



UUFM Fellowship of Murfreesboro  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

UUFM

July 2019  
Volume 2, Issue 07



# The Chalice



## How to Be a Social Activist

By Meredith Kermicle

The dictionary defines an activist as a person who campaigns for some kind of social change. There are lots of ways to work for change.

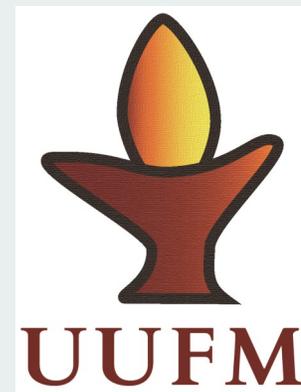
In the beginning of the current troubles in our country I would look around and see all those wonderful smart folks doing things to address the problems and think "I could never do that, they're so good" I have since learned that everyone with the will to do it can contribute and do something if they are willing to show up. It is frustrating, empowering and fun and it is a little addicting, just a warning.

When I was in college in the 70s, I took a class in Community Organizing. It was one of my favorite classes, we read Saul Alinsky's book like it was the bible and did volunteer work in the community for extra credit. Then I got on with real life but took those lessons with me until I needed them again.

Here are some ways to get started on your road to Social Activism:

1. Identify an issue or two that you are really passionate about. There is so much happening lately to work on that it seems overwhelming. Don't try to do it all, you'll burn out. Some folks work on larger national levels of the problem but if that feels like too much stick to local parts of the problem that you really can have an effect on.
2. Research the issue so you can speak a little about it based on the facts. Maybe even write yourself a little speech to practice on friends and family. Think about what change you would actually like to see and the steps to getting there.
3. Join a group that is working on the issue. Be flexible about this. When I joined SOCM (Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment) I didn't care a lot about the landfill issues but as I became more informed I began to care a whole lot. Along the way I have learned a lot about organizing (and trash).

Cont. on page 3



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Get to Know a Member.....	2
July Calendar .....	4
Poem .....	5

# Get to Know a Member

We frequently run this feature to familiarize you with our members. This month's member spotlight is on Sheila Moss.

## **How long have you been a member?**

I signed the book only about four years ago. As far as philosophy, I think I was UU for a long time, but didn't know it.

## **What originally brought you to UUFM and keeps you coming back?**

Morris and I attended a UU church in St. Louis while visiting my sister and liked it. I was raised Baptist and later attended the Methodist church, probably not for a very good reason. The Methodists had the best program in town for singles. Morris is Jewish and felt uncomfortable in a Christian church, so we did not have anywhere we could attend together. We wanted a religious affiliation and decided to look for a local UU church and found UUFM. We knew from the first time we went that we had found our spiritual home. As I said to Mo, "I can't believe there are other people that think exactly like I do." We liked the way social justice and the environment were valued and the nonjudgmental acceptance of others. Coming from two different backgrounds, there were not many churches where we both were accepted.

## **How do you like to spend your free time?**

I am a homebody and like spending time cleaning, decorating, gardening and improving my personal space. For a while I was very involved in politics as the wife of a small town mayor. For most of my life, I've been a wife and mother and had an outside career in social work. I was an early innovator of the internet via personal computer. I felt I had a lot to say, but did not have much opportunity to share my thoughts. The internet opened up a new opportunity for me to express my ideas. I taught myself how to build websites. However, websites need content, so I began to freelance and write my own articles. From there, I became involved with other content writers and with newspaper columnists through friends and online organizations. I still spend a lot of time blogging and online.

## **What is the best vacation you have taken and what is one place you'd like to see?**

I suppose the best vacation I've taken was to Egypt. Although I had traveled in the US, I had not previously done much international travel. Egypt was a life-changing experience. It was so different from my own life and experiences. It was very enlightening to see that an entirely different universe existed parallel to my own. There are many other places I would like to go, such as China, which I'm sure would probably be yet another world different from the one I know. I would also like to see Switzerland and the Alps, a childhood wish that has never been fulfilled.

## **If you could create a slogan for your life, what would it be?**

My slogan is: "Let your light shine, no matter how small." I am only one small person, a speck in the universe, but I have found a way to reach out. I think everyone can make a small difference in their own way and together we can make a big difference in the world we share.

## HOW TO BE AN ACTIVIST

Cont. from page 1

That work has evolved into working for local government transparency, fairness, and honesty because that was at the heart of the landfill and other issues the county is facing. I joined the Rutherford Neighborhood Alliance because I wanted to help SOCM network with other groups and now I have learned SO MUCH about how to lobby and speak with the people who make decisions locally as well as the history and personal dynamics that affect the decisions they make. I go to all the County Commission meetings I can manage because I want them to know we are watching and I want to learn about how this government actually works (or doesn't).

4. Decide what you can and can't do and then be ready to expand those boundaries and grow into doing more. For instance, I am a committed introvert, so canvassing for a candidate or a cause is really pushing the boundaries of what I am comfortable with, but I can happily write letters, postcards or letters to the editor about something I care about. But in the beginning I wasn't comfortable with some of those things either. I have said many times "Oh, I am not going to do that" only to find myself doing it a few weeks later.

Most of all **SHOW UP**. Go the local protest or bigger ones in Nashville if you can. Write letters, network with others, encourage others to get involved, give money or time even if you don't think you know how to contribute. Show up because not showing up is an option you only have because of white privilege. Oppressed people don't have that option. Show up in spite of how busy you are. Just do it. And you might make your community better and find a lot of friends along the way.

---



## July Calendar

July 02: UUFM Humanists 6:00 pm Firehouse Subs

July 04: Independence Day

July 07: Rabbi Rami Shapiro: “The Way of the Weeble: Finding Balance in the Midst of Chaos”

July 10: Men’s Group 6:00 pm Mellow Mushroom

July 11: Board Meeting 6:30 pm Kimbro home

July 14: Doug Traversa: “The Rival Messiah”

July 16: Full Moon Pagans meet at 6:00 pm  
McConnell home

July 16: Women’s Group 6:00 pm Thai Pattaya

July 21: Rev. Denise Gyauch: “This is No Time to Sit on the Fence! Notes from the General Assembly of the UUA”

July 28: Bob Kimbro: “Of a Fire on the Moon: A Tale of Two Americas”

**UUFM FELLOWSHIP OF MURFREESBORO**

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Murfreesboro, Tennessee (UUFM) is a liberal religious society associated with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). UUFM is a member of the Southern Region and the Mid-South District.

Contact *The Chalice*:

[Capt\\_Yossarian@Outlook.com](mailto:Capt_Yossarian@Outlook.com)

**UUFM Fellowship of Murfreesboro**

110 W. College St.  
P.O. Box 976  
Murfreesboro, TN  
37133



# Poem

## THE NEW COLOSSUS

By Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glowes world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she  
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”