



<b>In this issue:</b>	<b>SUNDAY SERVICES</b>
	<p><b>Sunday services begin at 11:00 a.m.</b>  <b>Childcare is available 9:15 to 12:15 p.m.</b></p>
Sunday Services Schedule.....1	<p><b>April 5 "This I Believe" YRUU Group</b></p> <p>The youth group will share some of the personal stories of growth and discovery that have helped them develop and articulate their spiritual beliefs.</p> <p>YRUU stands for Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, our youth group for teens, grades 9-12. Each year they do a worship service at USG and many find it inspiring and affirming. For people with younger children, this service often gets them excited about the potential for their own kids to become as thoughtful and articulate as the current crop of youth. Older members have said that it gives them hope that the future of Unitarian Universalism is in good hands.</p>
From the DRE.....2	<p><b>April 12 "Paradise Now: A UU Theology of Easter"</b>  <b>The Rev. Beth Putnam</b></p> <p>Easter is all about new life, but how can we as Unitarian Universalists experience new life and Easter without believing in resurrection? New insights about early Christianity and paradise were explored by Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Parker in their recent book <b><i>Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of This World for Crucifixion and Empire.</i></b></p> <p>The Rev. Beth Putnam will reflect on a Unitarian Universalist theology of Easter that is true to our spiritual history and has important implications for our social justice ministries. Join us for an Easter where we resurrect our spirits.</p> <p>The Rev. Beth Putnam is an affiliated community minister of the Fourth Universalist Society in New York City and a chaplain consultant for the VA New York Harbor Healthcare System. She served as an Intern Community Minister at USG from Fall 2006-2007. She was ordained by the Fourth Universalist Society in June 2008, with members of the USG community in attendance.</p>
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**April 19**                      **"The Only True Religion --- Ever!"**                      **Mark Bernstein**

How can Unitarian-Universalism be "the only true religion ever" when we learn from prophets of every religion in every age? How can we be "the only true religion ever" when our spiritual life is inspired by the wisdom of all the world's religions? How can Unitarian-Universalism be "the only true religion ever" when we celebrate the sacred circle through earth-centered traditions? Why you say? That's exactly why we are "the only true religion ever!"

Judge Mark I. Bernstein has been a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County since April 1987. He has been an active member of the Unitarian Society of Germantown for over twenty years. He has served in many capacities including Treasurer of the Endowment and President of the Board of Trustees. He has presented his service on the work of Joseph Campbell at five Unitarian Churches and has led many services here at USG.

**April 26**                      **"With All Our Lives"**                      **Rev. Robert M. Hardies**

What holds us back from giving ourselves *fully* to life and to love?

The Rev. Robert M. Hardies is senior minister of All Souls Church, Unitarian, in Washington, DC, a diverse, historic congregation in the nation's capital.

<b>FROM THE DRE</b>
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**A Tale of Two Patients**

It was late, near midnight, and the 25-year-old patient was barely conscious, just waking from surgery after sustaining a gunshot wound to his leg. Hours earlier I had sat with his anxious parents in the surgical hospitality area. They told me about their son, how they hoped he would be able to walk again, that he had "tried college" and was currently "between jobs." Now, as I stood at his bedside, I did my best to comfort him. He was clearly in a lot of pain, and I mopped his brow and offered ice chips.

Another patient had been in a terrible car accident. He had had to be cut from his vehicle and his legs were badly damaged. The following day he would undergo surgery to begin to repair the injuries. He was fuzzy from pain medication and trauma, so our interaction was brief.

One week after the first patient had been shot, I went to see him for the third or fourth time. Since the incident, his parents had taken time off from work, made arrangements for pets and younger siblings, and lost countless hours of sleep worrying about him. Their concern was compounded by the painful discovery that the shooting was connected to the patient's involvement with drugs. During our visit, the patient complained that he was bored, in pain, and had nothing to do all day but think. I asked him what kinds of things he was thinking about. "Oh, you know," he responded, "how much it hurts, how much I hate physical therapy . . ." When I asked him about the impact of the shooting on his family he replied, "I haven't really thought about that. I'm just thinking about my leg."

Later, I paid another visit to the car accident victim; I could see that he was in a good deal of pain. The surgeons had made some repairs, but it was uncertain whether he would walk unaided ever again. This patient, too, told me that he'd been doing a lot of thinking. When I invited him to share his thoughts, he talked

about priorities and meaning. For him, the accident had been a wakeup call. "I think I had some things all wrong," he confessed. "I was stressing about work and fancy cars and a big house as if all that stuff really mattered. Now I can see that what's more important is relationships with people you love and especially with God. I wasn't paying enough attention to those things, but God has fixed it so I can't run away." A tear slid down his cheek. "This might sound crazy, but I think what I'm supposed to learn from this is gratitude."

So you can probably guess where I'm going here. These two patients have taught me that we all make choices about how we respond to the circumstances of our lives. Sometimes we get stuck feeling victimized; other times we are able to make meaning from our pain. What makes us able to move from "Poor me" to "What can I learn from this?" is our connection to something greater than ourselves. If all we can focus on is our hurt leg, then we're just a person with leg pain. But if we can see a purpose in the hurt leg, the pain is still there, but so is the motivation to heal both physically and spiritually. Our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world is broadened. Victim, or spiritual seeker—the choice is yours.

*In faith,  
Jude*

## EVENTS AND FELLOWSHIP

### **Auction News!**

#### **Take Me Out to the Ball Game!**

Whoa fans! Don't forget to mark your calendar for a trip to the ballpark on Saturday, April 18. The ballpark right here at USG that is! At this year's annual service auction we'll wear our favorite baseball gear (Go Phillies!) munch on hot dogs and crackerjacks and other all-American fare, and then bid our hearts out for some wonderful auction items— services, dinners, parties, tours, and trips offered by our friends.

And we'll bid in the silent auction on all sorts of gift certificates to area stores and eateries.

Don't forget – many of these items are family friendly and affordable! This year's umpires (we mean auctioneers) promise to be funnier and fiercer than ever. Registration, poster auction and food stands open at 6 p.m. The main auction begins promptly at 7:15 p.m. Free childcare, fans!

**Make sure you're there for one of the church's most important fundraisers. And it's 1, (one!) 2, (two) 3 strikes you're out at the o-o-o-ld ba-a-all game!**

### **How to Help the Church and Make New Friends**

Offering an event for the service auction helps everyone! It's simple, its fun and it feels good. How does it work? Decide on an activity. For instance, if you have young kids how about a trip to the zoo or a walk in the Wissahickon with a picnic lunch afterwards or a simple "Make your own pizza night" Do you like museums or history? Plan a trip to your favorite local museum or historical spot. Its a great way to meet new people and also help the church- you provide the idea and

the Service Auction committee will guide you through the process or simply pickup a copy of our FAST Form at Coffee hour or online.

### **Take a "chance"**

For the next few Sundays at coffee hour, members of the church handwork group, "the Needle Exchange", will be selling chances on a handmade afghan knitted by members of the group. The afghan itself will be on display after church.

The money raised will go to support Safe Passage, the program in Guatemala that works to help children who are living on the dump in Guatemala City. This program has been adopted by our youth group, a number of whom visited and worked there last summer.

The drawing for the afghan will take place at the auction on April 18.

### **Friday Book Club**

Would you like to expand your reading choices and discuss them with witty, intelligent people? If so, the book group is for you. It meets monthly on the third Friday at 10:30 a.m. in members' homes. All are welcome. On April 17, we will meet at the home of **Wanda Will**. We will be discussing **The Bone Garden** by Tess Gerritsen. Bring a sandwich for lunch and fellowship following the discussion, if you wish. The hostess will provide dessert and beverages. Please call Wanda by Monday April 13 to let her know you are coming. For additional information, contact **Cynthia Claus**.

### **Easter is time for Flowering the Chalice!**

This Easter Sunday, April 12, USG will again come together with our well-loved celebration of the season, Flowering the Chalice. Be sure to bring to the 11 o'clock service one flower (or one sprig of a flowering bush or tree) per person. This is an all-generation ritual; we will see how all our small gifts truly create one gorgeous symbol of the renewal of the earth! Come, share the joy!

### **Men's Retreat**

The Unitarian Society of Germantown's annual Men's retreat will be held October 9-11, 2009. Contact **Hal Krieger** for more information.

The May **2009** CommUUnicator Deadline is **Sunday, April 12**

Editor: **Cynthia Claus**

Please or submit items via email to the editor or place in CommUUnicator box by 12:30 p.m. **April 12**. Flyers must be submitted to the USG office by the

CommUUnicator deadline. Submit materials in Verdana 11 pt when possible.

The CommUUnicator is published eleven times a year by The Unitarian Society of Germantown, 6511 Lincoln Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19119-3625

Office: 215-844-1157 ~ Fax: 215-844-1159 ~ website [www.usguu.org](http://www.usguu.org).

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## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

### **Share the Plate—Operation Homefront**

The next Share the Plate Sunday is April 19. On that date we will share the collection at the worship service with Operation Homefront, a charity dedicated to helping the families of men and women in the armed services. From its mission statement: "Operation Homefront provides emergency assistance and morale to our troops, to the families they leave behind, and to wounded warriors when they return home."

Operation Homefront works with nearly 5000 volunteers; it operates on only 8% overhead: 92 cents of every dollar raised directly supports those in need. It has provided critical assistance to 45,000 military families, has delivered more than 20,000 Care packages to service people abroad, and has received the prestigious Charity Navigator's 4-Star rating for conscientious stewardship. There are 30 chapters across the U.S. Our own **Deanna Kemler** heads the Pennsylvania chapter, which also serves Delaware.

Operation Homefront provides assistance to military families struggling not only with emergencies, but also with the problems of everyday life. A few of the programs are:

- Computer program allows families to stay in contact with their loved ones.
- Financial assistance helps in crises such as homelessness, illness and death.
- Furniture program provides lightly-used appliances, household and infant furniture.
- Moving program provides physical labor for families when a service member is deployed.
- Social outreach offers adopt-a-family opportunities.

Please make out your checks to support the work of this organization to Operation Homefront.

We like to keep the congregation up-to-date on our recent Share the Plate collections. You generously donated \$1,062 to the People's Emergency Center (Nov.); \$1,626 to NPIHN (Dec.); \$929 to Pathways PA (Jan.); \$1,058 to the Peace Corps Romania Project (Feb.).

As always, we are eager to receive your suggestions for worthy recipients.

### **Share the Plate Report**

Dear USG Members and Friends,

Mel and I are extremely grateful for your generous support for the people of Felsorakos, Romania. The people in this tiny Hungarian, Unitarian village in Transylvania are mostly subsistence farmers who would like to generate some much needed additional income by drawing tourists to their village.

The money you donated will be used to renovate an old bell ringer's house. The house will be used as a museum to display traditional items from the area as well as local crafts. A contractor will be used for some of the more difficult construction work but the local people will also work on the house and will donate the items to be displayed in the museum.

In addition to providing another reason for tourists to visit the area, the museum will also help the local people to preserve their heritage. The Szekelys, as

the local Hungarians are called, are thought to be the most traditional Hungarian group in the world. They still perform traditional dances and songs and practice traditional crafts such as weaving, wood carving and painting and basketry. Felsorakos has a wonderful women's choral group as well as several of the most traditional weavers in the area.

When we return in June, we will bring back pictures of the village and of the bellringer's house before the renovations are done. Jozsef will keep us updated on the progress. We hope that in the future, some of you will have a chance to visit Jozsef and his wife Reka and the friendly people of Felsorakos.

We are very much looking forward to be back at USG, seeing our friends and meeting all of you who have become active in the church during our absence. With lots of love and gratitude,

**Anne Gwynn and Mel Strieb**

Dear Friends, - let us send to you through this e-mail our love and gratitude for your wonderful help. Our common God bless all of you for it! The main goal of our lives is not how much we do, but how much love we put into doing. We have a common destiny- a lifelong walk hand in hand and sharing our faith and hope and our love. We are honoured and we are happy to have you as partners in this lifelong walk.

For me and for Reka it was an unforgettable feeling to meet you, to know you and spend some wonderful hours together in peace and joy.

Words are too weak to express our feelings,- so let us say just a big THANKS and we promise that we will keep you always in our prayers and we hope that we will have a lot of opportunities to strengthen our friendship and partnership.

GOD BLESS YOU!! ISTEEN ALDJON MEG!!

Jozsef and Reka and our Unitarian congregation from Felsorakos

#### **USG STAFF**

Minister: The Reverend Kent Matthies  
*(on sabbatical until August 2009)*

Director of Religious Education: Jude Henzy

Office Administrator: Robin Neill

Music Director: Mark Daugherty

#### **CONTINUING OUR FOOD CUPBOARD TRADITION**

Church members and friends are asked to continue our tradition of bringing food to the church on the first Sunday of each month. We need nonperishable food to fill our community cupboard, now housed in baskets **located at the dining room exit to the courtyard and next to the coat rack**. Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, April 5** as a reminder to purchase food for the hungry in Germantown. Collected items will be taken to St. Vincent's Food Pantry for distribution to those least able to make ends meet.

## SABBATICAL NEWS

### **News from the Sabbatical Task Force**

In preparation for Reverend Kent's sabbatical, a group of church leaders has been meeting to make sure the church will continue to run well during our minister's absence. The Sabbatical Committee is comprised of **Sarah West, Marny Walsh, Bill Morrow, Jude Henzy, Sam Gugino,** and **Eli Scearce**. We will continue to meet regularly to make sure all is running well. Here is a list of Frequently Asked Questions; if you have a question or concern please feel free to contact the committee chair, **Eli Scearce**.

### **Who will do the Sunday services Kent usually does?**

Excellent worship services are planned for the entire sabbatical period. Many talented UU ministers, **Jude Henzy**, and our own lay leaders will lead the Sunday services. Also included, as usual, will be our excellent music program led by **Mark Daugherty** and the USG choir.

### **How long is Rev. Kent's sabbatical?**

Rev. Kent's sabbatical is six months long. His last day with us will be Saturday, January 31 and he will return August 1.

### **Who do I contact if someone I know is in need?**

Pastoral Care is in the care of and supported by a trained team of lay folk. Call **Sarah West** or **Mark Kaufki**. The team will contact a religious professional to assist as well if needed.

### **Who will be available for rites of passage?**

Religious professionals, including our DRE and ministerial candidate, **Jude Henzy**, will cover weddings, memorial services and child dedications.

### **What will Rev. Kent be doing on Sabbatical?**

This will be a time for our minister to focus intensively on professional development and his own spiritual growth after serving our church for the last six years.

### **Will regular church activities such as the Annual Meeting, Auction and Budget Drive still take place?**

Absolutely! These activities are run by our very capable church leaders and will be held this year as usual.

### **Who do I call if I don't know whom to call?**

Contact the church office, Board President, **Sam Gugino**, the sabbatical chair, **Eli Scearce**, or a church staff member. We will help advise you on the proper channel. There will also be a "Who to Call List" on the website and in the Communicator.

## Sabbatical Sunday Services

4/5	YRUU	This I Believe
4/12	Rev. Elizabeth Putnam	Paradise Now: A UU Theology of Easter
4/19	Mark Bernstein	The Only True Religion --- Ever!"
4/26	Rev. Rob Hardies	With All Our Lives
5/3	Rev. Scott Taylor	First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY
5/10	Berdine Whedon	"Generations of Mothers"
5/17	Mark Daugherty, Choir	Music Sunday
5/24	Rev. Ken Beldon	Wellsprings UU Church
5/31	Kathy Bonnano	"Slamming Open the Door"
6/7	Rev. Howard Dana	Unitarian Church of Harrisburg
6/14	Jude Henzy & Youth	Religious Education Sunday
6/21	Rev. Libby Smith	UU Fellowship of Lower Bucks County UU House - Philadelphia
6/28	Rev. Kathy Bortner	Consulting Minister of UUs of Gettysburg Affiliated Community Minister of UU Congregation of York
7/5	Rev. Dwayne Fickeison	UUs of the Cumberland Valley - Boiling Spring
7/12	Rebecca Froom	
7/19	Rev. Kathy Ellis	
7/26	Rev. Nate Walker	First UU Church of Philadelphia

## HOW AND WHEN TO REACH USG STAFF

Office phone 215-844-1157 FAX 215-844-1159  
E-mail [usguu@verizon.net](mailto:usguu@verizon.net) USG website [www.usguu.org](http://www.usguu.org)  
Church office hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Robin Neill, Office Administrator - 215-844-1157 - [usguu@verizon.net](mailto:usguu@verizon.net)  
*Rev. Kent Matthies will be on sabbatical until August, 2009*  
Jude Henzy, Director of Religious Education - 215-844-1157 - [usgre@verizon.net](mailto:usgre@verizon.net)

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Membership Committee

#### **New Members**

We welcome **Michael and Ashley Nardi**, a young Mount Airy couple who joined USG in January, 2009. Michael grew up in the Cleveland area and Ashley outside of Philadelphia. Education and movement seem important themes in their lives now. Ashley is completing her doctorate in Physical Therapy at Drexel, and Michael has a Master's in Education and has taught kindergarten up to middle school. Currently, he has opened a Reiki practice in Chestnut Hill and volunteers at Keystone Hospice. He is also a published author.

Married for five years this July 24, Michael and Ashley enjoy watching movies, walking at Valley Green, practicing yoga, and reading together.

Individually, Michael loves Reiki, Tai Chi, yoga, reading and painting; and Ashley loves dance and exercise.

Michael was raised Catholic and Ashley Lutheran. They believe "there are many paths on the road of life, one no greater than the other" and love USG's community, its spirituality and openness.

**Erik and Brooke Cordes** are another young adult couple who joined USG in January, 2009. Newlyweds, they share their Mt. Airy home with 1000 vinyl records (collected by Erik), craft work (created by Brooke), and their dog, Morgan.

Brooke grew up in Concord, New Hampshire, in a large, close family that owns an independent pharmacy, where she worked as she grew older. With degrees in elementary education and social science, she is a certified elementary school teacher, both in New Hampshire and Pennsylvania. Currently, she works as a nanny. As indicated, she loves crafts, including knitting, sewing, card-making, and painting, and also enjoys photography.

Erik grew up in Bedford, Massachusetts, but was born in New Orleans, where all his family originated. Some favorite childhood memories center in his grandfather's house on a Mississippi bayou. Erik has a master's degree in Marine Science and a doctorate in biology, with post-doctoral research at Harvard. He is now an assistant professor at Temple in the Biology Department, studying deep-sea ecology.

Erik was first exposed to UUism when he and his grandmother attended a conference on Star Island in 1980. His entire family returned every summer thereafter, and he worked on Star every summer through college. And Star is where Brooke and Erik met: a few years ago, he attended a conference on Star that Brooke was leading.

Erik writes, "I believe that all Life is Sacred since we are composed of the same molecules that circulate through all life forms at one point in their existences. I believe in our responsibility and capacity to preserve all these life forms to ensure our own survival." Brooke writes, "I believe it is most important to love as well as to be present in my life and in this moment." Both hope to bring up their children with the lasting relationships they have found in the Unitarian community.

## **Stewardship Committee**

### **Commitment Sunday Was Fun!**

Gracious hosts and enthusiastic guests made the twenty-four cottage lunches (and one supper) a memorable event for all who attended (approximately 140 adults and a dozen children.) "A nice lunch.... good discussion on a satisfyingly deep and personal level" is how one guest described the experience. New folks met "old" folks and shared what they valued about being part of this church community. Thanks to all who made it such a happy event.

Watch for the announcement of a Sunday in May when we'll celebrate the end of a successful annual budget drive. By then all members and contributing friends will have returned their financial commitment forms.

Many thanks from your Stewardship Committee: **Linda Bernstein** and **Tom Schoonmaker**, Co-chairs, **Greg Bomke**, **Mike Heinsdorf**, **Susan Smith**, **Leni Windle**, and **Ann Schoonmaker**.

## BOARD NOTES

### **Board News, March 2009**

No matter how long you've been a member of USG or on the Board of Trustees, you are always finding out something new about your church. Several months ago, Board member **Susan Bockius** discovered that the church bylaws require that delegates to the UUA General Assembly be elected, not appointed, as they had been in the past (or at least as long as I can remember).

Therefore, at our Annual Meeting on May 17, members of the congregation will not only vote on three new Board members and the Nominating Committee for next year, they will also choose the six USG delegates for the 2009 General Assembly, which will be held June 24-28 in Salt Lake City. (The number of delegates is based on the size of the congregation.)

But wait, there's more! Susan's interest in the General Assembly went beyond choosing delegates. Last fall, she set up a GA feedback session during which those of us who attended the last GA in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla, as well as other GAs, talked about our experiences—what we learned and how we were inspired.

Ft. Lauderdale was my third consecutive GA. Each of them has been rewarding and informative. More importantly, they motivated me work and engage the support of others on new programs and to energize existing ones at USG. The most recent example is our Stewardship Committee, which is doing a superb job on our Budget Drive. That committee evolved after attending several GA workshops and discussing their contents with other lay leaders at USG.

You don't have to be a delegate to take advantage of all the great things at General Assembly, but delegates do have certain obligations, not least of which is choosing between Peter Morales and Laurel Hallman for our next UUA President. At our last Board meeting we adopted a resolution put forth by Susan, which defines the responsibilities of delegates.

- Those attending GA as delegates will be responsible for attending plenary sessions (during which the business of GA is conducted) and for exercising the congregational vote.
- Delegates will present a report to the congregation on the issues before GA, how the congregation's interests are affected by those issues, how delegates voted, and issues of on-going action or concern. This can be done in one or more sessions, convened and conducted by delegates.

If you are interested in becoming a delegate, please notify me as soon as possible so that I can put your name on the ballot for the Annual Meeting.

Thank UUs this month go to:

- **Mark Daugherty** and the USG choir for their excellent presentation of the "Changed My Name" cantata on March 1.
- **Mary Lee Keane** for launching the new USG blog.
- The Coming of Age religious education class of 7th and 8th graders for their exceptional Bayard Rustin portrait.
- **Betsy Gabriel** for organizing the Circle Dinners on March 28.

--Sam Gugino, President, Board of Trustees

### **USG APRIL 2009 CALENDAR**

Wednesday	4/1	12:30 p.m.	Out to Lunch
Wednesday	4/1	7:00 p.m.	Healing the Wounded Healer's Heart
Sunday	4/5	1:00 p.m.	Introduction to Zen Buddhism
Monday	4/6	7:30 p.m.	Earth Honoring Traditions
Tuesday	4/7	7:30 p.m.	Joseph Campbell: Unitarian Saint
Wednesday	4/8	7:30 p.m.	Buildings & Grounds Committee
Saturday	4/11	6:00 p.m.	Passover Seder
Sunday	4/12	9:30 a.m.	UU 101
Sunday	4/12	9:30 a.m.	Meditation Circle
Monday	4/13	7:30 p.m.	Women's Singing Circle
Wednesday	4/15	7:00 p.m.	Healing the Wounded Healer's Heart
Wednesday	4/15	7:00 p.m.	Ending Racism Committee
Wednesday	4/15	7:30 p.m.	Money & Emotions
Sunday	4/18	1:00 p.m.	UU History Field Trip
Saturday	4/18	6:00 p.m.	Annual Service Auction: "Take me out to the ballgame!"
Tuesday	4/21	7:30 p.m.	Men's Group
Wednesday	4/22	7:00 p.m.	Green Sanctuary
Sunday	4/26	9:00 a.m.	Buddhist Meditation
Sunday	4/26	12:30 p.m.	Unitarian Universalist History
Sunday	4/26	7:00 p.m.	Dead Sea Scrolls
Monday	4/27	7:30 p.m.	Exploring <i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i>
Tuesday	4/28	7:30 p.m.	Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday	4/29	7:00 p.m.	Healing the Wounded Healer's Heart
Tuesday	4/29	7:30 p.m.	<i>Palace of Illusions</i>