



# THE COMMUNICATOR

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Society of Germantown

October 2009 Volume 47, No. 2

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Dear Friends,

The spirit is alive and well at the Unitarian Society of Germantown. I want to call your attention to two rich worship services in the coming month. Both will provide comfort and light up our days.

On Saturday, October 17 we will celebrate the Hindu festival of lights: Diwali.

Throughout India and other countries, Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists light hundreds of thousands of small oil lamps called *diyas* in their houses and neighborhoods. For some the light of these *diyas* is meant to welcome Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth and prosperity for the New Year. To all, the light symbolized the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, justice over injustice, and knowledge over ignorance.

Our service with sitar music will begin at 6:30 pm, followed by a traditional Diwali feast at 7:30 pm.

If you wish to bring a dish, this is a vegetarian potluck. Food should be prepared without eggs if possible and no alcohol is permitted.

On Sunday, November 1 we will celebrate the *Dia de los Muertos*. Throughout many areas of Latin America communities and religious institutions are spiritually nourished through the activities of Day of the Dead. Counter to many ideas about death in our society, this is a happy time of reunion with the souls and memories of the dead. Come hear celebratory music, and bring a flower and photo of a deceased loved one. We will have an altar to lovingly hold the photos. All of our hearts will hold the ways in which people touched our lives.

These two culturally diverse experiences demonstrate how we learn from each other about how to live and love. We also help each other connect with the light on our journeys and beyond.

In Faith, *Kent*

## SUNDAY SERVICES

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

### **October 4 "Listen to Your Soul," Rev. Kent Matthies**

The Quaker philosopher, Parker J. Palmer said, "If we want to support each other's inner lives, we must remember a simple truth: the human soul does not want to be fixed, it wants simply to be seen and heard." Quakers and Unitarians have been preaching this simple wisdom for at least 170 years. Surprisingly it can be quite difficult to live out. How do we listen to ourselves and give others the gift of deep listening? What are the benefits?

### **October 11 "Jesus the Saviour: A UU Look at Redemption" Charles Gabriel.**

Christians throughout history have believed that we have been redeemed from sin by the crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus. A study of the life and teachings of Jesus reveal a more Unitarian Universalist version of true redemption.

### **October 18 "Healing After Loss" Jude Henzy**

To live is to lose, over and over again. Yet our awareness that life involves loss doesn't blunt its pain. How do we reconcile ourselves to loss and heal our wounds?

This worship service continues the theme of reconciliation begun by Peter Walsh in his talk in August. Likewise, the art show that ran concurrent with his service will be expanded and rehung this Sunday.

### **October 25 "Eighth Day of Creation" Rev. Kent Matthies**

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth" so tells the book of Genesis. Soon God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear." Our beautiful Mother Earth has been a long time in her glorious creation, but now endures much ecological damage. On Unitarian Universalist United Nations Sunday we will explore our spiritual obligations to continue as good stewards of the Land. This year's UN goals include providing all human beings with clean, accessible water. This is our duty as people of religious faith and citizens of the world.

#### **USG STAFF**

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

## FROM OUR DRE

As many of you know, this summer, while making a dazzling point on the tennis court, I tore the hamstrings in my right leg. I showed up for church on crutches, and was the focus of much concern. It made me a little uncomfortable, actually, and I wanted to just do my job without all the fuss. Then, Sarah West, chair of our Caring Ministry program, pulled me aside and asked if the church could send out an email asking members to provide meals for me. I resisted the idea, insisting I was fine and could manage on my own. "Jude," she said gently, "we all just watched you hobble around in pain; you have to let us help you."

One of the most compelling reasons that people join faith communities is for, well, *community*. We need one another. Life can be unpredictable, scary, joyful, boring, painful, amusing and a host of other things, and we don't want to go it alone. Sometimes the events of our lives are so big and so universal that we need to make ceremonies to contain them. We create rites of passage to mark the major changes, from birth to marriage to death, and ask other people to be there, as witnesses, helpers and sharers in the experience. We need one another to mop up the tears of joy and of sorrow. We need people who care about us to say "Great job!" when we've accomplished something, and to console us when we're hurting. We need help carrying the good news and the heavy burdens alike.

And so, one of the major functions of our church is to offer opportunities for us to give and receive care, to bind ourselves to each other so we feel less alone. When the salads and casseroles started arriving at my doorstep, I was moved to tears and experienced a deep sense of gratitude and connection to the individual bearing the crock pot and to USG as a whole. It was holy and beautiful, and many, many of you have been on both the giving and receiving end of this sacramental food chain. You know what I'm talking about.

Beyond this humble but powerful connecting through offerings of food, we have larger events which bind us together. In August, the congregation formally welcomed a new baby and committed itself yet again to helping support the new parents, in this case our own minister and his wife. In September, Kent and I had the honor of co-officiating at the lovely wedding of the now Mrs. Robin Falco, our church administrator. And in October, we held a memorial service for a long-time member and leader of our congregation, Amie Van Itallie.

We come to church to connect. We add meaning and purpose to our lives when we visit a church friend in the hospital, have our children dedicated during a worship service, or gather to console one another in a time of grief and loss. I invite each of you to think about what you can offer to our congregation, as well as what you might need from it. Let us take care of each other.

In faith,  
*Jude*

## EVENTS AND FELLOWSHIP

### **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. On October 16, we will meet at the home of Joan Long. We will be discussing ***Alice: Alice Roosevelt Longworth, From White House Princess to Washington Power Broker***, by Stacy A. Cordery. Bring a sandwich for lunch and fellowship following the discussion, if you wish. The hostess will provide dessert and beverages. Please call Joan a few days in advance to let her know you are coming. For additional information, contact Cynthia Claus.

Upcoming books for the year include: ***Netherland*** by Joseph O'Neill (November 11); ***My Life in France*** by Julia Child (November 18); ***A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*** by Michael Dorris (January 15); ***Small Island*** by Andrea Levy (February 19); ***The White Tiger*** by Adiga Aravind (March 19); ***The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society*** by M. Shaffer & A. Barrows (April 16); ***A Passage to India*** by E. M. Forster (May 21); ***In Other Rooms, Other Wonders*** by Daniyal Mueenuddin (June 18); ***The House of Mirth*** by Edith Wharton (September 17).

### **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: Mon.-Fri. 9:00 - 4:00  
Rev. Kent Matthies: 215-844-1157; [kmatthies@verizon.net](mailto: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](mailto:usgre@verizon.net)

### **Womenspirit Song Circle**

A refreshed, revamped (no pun intended) WOMENSPIRIT SONG CIRCLE will meet on **Monday, October 12** at 7:30 p.m. in the USG sanctuary. We'll continue to sing familiar tunes and learn new ones, chant, listen to a brief inspirational reading, and enjoy light refreshments. No experience/training necessary--just a desire to sing! This year, the relaxation part will be shorter and we'll listen and sing along to more recorded music; also, each meeting will have a theme. As always, you are encouraged to share a favorite poem, dance, song; to play the piano or bring an instrument. October's theme will be "Autumn & Leaving". WSC meets on the second Monday of the month. If you plan to attend, RSVP to [newmuse@comcast.net](mailto:newmuse@comcast.net).

Questions/suggestions? E-mail or call Donya at 610-667-0261. If *"The first duty of Love is to listen"* (Rev. Kate Bortner), *surely the second is to SING!*

### **New Group: New Jew-U's and Friends**

Have you ever wondered how a person can be both Jewish *AND* a Unitarian Universalist? A new group is forming in our congregation for "New Jew-U's and Friends." If you would like to receive information about upcoming activities, please give your contact information to Annette Boucher or Howard Silver. You can usually find one of them in the dining room after services, or you can send an inquiry by email to [anitaboucher@hotmail.com](mailto:anitaboucher@hotmail.com).

### **Visitor Breakfast with the Minister**

Visitors and guests are invited to attend "Breakfast with the Minister" on Sunday, October 25 from 9:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. at USG in the upstairs Assembly Room. This is a great opportunity to meet our minister, Rev. Kent Matthies, and our Director of Religious Education, Jude Henzy, as well as other visitors and guests.

This is a low-key, friendly way to learn more about Unitarian Universalism, to ask questions of Kent and Jude, and to mix with others who are newly finding our fellowship. We hope you will join us! If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Elaine Hills at [elaine.l.hills@gmail.com](mailto:elaine.l.hills@gmail.com).

### **Journey Circle**

On Monday, October 5, the Earth Honoring Group will be having a Journey Circle lead by Wally Moyer.

The Journey Circle will start at 7:00 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. We will do as many journeys as we can and share about our journey then share some snacks together.

What to bring: snacks or juice to share, something to lay on, something to write on and something to write with, something to cover your eyes with what are we doing. First we'll smudge the space and call the directions and then we'll talk about what a journey is and how to journey. You will learn how to journey or be reminded know how to journey, what a journey is, 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 we do will only be about 10 minutes. General Information on Journeying can be found at (<http://www.shamanlinks.net/Journey.htm>) or email Wally Moyer.

### **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 Friday through Sunday, **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 at [haroldkrieger@verizon.net](mailto:haroldkrieger@verizon.net).

### **Join the Circle Dinner Bunch Next Dinner on Saturday November 14**

As our church grows, it becomes hard 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.

Dinners are held in the homes of church members and friends. Generally, there are six to ten 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. Please let us know if you would like to host for either an all-adult or family grouping. You may email Betsy at [bsgabriel47@msn.com](mailto:bsgabriel47@msn.com), call at 215-376-0417 or talk to her at church. We will be taking reservations through Sunday, November 1.

### **USG Arts and Crafts Show Sunday, October 18 12:00 p.m. - 2 p.m.**

WANTED:

USG ARTISTS, SCULPTORS, POETS, WEAVERS, POTTERS, QUILTERS, SEWERS, KNITTERS, ETC. - AMATEURS AND PROFESSIONALS WELCOME!

This celebration of USG creativity will include paintings, sculptures, pottery, weavings, quilts, needlepoint, knitting, clothing, costumes and other handmade items on display after the service. Some contributors will offer items for sale with at least 10% of the cost benefiting the church. USG musicians will provide music and USG cooks will provide light refreshments. We encourage all of you who have discovered the pleasures of quiet creativity to share some of your results with your USG friends. If you would like to contribute to the Arts and Crafts Show or if you can contribute light refreshments, please contact Joan Long at 215-247-1379 or [jambobo@comcast.net](mailto:jambobo@comcast.net), or Marny Walsh at 215-242-8857 or [marny.walsh1@comcast.net](mailto:marny.walsh1@comcast.net) by October 7.

### **Turning 50 (The 2010 Birthday Challenge)**

Some of you have been there and done that; in fact, it seems like quite a while back. Some of you can't even picture turning thirty, let alone fifty! But somewhere along the way there comes a time when you reflect on the whole gift-giving aspect of the American birthday tradition and say, "I don't really need anything. I don't even really *want* anything." Yet friends and relatives still try to give you a gift. They just can't seem to help themselves.

This year as I've reflected on becoming 50, which is what's been going on in 2009 for me, I considered ways I could mark this milestone to the good of the community. I recalled my friend's idea to contribute to his church on his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday by hosting a 50:50 challenge. The result was enough money to construct a ramp from the sidewalk to the front door of their church to improve the accessibility. Determined to do something similar, I approached the Stewardship Committee at USG and presented the idea to them. Here's how it works:

Since USG is such a gift **to** me, the church will receive a monetary gift **from** me on my birthday. I then invite other USG members to do the same on their birthdays throughout 2010 and I will MATCH the contributions as they come in, up to \$5000. You could encourage your friends and family to give a gift to USG on the occasion of your birthday and it too would be matched. This would result in a total of \$10,000 for USG to spend on a project or improvement that is not part of the church's normal operating budget – the \$5000 from you, my community, and the \$5000 match from me to "you".

The Stewardship Committee helped me to think through the logistics of the 2010 Birthday Challenge, including how to gain Board approval then solicit ideas from all of you, for a suitable project to pursue together. I am happy to say that the USG Board voted in August to support the effort. The next steps are to build awareness of the Birthday Challenge and clarify the initiative to the USG community, to describe the process for submitting project ideas, and to get started by the New Year.

Keep an eye out for informational sessions that will be held several times in October or feel free to look me up in the USG directory and get in touch. I am excited at the prospect of your input, not only on this concept but on ways to gracefully transition to middle age!

--- Suzanne Matlock, USG Member

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

### **Calling All Editors!**

Do you enjoy writing and editing? A few people are needed to edit the *CommUUnicator*. Each monthly editor receives articles via email, organizes the articles under the proper heading, checks facts and figures (of course!), and sends the file to the USG office, where the printed copies are photocopied and mailed and where the issue is emailed to those people who prefer to receive it electronically. Being an editor takes 6-8 hours per issue, once every three or four months. It's fun and creative! If you are interested, please contact Edna Jones.

### **Continuing Conversation on Creating a More "Intentional Community"**

A group of USG members is exploring the possibility of creating a more intentional community at USG. There are many ways of creating intentional communities. For example, there could be more inter-generational

neighborhood-based activities and a more continuing support system for some of our older members who want to stay in their own homes as they age; this could mean actual shared housing arrangements. There are many other possibilities and options. If you are interested in participating in these conversations, please join us. The sessions will be held this fall after church on October 4, November 1, and December 6. Please contact to Linda Brunn at [lindabrunn@comcast.net](mailto:lindabrunn@comcast.net) or Gale Gibbons at [gigi3318@gmail.com](mailto:gigi3318@gmail.com) to RSVP and/or if you have any questions.

### **Share the Plate: You Too Can Make a Suggestion for Share the Plate**

Are you wondering where these worthwhile groups keep coming from? Are you thinking you have no suggestions for Share the Plate?

Linda Smith learned about August's recipient Achieve-ability, the group that helps homeless women achieve self support, because her daughter had a summer internship there. Kristen Shipler suggested the Maternal Wellness Center because she benefited from their services during her pregnancy. The Kenya Women's Medical Program was suggested by hearing of Sy Powell's travels there to provide reproductive health services there. Louise Lisi knew about the Reach Out and Read Program because she sees how children in the Philadelphia Health Center waiting rooms love to receive a book at their check up.

You probably know a neighbor, friend or student who works for or volunteers at a worthwhile organization. We would like to help them spread the word about their good works, and support them with our financial help. It helps us connect with our neighbors and with the spirit of generosity within us.

Don't hesitate to suggest worthwhile groups. The suggestion form is on the USG website. We want to hear from you!!

Share the Plate Task Force: Grant Fox, Edna Jones, Linda Bernstein, and Tom Stupak.

The **November 2009** *CommUUnicator* deadline is **Sunday, October 14**. Editor: **Peg Bruton**. Send your articles to her at **[pbruton@comcast.net](mailto:pbruton@comcast.net)**. Please submit items via email to the editor or place in *CommUUnicator* box by 12:30 p.m. on **October 14**. Flyers must be submitted to the USG office by the *CommUUnicator* deadline. Submit materials in 11 pt. Verdana when possible.

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Editors: Peggy Bruton, Cynthia Claus and Edna Jones

## WIDER UU WORLD

### **Resources For Older Adult Living at NIM (ROAL)**

Consultation and information and education for people 55 + who want to continue living a quality life in their own homes or in the Northwest community. We can help sort out and problem solve some of the difficult challenges you face in the third phase of living. Call us to locate specific programs or services, apply for medical insurance, help you advocate for yourself in challenging situations, find a support group or other options for caregivers, review a letter you don't understand, navigate insurance issues and utility discounts, and to understand eligibility requirements for financial relief programs. All calls are handled by a trained professional and are confidential. Call 215-843-5602 for information. --Linda C. Brunn.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee encourages all visitors to stop at the Visitor Welcome Table during coffee hour after Sunday services. A church member will be there to greet visitors and answer any questions. Visitors may also pick up a Welcome Packet, which contains information about the Unitarian Society of Germantown (USG), Unitarian Universalism, children's religious education, and much more!

Individuals who are thinking about joining USG or would like more information about what it means to become a member should contact Delores Hill at [hillott@comcast.net](mailto:hillott@comcast.net). Membership at USG has many benefits and involves mutual commitment.

The church commits to provide members:

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

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

Individuals not ready to become members may still become involved in the church. In fact, visitors are encouraged to get to know us by becoming active in our community before they make the commitment to membership. The church sends out a weekly email announcement which includes a calendar of events. Anyone interested in receiving these announcements should contact [usquu@verizon.net](mailto:usquu@verizon.net) to be put on the mailing list.

## AMONG US

Carolyn Barschow is beginning three months of service as a work-study intern at UU Rowe Camp and Conference Center in Western Massachusetts. She invites USG folks to visit or attend a workshop; see more at [rowecenter.org](http://rowecenter.org)

### ***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.

### **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. Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, October 4**, 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.

**Please check the Church Calendar on the USG website [www.usguu.org](http://www.usguu.org) for events scheduled during October.**