



THE COMMUNICATOR

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Society of Germantown
March 2009 Volume 46, No. 7

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SUNDAY SERVICES

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

March 1 "Changed My Name" USG Choir & Soloists, under the direction of Mark Daugherty

On March 1, the truly awesome USG choir will present "Changed My Name," a cantata inspired by spirituals and the lives of Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. This musical service also includes writings by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Tubman and Truth. The narration and music combine to make an unforgettably powerful expression of escape from slavery. It was originally written for the Harlem Spiritual Ensemble and it has become a USG choir favorite. Come experience this dramatic music.

Mark Daugherty has directed the USG choir for over 25 years

March 8 "Love Made Visible" Rev. Peter Friedrichs

Rev. Peter Friedrichs will reflect on what it takes to make a church and how we are called to minister to each other in beloved community. As we embark on our annual budget drive, he will explore how we might express our commitment to each other, to the church and to our larger faith.

Rev. Peter Friedrichs has served as pastor of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County in Media, PA since August, 2006. He was the recipient of the UUA's 2008 Annual Program Fund Stewardship Sermon Award.

March 15 "Family Wisdom" Jude Henzy

For better or for worse, our families play a leading role in shaping our ideas about how to be in relationship with others. There is often profound wisdom and deep meaning in those funny little sayings or quirky traditions with which we grew up. Come and explore what you learned from you family of origin and how it affects your interactions with people today.

Jude Henzy is the Director of Religious Education at the Unitarian Society of Germantown.

**March 22 "Treasured Dishes, Fragile Cups:
Abundance in Lean Times" Rev. Dr. Patrick T. O'Neill**

How do we maintain an attitude of spiritual abundance in times of economic worries? Consider inviting a friend to join you in church on this Sunday.

Dr. Patrick O'Neill holds degrees from the University of Chicago Divinity School and Meadville Lombard Theological School. He was ordained in 1979. He is currently the Senior Minister of First Unitarian Church in Brooklyn, NY.

March 29 "Be the Change" Rev. Stephen Shick

The vastness and complexity of the world's problems can paralyze even the most resilient person who works and longs for peace and justice. Rev. Shick's sermon, based on his most recent book *Be the Change*, will explore how the practice of self-reflection, the empowering gifts of nature and history, and the acceptance of grace can help sustain our individual and collective efforts for peace and justice.

The Reverend Stephen M. Shick is the Minister of the Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson in Massachusetts. Before entering the parish ministry he had a nationally syndicated radio program and served the UUA and the UUSC as a peace and justice minister. He is also the author of three books. He and his wife JoAnn Mulready-Shick were active members of USG in the 1980's, where they married, dedicated their children, and where Stephen was ordained.

FROM OUR DRE

Learning from Babies

UU minister Robert Fulghum famously asserted that he learned everything he needs to know about how to get along in life when he was in kindergarten. While I agree that we all picked up some valuable lessons there, I'd like to add that there's plenty to be learned from an even younger demographic. I'm talking about babies.

I maintain that we knew a lot of important things in our infancy, and somehow, through the busy-ness of life and all its demands of work and school and relationships and responsibility we forgot much of what really mattered. It was only through becoming a mother and observing my own babies that I began to get in touch again with infant wisdom.

One of my first lessons as a new mommy was the importance of stretching upon waking. I'd watch my tiny son make the transition from sleep to consciousness: he'd ball his hands into tight little fists, tuck his knees up to his chest, and then reach his arms above his head with all his might. He'd twist slowly from side to side as a deep and satisfied smile spread across his elfin face. It wasn't until after a full minute of this gentle exercise that he'd blink open his eyes and face the next part of his day. As I observed him I was struck by how much sense it made to loosen up before

taking on the next task, shake off the old business and any accompanying tension or tightness, and prepare myself for moving ahead. Thanks, baby.

Another remarkable thing about very young children is how unfazed they are by falling down. Oh sure, occasionally they take a header and burst into tears, but a toddler will hit the ground ten times in two hours and take it (pardon the pun) in stride. It's a perfect object lesson in human resiliency: You go down; you get up. You go down; you get up. You know you're going to go down again soon, but that doesn't stop you. Imagine if adults could approach the possibility of failure or rejection with such confidence and aplomb.

But for me, the biggest lesson from babyhood is how much babies notice things. And I mean *everything*. Talk about taking time to smell the roses! A baby will smell a rose, taste it, touch every leaf and thorn. Babies stare openly at whatever catches their interest. They wonder about where a dropped thing went or who's behind the door or what that piece of fuzz is on the carpet. While we adults are moving from task to task and chore to chore all but oblivious to our surroundings, babies are showing us that there's an amazing world going on every minute of every day. Of course we have things to do and missions to accomplish, but surely there's more time for wonder and curiosity than we currently allow ourselves.

So I say, go ahead, be a big baby! Stretch a bit every day; shake off the old aches. Wonder about and notice the world you're moving around in. And most of all, take some risks. You might fall down—we all do—but there just might be an interesting piece of fuzz to look at while you're on the carpet.

In faith,
Jude

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 next to the dining room exit to the courtyard. Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, March 1**, 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: The Reverend Kent Matthies

(on sabbatical until August 2009)

Director of Religious Education: Jude Henzy

Administrator: Robin Neill

Music Director: Mark Daugherty

EVENTS AND FELLOWSHIP

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 March 20, we will meet at the home of **Ann Schoonmaker**. We will be discussing *The Gift of Rain* by Tan Twan Eng. Bring a sandwich for lunch and fellowship following the discussion, if you wish. The hostess will provide dessert and beverages. Please call Ann by Monday March 16 to let her know you are coming. For additional information, contact **Cynthia Claus**.

Circle Dinners

What are you doing on Saturday, march 28? Attending a Circle Dinner, we hope!

As our church grows, it becomes harder to meet everyone, particularly those at a different life stage. Whether you are a visitor trying us out, a new member, or a long-time member, circle dinners are a great way to keep our community connected.

Currently, we have monthly potlucks for young adults and monthly social events for families with children. Circle dinners mix things up more: by life stage, age and time in the church. And it's not an either/or; you can participate in more than one of our parties.

Dinners are held in the homes of church members and friends. Usually there are six to eight participants. The host supplies a warm and inviting setting and organizes who brings what. Each guest brings a dish to share. These are casual, pleasant evenings where you'll have an opportunity to meet new people and perhaps get to know better someone you've known for years. It is possible to participate even if you choose not to host.

If you'd like to take part in a circle dinner, please contact **Betsy Gabriel**. Look for the "Circle Dinners" sign during hospitality hour following the service. You can register there. We are currently seeking hosts for both all-adult and family groupings. Please let us know if you would like to host. You may also call or email **Betsy**, or talk to her at church. We will be taking reservations through March 20.

Drumming

Drumming at USG is on changing. We have a drumming email list and you are encouraged to sign up to be on the email list to find out when the next drumming event will be held: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/USGdrumming/>

We will be holding periodic drum circles and some drumming workshops in the future. The Earth Honoring Chairperson, **Berdine Whedon** has also expressed an interest in creating space for drumming. Thus drumming at USG is not over and if you want a drum circle we can create it. For more information email **Wally Moyer**.

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 6:00 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-ld ba-a-all game!

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Checklist for Commitment Sunday, March 8

- Re-read the invitation that came by electronic E-vite or regular mail to attend a cottage lunch on **Sunday, March 8, at 1 pm.**
- Respond to the invitation. Do you know who your host will be and the location? If you need child care make sure you are assigned to a home that will have a baby sitter.
- Can't make March 8? Sign up for an evening meal on March 11 or a noon lunch on March 14.
- Check out the financial stewardship bulletin board in the vestibule for news of the generosity of committed church members.
- Review your annual budget drive packet containing budget goals, the fair-share giving guide, and a financial commitment form.
- Attend church on **Sunday, March 8**, to hear the **Reverend Peter Friedrichs** preach an energizing sermon on gratitude and stewardship.
- **No coffee hour on March 8!** We need time for all of us to get to the lunch hosts who will be waiting for us.
- Relax! Enjoy the camaraderie of a cottage lunch with friendly church folk. Share your vision for supporting the values and the mission of the Unitarian Society of Germantown.
- Say "thank you" to the hosts and facilitators for their hospitality and conversation, making this a good day for all.
- Refer questions or concerns to any member of the Stewardship Committee: Linda Bernstein and Tom Schoonmaker, co-chairs; **Leni Windle, Greg Bomke, Susan Smith, Mike Heinsdorf, and Ann Schoonmaker.**

Membership Committee

New Members

Steve Clarke, who joined USG in October of 2008, wrote his own profile. Below are (mostly) his words:

I grew up in the Olney section of Philadelphia, very working class. For the last twenty-eight years I've delivered the mail all over the city, but I'll be retiring early in 2009. I'm finally enrolling full time at Temple to complete a degree in Secondary Education of Social Studies!

It's hard to find anything that approaches the thrill of digging into history, although present day events are also compelling. This is the only election season I've ever knocked on doors and worked phones, which I did for Barack Obama. And I've finally opened my ears to the intoxication of jazz. I've written two novels. My latest, set in Mt Airy, concerns the backlash against Arab-Americans in the wake of 9/11, and features an Arab/Jewish romance.

I'm married to **Laura Marshall**, who belongs to the Germantown Jewish Center. Our blended family includes five boys, a black Lab, and three cats. My central guiding principal is that when I walk into a room I want to make it a better place than it was before I got there. I've found the best communion with God in his wild places, like an open field. We have an untouched preserve near home which I've dubbed the 'Church of the Open Field.' Curiosity led me to try a Unitarian Service, the music lured me, and the sermons closed the deal.

Sarah Frazier

Also joining USG in October of 2008 was Sarah Frazier, a young adult who lives in Warminster, PA. Sarah grew up in Ambler, and her father's family came from the Chestnut Hill area. She is currently an insurance agent, but is also in school, studying to teach English as a Second Language. Her interests include languages---she studied German, Spanish, and Hebrew in college---reading, swimming, walking/hiking, crossword puzzles, and occasional painting and journal-writing. She also likes singing and promises that one day she'll join the choir. Jason, a long-term boyfriend, has attended several services with her.

Raised Episcopalian at Saint Martin's of the Field in Chestnut Hill, Sarah stopped attending there and tried Judaism and Islam before coming to USG. She had driven past USG many times and "eventually I came in after deciding that I couldn't pick one religion, since I like them all. I believe in an omnipresent spiritual energy...and believe all the world's religions have some truths, and we are all connected..."

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 Scarce**. 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 Scarce**.

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 Scarce**, 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.

Sunday Service Speakers during Sabbatical

March 1	Mark Daugherty & Choir	"Changed My Name"
March 8	Rev. Peter Friedrichs UU Church of Delaware County	"Love Made Visible"
March 15	Jude Henzy Director of Religious Education, Ministerial Candidate, USG	"Family Wisdom"
March 22	Rev. Dr. Patrick O'Neill First Unitarian Congregational Society of Brooklyn, NY	"Treasured Dishes, Fragile Cups: Abundance in Lean Times"
March 29	Rev. Steven Shick First Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson, MA	"Be the Change"
April 5	YRUU	Annual Youth Service
April 12	Rev. Elizabeth Putnam	Easter
April 19	Mark Bernstein	"The Only True Religion – Ever"
April 26	Rev. Rob Hardies All Souls Church of Washington, D.C.	
May 3	Rev. Scott Taylor First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY	
May 10	Berdine Whedon	"Generations of Mothers"
May 17	Mark Daugherty & Choir	Music Sunday
May 24	Rev. Ken Beldon Wellsprings UU Church	
May 31	Kathy Bonnano	"Slamming Open the Door"
June 7	Rev. Howard Dana Unitarian Church of Harrisburg	
June 14	Jude Henzy & Youth	Religious Educ. Sunday
June 21	Rev. Libby Smith UU Fellowship of Lower Bucks County UU House - Philadelphia	
June 28	Rev. Kathy Bortner Consulting Minister of UUs of Gettysburg Affiliated Community Minister of UU Congregation of York	

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 - 4:00

Rev. Kent Matthies will be on sabbatical until August 1, 2009

Jude Henzy, Director of Religious Education 215-844-1157

usgre@verizon.net

BOARD NOTES

Board news, March 2009

Unless you've been stranded on the Bridge to Nowhere for the past six to nine months, you know that we've been developing a Master Plan for our physical plant, one that addresses our growth needs for the next two decades and beyond. Our Strategic Planning Council has had a number of meetings with Brawer & Hauptman, the architectural firm we have engaged to develop the MP, to go over our current and future needs and how they may be best addressed.

In December, B&H also meet individually with committee and council chairs to find out what those groups felt needed attention. On January 4, B&H made an all-church presentation after Sunday service.

B&H took the information from these sessions and created a 28-page workbook, which was handed out to over 40 church leaders at a day-long charrette workshop on January 31 and a follow-up session on the evening of February 4. A charrette is a kind of brainstorming session designed to reach consensus on our priorities for addressing the needs of the church. These priorities mainly centered around: 1) expanding space for religious education classes; 2) expanding and making more efficient space for staff; 3) developing a more practical and attractive rear entrance, which also addresses handicap accessibility; 4) making the sanctuary a more utilitarian space; 5) renovating the Austin Youth Lodge to make it an income-producing apartment on the second floor and usable church space on the first floor; and 6) upgrading electrical service and air conditioning.

B&H will have two more meetings, one with SPC and one with the Board of Trustees, before the finalized MP is presented to the congregation.

Some have asked why we are doing a Master Plan now, when the economy is in such bad shape. One reason is that this process began well before the economic downturn. Second, we still have a long way to go before we are "shovel ready," such as working out the details for what gets built and creating the structure for a capital campaign to make it happen.

Finally, we expect to double our membership in 20 years. If we aren't going to plan for our future now, when will we?

--Sam Gugino, President, Board of Trustees

The **April 2009** CommUUnicator deadline is **Sunday, March 8.**

Editor: **Sue Couch.** Send your articles to her at scouch@nbme.org
Please submit items via email to the editor or place in CommUUnicator box by 12:30 p.m. on **March 8.** Flyers must be submitted to the USG office by the CommUUnicator deadline.

Submit materials in 11 pt. Verdana 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

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USG MARCH 2009 CALENDAR

Sunday	3/1	1:00 p.m.	Introduction to Zen Buddhism
Sunday	3/1	7:00 p.m.	Dead Sea Scrolls
Monday	3/2	7:30 p.m.	Earth Honoring Traditions
Wednesday	3/4	12:30 p.m.	Out to Lunch
Wednesday	3/4	7:00 p.m.	Healing the Wounded Healer's Heart
Friday	3/6	7:00 p.m.	Singles of All Ages Potluck
Sunday	3/8	9:30 a.m.	UU 101
Sunday	3/8	9:30 a.m.	Meditation Circle
Sunday	3/8	1:00 p.m.	Commitment Sunday Cottage Lunches
Tuesday	3/10	7:30 p.m.	Joseph Campbell: Unitarian Saint
Wednesday	3/11	7:30 p.m.	Buildings & Grounds Committee
Wednesday	3/11	7:30 p.m.	Money & Emotions
Sunday	3/15	12:30 p.m.	Unitarian Universalist History
Monday	3/16	7:30 p.m.	Women's Singing Circle
Tuesday	3/17	7:30 p.m.	Men's Group
Wednesday	3/18	7:00 p.m.	Healing the Wounded Healer's Heart
Wednesday	3/18	7:00 p.m.	Ending Racism Committee
Sunday	3/22	9:00 a.m.	Buddhist Meditation
Sunday	3/22	12:30 p.m.	Unitarian Universalist History
Monday	3/23	7:30 p.m.	Exploring <i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i>
Tuesday	3/10	7:30 p.m.	Joseph Campbell: Unitarian Saint
Tuesday	3/24	7:30 p.m.	Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday	3/25	7:00 p.m.	Green Sanctuary
Wednesday	3/25	7:30 p.m.	Money & Emotions