



THE COMMUNICATOR
The Newsletter of the Unitarian Society of Germantown
 February 2008 Volume 45, No 6

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SUNDAY SERVICES

**Sunday services begin at 11:00 a.m.
Childcare is available 9:15 to 12:15 a.m.**

Feb. 3 "Black Unitarian Universalist Pioneers" Rev. Kent Matthies

Let us pay homage to the stories of people of color who have come into our denomination, which has historically been mostly white. These UU stories include spiritual callings, brave responses, painful ignorance, struggles of ambivalence and pure joy. Many of us share a deep desire and hopefulness for increasingly authentic multi-cultural UU community. Like all humans, if we don't know and own our history, we are bound to repeat mistakes of the past.

Feb. 10 "Being Dust" Rev. F. Jay Deacon

Ash Wednesday is February 6. Isn't Lent, with that ash-mark on all those foreheads, a bit *grovelly* for UUs? We are an amalgam of god and dust. To be a religious, moral being is sometimes to feel uneasy about the quality of our purposes, days, and deeds, without grovelling. How might Emerson see it?

Rev. F. Jay Deacon, D.Min., is Interim Minister at Unity Church UU, North Easton, MA. Previously he served as Director of the UUA Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Concerns, as minister at Unity Temple UU Congregation in Oak Park, IL, and in Northampton, MA, where he produced *Spirit*, a weekly UU radio show.

Feb. 17 "Black History is Our History" Rev. Peter Friedrichs

It has been more than forty years since the Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964, yet we still live in a society where the history, talents, and accomplishments of African Americans are celebrated separately from those of the dominant culture. Why is this so, and how can we, as people of faith, work to eradicate the vestiges of racism that persist in our society?

Rev. Peter Friedrichs is the minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County, in Media, PA.

Feb. 24 "Embrace Your Championship" Rev. Kent Matthies

There are so many reasons we tend to accept our own individual powerlessness. We don't want to offend. We don't believe in ourselves enough. We don't want to seem egotistical. However, liberation theology is a great approach to personal living. Let go of YOUR powerlessness and embrace a more confident, effective and powerful YOU! The power of positive thinking can take you where you never thought you could go.

THE SERMON TOPIC FOR MARCH 2—Don't Miss It

The Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray will speak on the topic "Love, Power & Other Temptations." Susan is a life-long Unitarian Universalist minister, serving in Ohio. She is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and the University of Wisconsin, where she studied molecular biology. Susan's ministry centers around worship, leadership development, personal growth, and community organizing.

FROM OUR DRE

Shifting Gears

February 17 marks the first Sunday of the spring semester for children's religious education programming. Preschoolers will continue their *Chalice Children* curriculum, exploring what it means to be part of a church community. And the 7th and 8th graders will continue with the *Our Whole Lives* comprehensive sexuality education program they began in the fall. But children in Kindergarten through grade six will be shifting gears.

This age group, in their different classes, spent the fall semester on Unitarian Universalist history and identity. They learned about famous UUs, from Beatrix Potter to Frank Lloyd Wright to the guy who invented Jell-O. They participated in activities designed to help them understand our seven principles and lead lives in accordance with them. Now it's time for something new.

Two years ago, the Children's Religious Education Committee decided to divide each church year into two semesters for the elementary grades. This gives us an opportunity to cover our four major themes (Social Justice, UU Identity, World Religions, and Bible Stories) more frequently and allows us to freshen things up in the middle of the year. So, beginning later this month, we'll move into our Bible Stories semester.

Some might wonder why we devote an entire semester every other year to the Bible, while others may be curious as to our approach. First, the Bible is still the predominant religious text for most of our culture, and references to it shape our everyday lives. In order to be culturally literate, our children need to understand what a Good Samaritan is, who Moses was, or why we don't have school on Good Friday. In addition, both the Hebrew text (aka Old Testament) and Christian Bible (aka New Testament) are important sources of our Unitarian Universalist faith. We grew out of these traditions and want our kids to have an understanding of those roots.

What's unique about the UU approach is that we'll be teaching them, not as doctrine or creed, but as wisdom stories. The difference is that we will not be instructing children to view Biblical events as literal truths, but as tales with enduring human truths that even today help us understand how to live. The Good Samaritan is a story about the importance of helping those in need; Moses was a civil rights leader; and Jesus' resurrection reminds us that we can overcome adversity.

In addition, Bible stories are a bridge for our children to use in understanding what their friends believe. Most of their pals are either Christian or Jewish, and familiarity with the major stories of these faiths can help our kids respect and celebrate their friends' traditions. We'll cover other faiths in our World Religions semester next year so that our children can learn from the wisdom of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Earth-based traditions and others.

In faith,
Jude

EVENTS AND FELLOWSHIP

Jeannie Gagné at USG to Benefit Youth Trip to Guatemala

USG's Music Ministry proudly announces a performance by UU musician Jeannie Gagné on Friday, February 22, at 8:00 p.m. A world-class vocalist, Jeannie has sung with Philip Glass, opened for the Barenaked Ladies, performed for NBC-TV with comedians Penn and Teller, toured with reggae legend Frankie Paul, and sings on the soundtrack for the feature film *Anima Mundi* (1993). She has received extensive press coverage, including feature stories on PBS's *All Things Considered* and the *CBS Evening News*.

Jeannie is voice professor at the world-renowned Berklee College of Music in Boston, where she teaches pop/rock, blues, jazz, folk, and classical styles. A veteran performer, she sings from the depths of her soul with rare skill and passion. Her four-octave range and unique vocal style go from strong blues-influenced singing from-the-gut, to lyrical, beautiful and sometimes haunting reflective singing. She performs jazz with equal agility, and is seen frequently in the Boston area and elsewhere. Her pop/rock sound has been compared to Bonnie Raitt, Sarah MacLachlan, Sheryl Crow and Margo Timmins of Cowboy Junkies. Jeannie has recorded two albums—*Wide Open Heart* and *Blues Me, Baby*—and is currently working with legendary producer Mitchell Green on a third.

The Music Director of the UU Society in Middleboro, MA, Jeannie was part of the team that created our new hymnal, *Singing the Journey*. She leads workshops around the country on personal empowerment through singing, jazz/pop improv techniques and joyful movement. She will be featured at the JPD Music and Worship Arts Festival, to be hosted by USG on Saturday, February 23rd.

Proceeds will benefit our high school youth, who are raising funds for a service mission trip to Camino Seguro in Guatemala. Suggested donation: \$10. For more information about Jeannie, see www.jeanniegagne.com.

Friday Morning Book Group

Do you enjoy reading and discussing what you've read? If so, the book group is for you. It meets monthly on the third Friday at 10:00 a.m. at members' homes. All are welcome. On February 15, we will meet at the home of Wanda Will. We will discuss *Surprised by Joy* by C.S. Lewis. Bring a sandwich for lunch and fellowship following the discussion, if you wish. The hostess will provide dessert and beverages. Please call Wanda a few days in advance to let her know you are coming. For additional information, contact Cynthia Claus.

USG STAFF

Minister: The Reverend Kent Matthies
Director of Religious Education: Jude Henzy
Office Administrator: Robin Neill
Music Director: Mark Daugherty

Needle Exchange

The Needle Exchange is for people who knit or do any other kind of needlework. We meet at 7:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. The next meeting will be February 11, place to be determined.

Adult RE

Sign up for spring semester Adult RE classes:

- Friday Night Films at USG: Movies to Inspire, Provoke and Entertain (next movie is on February 15)
- Race and Parenting (February 10)
- Holistic Nutrition Seminar (February 17)
- UU 102 - The Seven UU Principles, One at a Time (drop-in, next session on February 17)
- Intimate Justice: Finding Fairness in Close Relationships (February 24)
- Exploring Deep Ecology (began on January 28, contact the leader if you are interested in joining in progress)
- Storytelling for Beginners (began on January 30, contact the leader if you are interested in joining in progress)
- Unitarian Universalist History (starts on February 10)
- Poetry of Rumi (starts on April 9)

To enroll in classes, or for more information about course dates, times and charges, click on <http://www.usguu.org/AREBrochure.htm> or call the USG office. To register, send an email stating for which course(s) you want to register. Please include your name, phone number and e-address. You can pay at the first class.

You may also send registration and payment to USG Church Administrator, 6511 Lincoln Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19119

Holistic Nutrition Seminar

An interactive Holistic Nutrition Seminar will be presented Sunday, February 17, at 12:30 - 1:30 p.m, by Emily Clark, CHHC, AADP, Nutritional Counselor. Come learn how to nourish yourself without dieting, deprivation or willpower, learn how to eat for optimum energy, health and weight loss, the bodily and emotional effects of different foods, primary foods vs. secondary foods, and how to achieve a balance.

This seminar costs \$5 and is sponsored by the Adult Spiritual Development Committee. Healthy foods and beverages will be served. Sign up on the poster on the bulletin board in the Dining Room (first floor), or send an email to the Church Administrator

Emily Clark is a GFS alum and a graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition in New York City. A former dancer, she has been giving nutrition and weight loss advice for years and emphasizes an individualized approach to help her clients achieve increased energy, weight loss, a sense of balance in their lives.

Valentines Day Party

Come to a Valentines Day party on Friday, February 8, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. All ages welcome! Help us make some very special valentines for some very special people at UU House or for anyone else at whom you aim your arrow. Pizza

and beverages will be served. This year we're looking for some heart-healthy sides and desserts, so please bring your favorites to share. We'll supply the materials, you supply the heart. \$5 donation per family. For more information on this event, please contact Kim Killian.

UU 101

A one-hour introduction to Unitarian Universalism for visitors and new members is held on the second Sunday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Daskam Room (second floor). Attendees will receive a free copy of *The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide*. Childcare is provided. If you plan to attend or have questions, contact group leaders Howard Silver or Linda Bernstein. The next session will be held Sunday, February 10.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Share the Plate

We are privileged to direct our contributions in February to the Philadelphia Committee to End Homelessness. Since 1982, PCEH has dedicated itself to reducing the number of homeless individuals in our city through combined prevention and intervention. PCEH has never sought or accepted public money in order to have the freedom to develop solutions that end homelessness rather than manage it. PCEH works directly with people who are homeless and people who are at high risk of becoming homeless with an array of services and referrals that meet clients at their level of needs. Services include advocacy, homelessness prevention, day center, street outreach, community education, research, and support. The founders of this organization first went out on the streets and down the alleys to find out from the people living there what they needed. Outreach will continue until no one is there. Each day, the doors open at 802 N. Broad St. to provide essential services to people living on the street, where they will be treated with respect and will not be turned away in their search for a better tomorrow. Their name is their mission. Checks should be made out to PCEH.

The Share the Plate program was approved by our Board of Trustees as a one-year experiment, beginning in April 2007. Each month, a charitable organization is selected from the nominations sent in by members of the congregation to receive one Sunday's offering. As our first year of operation draws to a close, the Share the Plate task force (composed of Grant Fox [chair], Linda Bernstein, Berdine Whedon and Jude Henzy) is preparing to ask the Board to consider continuing the program. Before we meet with the Board, we'd like to hear from you.

On Sunday, February 17, the Share the Plate Task Force will hold an open forum at which members of the congregation may offer comments and ask questions about this program. Please join us in the Assembly Room (second floor) during Fellowship Hour to find out how organizations are selected, tell us what you like, suggest ways to change, or whatever else is on your mind about giving away the offering. On the next page is a table depicting our collections to date. Thank you to everyone who has participated in this important charitable work.

DATE	RECIPIENT	REPRESENTATIVE	AMOUNT
April 15	Community Church UU First Church New Orleans	None	\$963
April 29	UUSC	Charlie Clements	\$1556
June 17	Neighborhood Inter-faith Movement (NIM)	Rabbi George Stern	\$912
July 15	UU House	Scott Anderson	\$650
Aug. 12	Habitat for Humanity		\$718
Sept. 16	Lingelbach School		\$860
Oct. 21	Soyini Powell's Group	Sy Powell	\$1839
Nov. 18	Philabundance	Bill Clarke	\$1472
Dec. 24	NPIHN/USG 50-50 split	N/A	\$3645

Jubilee II

Jubilee II will take place at USG on April 18 - 20. Save the date!

Jean Phillips Resigns as Newsletter Editor

Citing conflicting demands on her time, Jean Phillips has resigned as an editor of the CommUUnicator. She joined the staff six years ago, editing many issues each year, with Joe Tomei helping her on the computer. Prior to her stint as editor, she taught fourth grade in RE for six years. Many thanks to Jean and Joe for their fine editorial work.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Report

Our New Members

Please offer a warm welcome to those new members who signed our membership book on January 20. Our membership rolls now include **Donya Coldwell, Jane Eisenstein, Norman** and **Suzanne Matlock, Gwendolyn McNuckles** and **Laura Draper** and **Michael Tepper**. It has been a privilege for the Membership Committee to welcome these new individuals and families to our community. You will find their profiles in later issues of the CommUUnicator.

To Join the Church

Have you been thinking about joining USG and wondering what that might mean? At USG, membership involves mutual commitment.

Our church commits to provide members:

- Excellent worship experiences
- Caring and outreach
- Faith development opportunities
- Opportunities for service
- Spiritual education for all ages

Individual members commit to provide the community with their:

- Regular attendance at worship services
- Work on personal faith development
- Financial generosity
- Volunteer service to USG
- Service to the larger community

To learn more about membership at USG, please contact Betsy Gabriel.

Ending Racism Committee

Join other UU's for this racial justice drama event. *Black Gold*, a comedic satire, is the play chosen for this year's racial justice theater outing in Philadelphia. It is again an InterAct Theatre production located at the Adrienne Theater on Sansom St., just 1 block from First Unitarian Church. The matinee is at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 16, to be followed by refreshments, discussion and dinner at the church, 2125 Chestnut St.

The cost of the entire event is \$30. Reservations can be made by sending checks to Sayre Dixon, 22 E. 6th St., Media, PA. Further information about the play is on the Interact Theater website. To learn more about the event, call Sayre Dixon at 610-565-6855 or Luana Goodwin at 215-235-2343.

WIDER UU WORLD

Sounding Our Spiritual Depths

The 7th annual Joseph Priestley District Music and Worship Arts Festival "Sounding Our Spiritual Depths" will be held at USG on Saturday, **February 23**, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Deanna Kemler.

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, February 3**, 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.

The March **2008** CommUUnicator deadline is **Sunday, February 10**.

Editor: **Edna Jones**, ejones07@comcast.net

Please submit items via e-mail to the editor or place in CommUUnicator box by 12:30 p.m. on **February 10**. Flyers must be submitted to the USG office by the CommUUnicator deadline. Submit materials in Verdana 11 pt when possible.

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Coordinator: Sue Couch. Editors: Peggy Bruton and Edna Jones

BOARD NOTES

Last fall, the Board of Trustees adopted social justice within our community as the church priority issue for the fiscal year 2007-2008. Titled "Social Justice Begins at Home," this priority reflects our commitment to our immediate community. There are numerous areas in the community that could use our help. But rather than watering down our efforts by trying to address too many, the Social Action Committee wisely picked four existing programs to focus on:

- NIM—The Neighborhood Interfaith Movement, which brings together all faiths for common goals.
- NPIHN—The Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network, which reaches out to the homeless.
- Public Education—Primarily the Lingelbach School at Wayne and Johnson, where many of us have tutored students for years.
- Environmental Issues—Working with city and neighborhood groups to make our community more environmentally sound and, with the Green Sanctuary Committee, to do the same at USG.

In the November CommUunicator, I urged all committee chairs to discuss Social Justice Begins at Home with their committees and to come up with ways in which they could model the four aspects of our social action priority. For example, the Caring Committee could work with like committees in other churches to help with shut-ins in the community. Buildings & Grounds might volunteer to help deal with a local environmental hazard. However, Program Council chair Margaret Griffen pointed out that committees and councils had already made up their budgets and priorities much earlier in the year and were quite naturally conflicted about how to implement the priority.

So, at its November meeting, the Board decided not to end Social Justice Begins at Home on June 30, 2008 (the end of the 2007-08 fiscal year) as initially scheduled, but to extend it through the 2008-09 fiscal year (ending on June 30, 2009). This will give everyone more time to work on this important project and include it when making up their next budget. (The Board is considering making future church priorities two years.)

Reaching out into the community to help those less fortunate is an important part of what it means to be a UU. Please include the above four programs in your committee and council meetings and come up with ways in which USG can be a better neighbor.

Thank UUs this month go to:

***Nancy Dearden** for helping to coordinate the various service activities on Martin Luther King holiday, January 21, and for coordinating the winter coat drive.

***Susan Zingale-Baird** for organizing the "Building the World We Dream About" curriculum that promotes multi-culturalism and anti-racism in UU congregations.

***Jim Petka** and the Buildings & Grounds Committee for fixing (let's keep our fingers crossed) the chair lift.

Sam Gugino, Board President

CARING COMMUNITY

Louise Lisi and **Burt Froom** have been dealing with Burt's severe leg ulcer which involves weekly visits to Penn Wound Care Center and requires Burt to keep his leg elevated and to stay off his feet. They expect two to five more months of this demanding regimen. Calls, cards, visits and ideas how to stay oriented and mentally alert are welcome.

Waverly Duck is currently completing a two-year postdoctoral associate appointment at Yale with urban ethnographer/sociologist Elijah Anderson. He is working in the areas of gender, race, and health, a book on the federal death penalty, and co-organizing an ethnography conference which will take place at Yale this spring. He hopes to return to Philadelphia and rejoin the USG family upon the completion of his studies.

HOW AND WHEN TO REACH USG STAFF

Office phone 215-844-1157 FAX 215-844-1159
E-mail usquu@verizon.net USG website www.usquu.org
Church office hours: Mon.-Fri. 9:00 - 3:00

Rev. Kent Matthies 215-844-1157 kmatthies@verizon.net

Office hours:

Tues. 9:30 - 11:30 & 1:30 - 4:00

Wed. 9:30 - 11:30

Fri. 9:30 - 11:30 & 1:30 - 4:00

Jude Henzy Director of Religious Education 215-844-1157

usgre@verizon.net

FEBRUARY MEETINGS & EVENTS

Friday	2/1	6:30 p.m.	First Friday Potluck
Sunday	2/3	9:15 a.m.	Breakfast with the Minister
Monday	2/4	7:30 p.m.	Earth-Honoring Traditions
Tuesday	2/5	7:30 p.m.	Cakes for the Queen of Heaven
Wednesday	2/6	12:30 p.m.	Out-To-Lunch
Sunday	2/10	9:30 a.m.	UU 101
Sunday	2/10	9:30 a.m.	UU History
Sunday	2/10	12:30 p.m.	Race and Parenting
Sunday	2/10	4:00 p.m.	New Member Potluck
Sunday	2/10	6:00 p.m.	Drumming Circle
Monday	2/11	7:15 p.m.	Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography
Wednesday	2/13	7:30 p.m.	Buildings & Grounds Committee
Friday	2/15	7:15 p.m.	Friday Night Films
Sunday	2/17	9:30 a.m.	UU 102
Sunday	2/17	12:30 p.m.	Holistic Nutrition
Monday	2/18	7:15 p.m.	Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography
Wednesday	2/20	7:00 p.m.	Ending Racism
Friday	2/22	8:00 p.m.	Jeannie Gagne Concert
Saturday	2/23	9:00 a.m.	JPD Music & Worship Arts Festival
Sunday	2/24	9:00 a.m.	Buddhist Meditation
Sunday	2/24	9:30 a.m.	UU History
Sunday	2/24	12:30 p.m.	Intimate Justice
Monday	2/25	7:30 p.m.	Exploring Deep Ecology
Wednesday	2/27	7:30 p.m.	Storytelling for Beginners