



In this issue:	FROM THE DRE
From the DRE.....1	<p>Dear Friends,</p> <p>The lazy hazy days of summer are fully upon us, and with them comes vacation time. We take trips to the shore, the mountains, to lakes and theme parks, exotic locales, or back home to see family. I heard once on NPR about someone who conducted vacation research. The researcher asked vacationers to rate how much they were enjoying their vacation. He then followed up in six months, one year, and two years. He found that the greater the time lapse since the vacation, the higher folks rated the experience.</p> <p>His theory explaining this phenomenon was that while on vacation people are often stressed. They've been waiting in long lines, are disappointed in their accommodations, are wondering how they're going to pay for all the unanticipated expenses, or just can't stand listening to their kids bickering in the back seat for one more second. But as time passes, the lines are forgotten, the bills are long paid, and the kids are too preoccupied with Facebook to talk to each other, much less squabble. All that remain are the memories of beautiful views, scrumptious meals, happy reunions, and shared adventures. Memories are like that, selective and not fully reliable.</p> <p>Two thoughts occur to me. One is that it's kind of sad that people on vacation, and supposedly enjoying themselves, are actually often cranky, anxious and miserable. The other is that, if we don't recall the unhappiness, I wonder if we're doomed to repeat it. How can we have truly pleasant experiences and remember them accurately?</p> <p>I'd like to suggest that there is a spiritual response to this dilemma. For one thing, we need to do a better job of living more fully in the present. Too often we're focused on what comes next instead of experiencing where we are. How different might a canoe ride on the lake be if we weren't spending it calculating whether or not we could squeeze in a trip to the outlet malls before dinner?</p> <p>Along with living in the present, we need to be careful about the attitude we bring to our vacation</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>
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situations. I can remember family outings when one or the other of my kids was adolescent. He or she would be sullen and moody, noticing every glitch that came our way: "The hot dogs are burned." "The humidity is making my hair frizz." "The ocean is full of jelly fish." On my better days I'd suggest alternatives: "Try the macaroni salad." "You look so cute with a ponytail." "Make a sandcastle." But there were times when the sulky teen would drag me down too and I'd bark about having my good time ruined or mumble something about wishing I'd left someone home.

But once, when my fuse was dangerously short, inspiration hit. "You know," I said, "you've got a choice here. You can choose to focus on what's going wrong, or you can appreciate what's going right. You actually have a lot of control over what kind of experience you have. Miserable or joyful is totally up to you." As soon as the words came out of my mouth I realized how true they were, and how much I needed to follow them myself. This probably isn't a brilliant insight, but if it can help even one family have a nicer picnic or happier camp-out, then it's worth sharing.

So my wish for all of us this summer is plenty of special times with friends and family, and that we experience the pleasure in the moment, not six months to two years later.

In faith,
Jude

[Rev. Kent Matthies is on sabbatical until August.]

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 door to the courtyard and next to the coat rack. Please mark your calendar for **Sundays, July 5 and August 2**, 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.

USG STAFF

Minister: Reverend Kent Matthies
(on sabbatical until August 2009)
Director of Religious Education: Jude Henzy
Office Administrator: Robin Neill
Music Director: Mark Daugherty

SUNDAY SERVICES

PLEASE REMEMBER:

**Sunday Service begins at 10:30 a.m. during July & August.
Childcare is available 10:15 -11:45 a.m.**

July 5 "Faith of the Founders" Rev. Duane Fickeisen

We will mark the birthday of our nation by examining the religious convictions of the nation's founders. Though many who seek political gain would like to convince us that the founders were Christians of an evangelical stripe, they were more likely Deists, Unitarians, and religious skeptics. We'll ask how their faith influenced their politics and the vision that was codified and institutionalized in our governance structures and in the rights and privileges they sought to guarantee.

Rev. Duane Fickeisen has been parish co-minister of the Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley in Boiling Springs, PA (near Carlisle) for 12 years. He is a graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry and lives in Carlisle with his wife and co-minister, Rev. Judy Welles.

July 12 "Revelation in the Heart" Rebecca Froom

Direct experience is one of the sources for our Unitarian Universalist tradition. Within the setting of worship, how does religious community help us read our "revelations in the heart" for deeper meaning? Liberal religious theologians have been pondering this question, in word and practice, for generations. Drawing on the work of Ralph Waldo Emerson, her own direct experiences in seminary, as well as her current work as a hospital chaplain, Rebecca Froom will explore the connections between heart and mind, and how they are strengthened during worship.

Rebecca Froom grew up in the Unitarian Society of Germantown, and is currently pursuing a Master of Divinity through Meadville Lombard Theological School and Harvard Divinity School.

July 19 "Spirit of Compassion" Kathy Ellis

Compassion lies at the heart of all our religious traditions and is a primary goal of spiritual practice. How can we increase compassion in our own lives and in the world?

Kathy Ellis is a candidate for the Unitarian Universalist ministry. She has completed her coursework at Meadville Lombard Theological School and, in September, will be the ministerial intern at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York, PA.

July 26 "A Ministry of Mediation" Rev. Nate Walker

Did you hear about the threat of a racist and homophobic band playing at the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia that would attract skinheads and protests from militant anti-racist groups? Yikes! Rev. Nate will explain the strategy that was used to bring resolution through mediation. Countering the effects of our culture, so quick to judge, he will explore the potential of dialogue in realizing one of our cherished Unitarian Universalist ideals, preserving the inherent worth and dignity of all people, even those with whom we disagree.

Rev. Nate Walker is the settled minister of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia and a graduate of Columbia University, Union Theological Seminary and Emerson College.

August 2 "Reconciliation" Peter Walsh, Gloria and William Delamar

This service will highlight the poetry, stories and art of members of the congregation. They will share the wisdom they have gained over the years in reaching some degree of reconciliation with themselves, with the passing of time and with the events of their lives. The service will feature the work of Peter Walsh, Gloria Delamar, Bill Delamar, Jim Long, Ruth Donnell, Kathy Sheeder Bonnano, and others. Musical selections will be sung by Betsy and Charles Gabriel. An accompanying art show will include works by Joan Long, Bill Downes, Tom Schoonmaker, Gary Bromberg, Sarah West, Amy Van Itallie, and others.

August 9 "Sitting by the Tree" Rev. Kent Matthies

The Buddhist seeker, Siddhartha, sat next to a river to find enlightenment. When my sabbatical began, I felt called to spend time by myself sitting quietly by a tree. I didn't expect answers to life's biggest questions, but I wanted to clear my head. I hungered to improve my connection with the light. While sitting, a love of life swelled up in me. How can we rejuvenate our joy for life's gifts and help others do the same?

August 16 "Deep Green: The Earth, Activism and Spirituality" Green Sanctuary Committee

Green Sanctuary Committee members will share their experiences of spiritual connection to the Earth. Dennis Strain, Carolyn Scott, Lee Meinicke and Joe Walsh are all members of the Unitarian Society of Germantown.

August 23 "No Savings Plan" Rev. Kent Matthies

Millions of Americans are hit hard in this recession. Many of us are just trying to get by, let alone save a little money. During tough economic times it is hard to know how to live spiritually. The Bible tells the story of a poor woman who poured expensive oil all over Jesus' head. This was a lavish display coming from a woman who probably counted pennies. What does her story say about how we can live our own lives?

August 30 "The Art and Science of Happiness" Sam Gugino

Is happiness the result of an artfully constructed life, scientific exploration and application, or just dumb luck? In *The Art of Happiness* the Dalai Lama says we can "achieve" happiness by "training the mind." And he's got the science to back him up.

Food and wine writer Sam Gugino has been a member of USG since 2002 and has served the church in a number of capacities. He is most proud of his three-year stint as Membership Chair and three years on the Board of Trustees, the last two as president.

Sept. 6 "Above & Beyond the Call of Work" Barbara Dowdall & Sarah West

On this Labor Day Weekend, we will examine the importance of work in our lives. What meaning do we find in our work? How are we defined by our work? Can we grow spiritually in the context of our work life? How do we adjust when our work life ends or is interrupted?

Barbara Dowdall and Sarah West are both educators and long-time, active members of the Unitarian Society of Germantown.

EVENTS AND FELLOWSHIP

Earth-Honoring Group to Hold a Journey Circle

July 6, the first Monday in July, the Earth-Honoring Group will have a Journey Circle at USG. It will be led by Wally Moyer and others who have journeyed before. Starting at 7:00 until 9:00 p.m., we will do as many journeys as we can and share about our journey.

What to bring: snacks or juice to share, something to lie on, pencil or pen and a few sheets of paper, a scarf or something similar to cover your eyes.

First we will smudge the space and call the directions. I'll teach you what a journey is and how to journey. Or you can journey in any way you've been taught. There will be rhythmic drumming during the journey and a call back. The first journey will be only about 10 minutes. Looking forward to your participation.

You can find some general information about journeying on the website <http://www.shamanlinks.net/Journey.htm> . Questions? Contact Wally Moyer.

Singles of All Ages Potluck

Our next potluck will be on Friday, July 10, at 7:15 p.m. in the Dining Room. We will meet for eating and planning other events. Last names beginning with A-S should bring appetizers, T-V should bring desserts, and W-Z should bring beverages. For more information, please contact Donna Cotzen.

Share the Plate

July: The Maternal Wellness Center

The Maternal Wellness Center is a non-profit charitable organization whose mission is to support, educate and empower women and families during the transition to parenthood. From pre-conception through the early child-rearing years, the center provides a variety of services to help women and families discover and follow their intuition in making healthy decisions.

In the 8-week Birthworks course--for pregnant women and their birth partners--women will learn how to trust their bodies in a safe, supportive atmosphere. Material covered in the course includes medical interventions, birth plans, nutrition, non-medical pain relief, how to avoid a C-section, and breastfeeding. Beliefs and feelings about birth and planning for the post-partum period will be covered. Exercises include relaxation, meditation and visualization. Workbooks are provided.

In addition to the Birthworks course, holistic childbirth education classes include Birthing Again, Hypnobirthing, Birthing from Within, the Bradley Method, Survivors of Sexual Abuse. Under Prenatal/Postpartum Services are midwifery services, pregnancy and family photography, yoga, massage, acupuncture, full-day retreats, infant CPR. There are workshops and counseling, which include nutrition, new mothers groups, individual psychotherapy, counseling for couples, and various support groups.

The Center works locally in Mt. Airy to support families who want to parent their children with love and grace. It works with families in need in the community.

Please be generous in your support of this worthwhile charity on Share the Plate Sunday on July 19.

August: ACHIEVEability

Once a month we donate our Sunday morning offering to a worthwhile charity. Our recipient organization on August 16 will be ACHIEVEability. Since 1981 ACHIEVEability has been working to end poverty by helping single-parent, low-income families, many formerly homeless, to achieve self-sufficiency. Believing that housing is a necessary first step to ending poverty, ACHIEVEability has developed a housing program to help stabilize families. But ACHIEVEability believes that education is the key to achieving permanent self-sufficiency and financial freedom. It encourages each client to earn at least 15 credits per year toward a post-secondary degree or equivalent.

There are academic tutors on staff to provide financial and tutoring assistance to clients and their children. It also provides job training, assessment and counseling to aid their clients' transition into the workforce. Staff and volunteers provide individual and group instruction on academic, computer and multimedia topics.

Since 1981, ACHIEVEability has turned abandoned houses and vacant lots throughout West Philadelphia into over 200 homes—both rental and homeownership units. It manages 156 rental units for the families in its program and is planning to develop additional units. Other social services provided include job life skills workshops, emergency furniture and food assistance, transportation and childcare subsidies, drug and alcohol counseling, family recreational activities, and a Homebuyers Club to learn about buying a home.

Please contribute generously to this very worthwhile organization.

Men's Retreat at Murray Grove

The fourth annual UU Men's Retreat at Murray Grove Conference Center in Lanoka Harbor, NJ, will be held October 9-11. Every UU man in the Philadelphia area is invited to attend and experience a wonderful weekend. The theme of the weekend will be "Building Community." Activities will include workshops, yoga, hiking, drumming around a bonfire, delicious food prepared by Dallis Graham, and poker, topped off by worship in the 19th Century chapel. Come get to know and bond with the other men in the Philadelphia area congregations. The cost for the weekend is \$150. This includes Friday supper, three meals on Saturday, and Sunday breakfast. Include a check for \$75 made out to USG with your application. Give or send to Hal Krieger (670 Jamestown St., Philadelphia, PA 19128). For more information contact Hal.

Conversation on Creating a More “Intentional Community”

Join a group of USG members who would like to explore the possibilities of creating more intentional community at USG. What does this mean, you wonder. That’s what we want to talk about. It could mean more inter-generational neighborhood-based activities; it could mean building a more continuing system of support for some of our older members who want to stay in their own homes as they age; it could mean actual shared housing arrangements. There are other possibilities. Let’s get the conversation started.

Join us at 11:30 a.m., after Fellowship Hour, in the Sullivan Chapel on July 12. A light lunch will be available. Please RSVP if you will be coming, and to ask any questions you may have. RSVP to Linda Brunn or to Gail Gibbons.

New Year’s Eve Party—Reserve the Date

The USG Men's Group will again host a New Year’s Eve Party for all of our friends and family. There will be music for dancing, movies for kids, food, and a gift exchange. Come celebrate the New Year at the Unitarian Society of Germantown. Mark your calendars, tell your friends. More information will be coming soon.

Friday Morning Book Group

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. The book group is now on summer holiday until September, but we do have a reading assignment. It's *Alice: Alice Roosevelt Longworth, From White House Princess to Washington Power Broker*, by Stacy A. Cordery. For additional information, contact Cynthia Claus.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Resources for Older Adult Living

ROAL is a phone service to make life easier for older adults, families and caregivers who live in Germantown, Mt. Airy, Chestnut Hill and adjoining neighborhoods. ROAL is a program of Neighborhood Interfaith Movement (NIM). The ROAL phone line helps callers connect with any service they may need related to staying in the community or improving the quality of their lives. Call with questions about anything from housing, heating, health insurance, transportation, respite care or home maintenance to social and volunteer opportunities. Call and speak to Emilia Xavier at 215-843-5602. Reach her directly Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., or leave a message and your call will be returned promptly. Brochures are available at USG.

Weekly Email Changes

USG has changed email newsletter programs from Newsletter Monkey to Constant Contact. If you (or your family) are receiving the weekly emails and *CommUUnicator* at the wrong email address, please let us know so that we can update our records. Also, if you are experiencing any problems reading or receiving the emails, please contact Robin at usquu@verizon.net

Membership Committee

New Member Profiles

Anne Ream and Philip Weiser joined USG in May, and then Anne wrote both the following short profiles for them, thus making the editor's job very easy! She did note, however, that paring their lives down to 150 words each was difficult: "I've had a relatively interesting and adventurous 64 years, while Philip has had 68 of the same!"

"I [**Anne Ream**] was born in New Jersey, but my parents moved to North Carolina when I was an infant. I grew up running barefoot around the Blue Ridge Mountains. When I turned fourteen, my family moved to York, Pennsylvania. I spent 24 years there, devoted to my three children, Michael, Stephen and Annelise. At forty, I earned a degree in fine art. After teaching fine art photography at a girls' school, I earned a masters degree in art therapy at fifty. Upon moving to Philadelphia, I discovered Mt. Airy, the Wissahickon, USG and Philip. For twelve years we have enjoyed one another, especially hiking together. During those years, our eight grandchildren have been born.

"I believe healthy expression of emotion is vital for spirituality, and the warmth of the USG community encourages, allows and supports this expression."

Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington, are **Philip Weiser's** hometowns. His family belonged to the Methodist church. He became a Boy Scout, a mountaineer and a talented distance runner. After graduate school in Minneapolis, Denver became his new hometown. His son was born there and dedicated at a Unitarian church. In 1983 Philip followed a reporter to Philadelphia when she got a job at the *Inquirer*. A few years later, he happily found and joined USG. In June 1999, Anne and Philip met when she lit a candle for her first grandchild, Juliet, newly born on her birthday.

Philip says, "All you members of USG have recently given me quite a homecoming by extending your warmth and caring, which feels very accepting and supportive."

* * *

Another person who joined USG in May, 2009, is **Jane Cassady**, who lives in Germantown with her wife, Amy Lawson, and their cat, Arlo. Jane lived in rural Pennsylvania until she was thirteen, "with a pony and ten acres to play on." Then her family moved to upstate New York, where she lived for most of her adult life. In college, she became a poet. She has performed at poetry venues across the country, is involved with the Poetic Arts Alliance of Philadelphia and the Philly Slam, and has had chapbooks published, recently "A Light Wallflower Panic." As part of AmeriCorps, she also teaches at the Emlen Elementary Afterschool Initiative. At age 12, Jane began to question her Catholic upbringing and spent time as a "spiritual agnostic" but felt the need for support. At a UU church in New York, she was delighted to find a religion she could agree with, "especially the Emersonian and social justice aspects." Dr. King's words resonate with Jane, that "Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

SABBATICAL NEWS

News from the Sabbatical Taskforce

To prepare for Rev. Kent Matthies' sabbatical, a Sabbatical Taskforce was formed to assure the church would continue to run well during our minister's absence. The Taskforce members are Sarah West, Marny Walsh, Bill Morrow, Jude Henzy, Sam Gugino, and Eli Scarce (chair). This group meets regularly. Here is a list of Frequently Asked Questions; if you have a question or concern, please feel free to contact Eli.

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, is our excellent music program led by Mark Daugherty and the USG choir.

How long is Rev. Kent's sabbatical?

It is six months long. His last day with us was January 31; he will return August 1.

Whom do I call if someone I know is in need?

Pastoral Care is in the hands of a trained team of lay people. Call Sarah West or Mark Kaufki. The team will contact a religious professional to assist, if needed.

Whom do I call if I don't know whom to call?

The choices are: Contact the church office; the Board President, Berdine Whedon; Eli Scarce, chair of the Sabbatical Taskforce; Robin Neill, our Administrator.

Who will be available for rites of passage?

Religious professionals, including Jude Henzy, our DRE and ministerial candidate, 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, Service 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.

TRASH TO CASH

Don't forget to bring in your spent printer ink cartridges and used cell phones for our Trash to Cash program.
Keep those Acme receipts coming in, also, for a 1% rebate.

HOW AND WHEN TO REACH USG STAFF

Office phone: 215-844-1157 FAX: 215-844-1159
E-mail: usguu@verizon.net USG website: www.usguu.org
Church office hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Rev. Kent Matthies 215-844-1157 kmatthies@verizon.net
(on sabbatical until August)

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

Robin Neill, Office Administrator - 215-844-1157 - usguu@verizon.net
Jude Henzy, Director of Religious Education - 215-844-1157 - usgre@verizon.net

BOARD NOTES

At the May 25th Board meeting we expressed our grateful thanks to outgoing Board members: Sam Gugino, for his energetic and strong leadership as President of the Board for the past two years; Marny Walsh, for also chairing the Sabbatical Committee in conjunction with being on the Board; Charles Gabriel, who had served as Vice President of the Board for a year and for also chairing the Strategic Planning Council. The contributions of this group are immeasurable. And we extended a hearty welcome to the very talented and committed incoming Board members: Mary Lee Keane, Norman Matlock, and Mark Bernstein.

At this meeting the following Board officers were elected: Berdine Whedon, President, Susan Bockius, Vice President, and Alan Windle, Secretary (thanks so much to Alan for signing up for a second term in this role). We began work on the budget and then met again on Saturday, May 30, to continue. We will complete budget deliberations at the June 30th meeting.

On June 14th we celebrated the culmination of the first year of Board initiative on Leadership Development with a Volunteer and Leadership Recognition Picnic. Assembling the names of the many people in our community who contribute their time and talents was an awe-inspiring and moving experience. By the time all the lists were compiled and ready to be posted in the grove, there were over 900 separate volunteer tasks that had taken place--900 separate times (or more!) where people stepped forward to teach Sunday School, sing in the choir, work on the budget, lead a worship service, make a meal for someone, lead a course, offer childcare, record a Sunday service, contribute to the auction, host a circle dinner, or any one of a hundred or more places people found to lend a hand. We have a tremendous community. While we always seem to struggle with getting our budget worked out and money can be tight, the place where we shine is the outpouring of love and support of our community in very real and practical ways, that keep USG going and make it the wonderful place that it is.

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to serve as Board President this year. I most earnestly ask for your support (and patience) as we move forward together in faith and love.

Thank UUs go to:

Amy Anu-Birge, Jonel Sofian, Jim Salom, Debbie Kish-Silver, Lida Holota, Gale Gibbons, Sandy Bates, Grant Fox, and Norman Matlock for their help with the Volunteer & Leadership Recognition Picnic.

And to Ann Schoonmaker, Marcy George, Peggy Bruton, Andrea Barsevick, and Kristina Victoreen for making a brand-new regulation USG banner to both display in our sanctuary and to carry in the banner parade at General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,
Berdine Whedon

MEMORIAL FUND

Remember a loved one or recognize a special day with a donation to our Memorial Fund. Send a check, made out to UUSG Memorial Fund, to the church office. Indicate the name of the person you are remembering, and your gift will be acknowledged. The Memorial Fund supports special church projects.

Questions? Call the church office.

The **September 2009** CommUUnicator Deadline is **Sunday, August 9**
Editor: **Delores Hill**. Please submit articles via email to the editor or place in the *CommUUnicator* box by 12:30 p.m. on **August 9**. All inserts or flyers must be submitted to the USG office by the *CommUUnicator* deadline.

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Please check the Church Calendar on the USG website www.usguu.org for events scheduled during July and August.