commitment to peace issues and the involvement of the church in these issues.

For more information about the Wednesday Morning Study Group please contact Dr. David W. Andersen, facilitator for the group.

1st and 3rd Wednesdays in the Chapel at 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

We will be tackling Thomas—both the Infancy Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Thomas. Both are non-canonical (i.e. not in the Bible) accounts of Jesus. How do they square with what we know about Jesus? Where do they depart from the Gospels? Why were these books banned?

Come and join the discussion. The books will be printed out and provided by Pastor Luke. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Luke.

Every Wednesday night in the Fellowship Room at 6:30 p.m., starting January 18.

Wednesday Night Book Group

January 25: The Paris Wife by Paula McLain

February 29*: Weird Sisters by Eleanor Brown

March 28: The Lost Summer of Louisa May Alcott by Kelly O'Connor

April 25: Silver Sparrows by Tayari Jones

May 23: The Piano Teacher by Janice Y. K. Lee

June 27: A Reliable Wife by Robert Goolrick

*Because of Ash Wednesday, the February meeting will be on the 5th Wednesday.

Bring friends for an informal discussion and fellowship. Participants are responsible for obtaining and reading each month's book..

4th Wednesday in the Fellowship Room at 7 p.m.

Thursdays

Thursday Morning Prayer Group

Members of the worshipping community gather each Thursday morning from 8:30-9 a.m. in the Fellowship Room to join together in prayer.

Taizé Worship Services

This opportunity for mid-week worship is formed around the singing of songs and the reading of scripture.

3rd Thursday in the Chapel from 7-7:45 p.m.

Spring Women's Retreat!

Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28

Women (of all ages), family and friends are encouraged to attend this time of relaxation, spiritual refreshment and fellowship. We will leave Sylvania by 5 p.m. on Friday and will return by 4 p.m. on Saturday. More information will be available in February. Those wishing to serve on the Retreat Committee may contact Kathy Tashima.



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