

FOCUS

January 2007

Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County

UUCDC is a liberal religious community where young and old, partnered and single, gay and straight, skeptic and believer, people diverse in background and race, come together to build a better world for ourselves, our children and the larger community. We invite those who share these values to join us for Sunday services and for events listed in this newsletter.

145 W. Rose Tree Road
Media, PA 19063
(610) 566-4853
www.uucdc.org

E-mail:
churchoffice@uucdc.org

**Sunday Services,
Nursery Care &
Church School**
(PreSchool - 8th)
10:30 a.m. Sept.-June

**Coming of Age &
High school Youth**
6 p.m. Sundays



FROM THE MINISTER

The burning of our rainbow flag last November and our congregation's response to that incident have left a lasting impression on me, as I know it has on many of the friends and members of our church. I have learned many things as a result, and I would like to share some of those learnings with you.

The first lesson is that homophobia unfortunately remains a significant force within our society. This does not come as a shock, given the number of constitutional amendments banning gay marriage that have been adopted across this country in recent years. The flag burning reinforces that homophobia and hate is not some distant enemy, but a palpable presence in our community.

I've also learned that our church community can be an effective voice in opposition to this dominant anti-gay public sentiment. Our vigils and interfaith service were powerful statements in favor of equal rights for all, regardless of sexual orientation or affection, and even a conservative newspaper like the Delaware County Daily Times heard us and responded favorably. This power translates into other arenas as well, and this incident reminds us that UUCDC has the potential to stand as a strong voice for social justice in southeastern Pennsylvania.

(Continued on page 2)

Speakers For Jan. Sunday Services

In a change from our past practice, sermon topics will now be posted on the church Web site, <http://uucdc.org>, and e-mailed to listserv subscribers on the Thursday of each week.

- January 7: Rev. Peter Friedrichs
- January 14: Rev. Peter Friedrichs
- January 21: Rev. Peter Friedrichs
- January 28: Guest Speaker

Who's Who

Staff

Rev. Peter A. Friedrichs,
Minister
Jean Campbell,
Acting Director of Religious
Education
Beth Youse,
Acting Music Director
Rina Jurceka,
Administrator

Board of Trustees

Jody Malloy,
President
Mark Bernstein,
Vice President
Stu Greenberg,
Treasurer
Carlin Knight,
Secretary
Donna Harris
Katy Lynn
Bruce Wyman
Lowell Young

(Continued from page 1)

From the Minister

Perhaps the most important lesson of November's events is that our work as a Welcoming Congregation is ongoing. Through discussions I've had with many folks since the flag burning, it has become apparent that we as a congregation have work we need to do to reaffirm our welcoming status. Many of our current members were not here when the congregation voted to become a Welcoming Congregation in 2002. Many members and friends do not know what that process was or what the "Welcoming Congregation" designation means. Some do not appreciate the significance of the rainbow flag symbol, and others have expressed concerns that we are giving "special status" to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) concerns to the exclusion of other oppressed people or groups.

As a result of these learnings, I have made a commitment to the Board of Trustees to coordinate a series of events that will provide educational and experiential opportunities to the congregation that will respond to these questions and concerns, and that will help us renew our commitment to welcoming lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning people into our church community. In the coming weeks an action team will map out a strategy and they will implement it in the months ahead. While awareness of and sensitivity to LGBTQ concerns will remain an ongoing process, my hope is that our current efforts will culminate in a ceremony of rededication of our commitment to welcoming LGBTQ members into the church. We will symbolize that renewed commitment by installing a permanent rainbow flag sculpture on church property in the Spring. If you would like to join the action team that will design and deliver this programming, please give me a call or send me an email (minister@uucdc.org).

This work is vital to our congregation and to our wider community. As we move into the New Year, with all its attendant challenges and rewards, I hope that everyone will engage this issue with the fullness of heart and spirit that is the hallmark of our religious community.

Peace,

Peter

FOCUS INFO:

Editors:

Bette Austin
& Neil Goldstein

Production:

Rina Jurceka

The January deadline
is **January 10.**

Please send in your text
via email to:

Focus@uucdc.org

or put it in the Focus box,
in the church office.

Focus Folding, 10 am
Jan. 26. Come help!

Welcome in 2007 at 'Bash' Here

Leigh Mitchell, Stu Greenberg, and Bryan Boosz will be your hosts for the UUCDC New Year's Eve Bash, a relaxing evening of food, drinks, music, and fun!

Come on out to Fellowship Hall to mingle with friends, say goodbye to 2006, and welcome the arrival of 2007. The party starts at 8 p.m. Dec. 31 (of course).

Your mingling experience will be enhanced with delicious food, a champagne toast, music, snacks, desserts, a Martini bar, beverages, door prizes and party favors. Tickets (\$30 a person) will be on sale in Fellowship Hall after the Sunday service, or contact Leigh, Bryan or Stu.

Don't sit home and watch someone else ring in the New Year. A splendid time is guaranteed for all!

BOARD PERSPECTIVES: CONGREGATIONAL POLITY

From the President/Jody Malloy

"Congregational Polity. Last year, while on the Ministerial Search Committee, I first heard this phrase. I must say, it scared me. It sounded like something that only ministers and the people in Boston at UUA would understand. I honestly figured I'd just leave it that way. I asked what it meant, but I didn't really listen. I had already decided it was something that I didn't really need to grasp.

But it kept coming up -- in sermons, in discussions about the search process, and in discussions I had as I started to think about becoming the president of the Board of Trustees. I realized that while it was a phrase I wasn't used to, and therefore, it seemed more lofty than the lay person's vocabulary with which I was comfortable, it really was a simple concept. More significantly, it was an important concept -- something that not only I as president should know, but that we all should understand.

So what is "Congregational Polity?" The clearest definition I've found is this: "Congregational polity" is the form of church government in which each congregation is an autonomous, self-governing, covenanted body. In the UU tradition, there are no bishops, no synod, no presbytery, no episcopacy.

No organized body or individual outside the congregation can dictate or direct the decisions and activities that go on within it. The individual church owns its own properties, elects its own ministers and other church officers, and conducts all its own affairs.

Reading this definition, I expect that you can understand why it came up during our ministerial search process. The fact that we even had a ministerial search process, that we were not assigned a minister, is due to our congregational polity. More than that, congregational polity means that we choose the programs that we offer, the social action that we perform, the religious education programs that we provide, the groups to whom we rent space, and much, much more. We, the members of our individual church, choose all that. While there are national and regional UU organizations to which we belong, they are for our support and to help us speak with a larger, combined voice when we want to, not to dictate what we do.

Why am I explaining this to you? Because this month we have one of two congregational meetings (the other is in May), where we make decisions about the future of our congregation. We shall elect Board members who lead us in all the decisions that are put before us because of the freedom provided by

our congregational polity. We shall vote on the budget, deciding how we shall use our money to support the church. By voting for our leaders and our budget, we shall set the direction of our spiritual home. Because of our congregational polity, we have that opportunity.

UU's fifth principle declares that "We covenant to affirm and promote the rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large." We tend to think of that principle in terms of our responsibility to participate in our civic government. I'm asking you to recognize the importance of the principle in terms of our congregational government.

Come to our congregational meeting, January 21. Come to the budget information session, January 14. Come be part of our democratic process. It's our right. It's our responsibility. It's our Fifth Principle, and your leadership wants to hear your voice.

Jody

Thank You!!!

Thanks to lots of hungry folks at UUCDC the Coming of Age Group raised well over \$700 at their soup luncheon Dec. 17th. There are more soup lunches planned, so let Chelsea Harris, Nicole Jurceka, Natesh Karna or Eric Lenke know if you had favorites among those soups served.

RE-FLECTIONS

JEAN CAMPBELL, ACTING DIRECTOR
OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

As we approach the New Year and with four months into the role of acting director of Religious education, I thought it appropriate to give an update as to what has been accomplished so far and what we hope to work on in the next half of the year. It is a mid-term report card, so to speak.

Looking back, I was hired for a 30-hour-week position. My job basically is to oversee seven aspects of UUCCD's Lifespan Religious Education program. When I started, there

were four people committed to the RE Council. This group, under the former director of RE, Kate Ramos, had planned the beginning of the church year. Beyond that, the slate was open.

Now, December 8, looking at the program, we have an RE Council of seven members, but remain in need of a chairperson. The Council is comprised of four team leaders and three at-large members.

We have had a retreat and we

now have an average of 60 children participating on Sunday morning, with 12 youth participating in Sunday evening programming.

There is now an Adult Education subcommittee of five persons, a Sunday School subcommittee of three, a youth subcommittee, a Creation team of five, whose job is to plan workshop rotation, and a DRE Advisory Committee.

Jean

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Adult Religious Education

Can You be Good Without God? Living Ethically in Accord With the Humanist Manifesto

In January the Adult RE Committee is offering a four-part series on the Humanist Manifesto. The Humanist Manifesto is the title of three declarations of principles and intentions, laying out a Humanist worldview. The first was published in 1944, the second in 1973, and the third in 2003.

The central theme of all three is the elaboration of a philosophy and value system which does not necessarily include belief in a personal God or any higher power, although the three differ considerably in their tone, form, and ambition. To read the Manifesto go online to: <http://www.jcn.com/manifestos.html>.

Each session will be held twice in the week: Sundays, 8:45 A. M. to 10:15 A. M.; Thursdays, 7:30 P. M. to 9:30 P.M. in the Youth room or the Lounge.

The subjects and their dates are:

Sunday, January 7 and Thursday, January 10: Provides context--an overview of the three Manifestos, their origins, their relationship to Unitarian Universalism.

Sunday, January 14 and Thursday, January 17: UU and the Manifestos. Do they reflect your thinking? What is religious humanism and is it the same as secular humanism? During this session, participants have the opportunity to explore the implications of the Manifestos and their relationship to their own beliefs.

Sunday, January 21 and Thursday, January 24: Can you be good without God? What does it mean to be ethical? If behavior is not based on (a) God's commandments, what is the basis of it? What is your response to ethical systems that are radically different from your own?

Note: Sunday, January 28, there will be a Sunday morning Forum instead of the series on Humanism. The series will continue on Thursday.

Thursday, February 1 and Sunday, February 5: Humanist Ethics and Issues. During this session

we will explore participants' responses to contemporary issues in light of the Manifesto. What is the humanist response to population growth, war, economic issues, etc.?

Please plan to print copies of the Manifestos and bring them with you to the sessions.

Let Jean Campbell know if you are planning to attend either the Sunday or Thursday sessions. 610-566-4853, Ext. 3 or dre@uucdc.org. session. Also, let her know if you will need child care for the sessions.

Middle School Activities Group

In December, a small group of sixth-to-eighth graders gathered to eat and exchange homemade cookies, swap music, play a few games, and try group poetry writing. A lot of fun for all involved.

This month, we're doing a snow-tubing trip to Blue Mountain Ski Resort in the Poconos on Saturday, Jan. 13. We'll leave at 3 p.m., returning around 10. We're looking for chaperones and drivers. Friends are welcome to come. Cost: \$25. Contact Jean Campbell, acting DRE, for scholarship information.

Coming of Age

The COA Group members will start the new year with their annual UU Dinner Party, in which famous Unitarians, Universalists, UUs, and others come to life around a formal dinner table. Later in the month, they will explore decision-making skills, operating images, and values clarification.

Many thanks to our new mentorship pairs: Natesh Karna and Chris Townend, Erik Lenke and Mike Mitchell, Nicole Jurceka and Katy Lynn, and Chelsea Harris and Jody Malloy.

YUCKIs

The YUCKIs are starting off the year as the servants for the UU Dinner Party! Then they are off to Arlington, Va., for Winter Con, a youth conference focused on social justice work.

And they will host the Aquarius Coffee House, back by popular demand. That fundraising effort is an inter-generational event for the whole community. It will be held on Saturday, Jan. 27, at 7 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. (See details on page 12.) Please support the Coffee House with your participation and patronage. A performance sign-up poster will be available outside the Youth Room soon, so *start practicing!*

-- Jean Lenke

Films for All, Hosted by M&Ms (No, Not That Kind)

Every year, the ninth grade Coming of Age Program hosts a series of COA Community Movie Nights on the fourth Sunday evening of every month. Traditionally, we start off the year with a couple of COA favorites and then let the youth and their mentors take over.

Last month the mentors and mentees (M&Ms) got off to a great start with "Batman Begins," hosted by Erik Lenke and Mike Mitchell. What a great movie, with the classic "hero's journey" metaphors and a few extraordinary twists (a mentor turns out to be the bad guy).

At 6:30 p.m. Jan. 28, Chelsea Harris and Jody Malloy will host the classic 1986 adventure "Stand By Me," the story of four boys who search for a missing teenager and have the experience of their lives. Outstanding performances.

The COA films explore themes of growing up, as well as social justice and difficult ethical and moral issues. They are geared to appeal to all audiences and are followed by a short reflective discussion.

These movie nights are open to everyone. Ratings vary and are posted with the monthly listings. Parents must accompany children younger than 13.

-- Jean Lenke

Side by Side: Mothers and Daughters Exploring Selfhood and Womanhood Together

Who? Mothers and their pre-adolescent daughters (fifth and sixth graders). Girls without mothers present in their lives may participate with a female guardian or mentor.

What? Sharing thoughts and feelings about growing up as girls and women in today's society. Challenging our culture's narrow definition of the feminine. Coun-

tering messages in music, TV, advertising and elsewhere. Improving relationships between mothers and daughters, and providing communication skills to help both weather the storms of adolescence. Exploring personal and cultural ideas about womanhood and femininity in an attempt to raise daughters' self-esteem at a vulnerable time in their lives.

When and where? 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Sunday evenings, Jan. 28 – March 11 (seven weeks) in Classroom 1.

Registration: Space is limited. Contact Jean Campbell, acting DRE, at 610-566-4853, Ext. 3, or dre@uucdc.org.

-- Jean Lenke

Big Tires, Lots of Snow, and You

The Middle School Activities Group wants *you ...* to go snow tubing with us, on Saturday, Jan. 13!

For more information, call Jean Lenke, 484-431-3524, or e-mail lenke5@rcn.com.

NOTES FROM THE BOARD

The Board is excited to announce that Lowell Young has accepted a recently vacated position on the Board. According to our by-laws, the Board appoints a replacement until the next congregational meeting scheduled for January 21, when the congregation votes on the replacement.

Because of his interests and experience, Lowell will take over the position of treasurer from Stu Greenberg, a difficult pair of shoes to fill. Thank you Stu for your dedicated service and Lowell for stepping into that position. The Board looks forward to Lowell joining us for the January meeting.

Jane Seelaus also has agreed to chair the Nominating Committee. A thank you to Jane and the rest of the Nominating Committee for their nomination of Lowell Young.

Regarding church finances, we thank the people who have responded to our request for one-time contributions. A list of those who already have contributed is in the lobby. It will be updated each week.

The Board discussed goals that we set for the year.

- ♦ **Hiring Permanent Religious Education and Music directors:** At the next meeting, Judy Farling, Personnel Committee chair, will present a plan for hiring permanent staff. Work will begin in February, after we learn whether acting directors are interested in serving on a permanent basis.
- ♦ **Policy Governance:** The Board is developing a plan for moving towards a policy Board. For the next few months, Mark Bernstein, Donna Harris and Katy Lynn will contact congregations that already have made the move, or are in the process of developing a plan of action.
- ♦ **Membership:** The Membership Committee has done incredibly good work as they gave structure to the membership process. Their job is important, and they could use some help. Members interested in our growth as a congregation are urged to consider serving on the Membership Committee.
- ♦ **Social Justice:** The Board especially acknowledged the work of the Social Justice Committee which has done an outstanding job of putting our values into action. The Board also thanks the Broughton foundation for its generous gift supporting the Social Justice Committee.

The Board and staff also wish to thank the people who helped make the work of the church possible in the last month, in particular, the following:

- Gail Freedman, who designed and created “kits” for holidays banners. The Sunday School created four beautiful banners that were hung December 17.
- Those who helped during Thanksgiving service, including the Neighboring Faiths Youth, the Youth orchestra, and those who baked and served, including Jane Seelaus, Gail freedman, Berrie Torgan-Randall, Janet Young and Dick Salomon.
- Ed Krizek and Susan Eidson, who helped Rina by doing data entry and answering the phone.
- Sunday Morning Team, including greeters, ushers, coffee-makers and worship associates, who keep the Sunday morning experience wonderful for visitors and members alike.
- Marge Caton as emergency office help this past month.
- Various members who together gave the church a beautiful, new, wooden music stand to honor the 50th wedding anniversary of Italo and Jean Taranta.
- All those who contributed music to our Sunday services, with a special thanks to Russ Ferrara and Ann Seidman, who worked with Beth Youse to coordinate a successful music program.
- Those who helped during the rainbow flag vigils, especially Leigh Mitchell, who created an instant phone tree to contact everyone, and Victoria and Katie Malloy ushers at the interfaith service.
- Bob McClennen for his extraordinary efforts in tackling our recent heating and plumbing issues.

Katy Lynn

Congregational Meeting Set for Jan 21, Budget Information Meeting for Jan. 14

On Sunday, Jan. 21, after the service, we will hold our annual January congregational business meeting. All members and friends are encouraged to attend.

Additionally, on Sunday, Jan. 14, just after the service, the board will host a discussion and feedback session concerning the proposed Jan. 1-June 30 budget.

At the Jan. 21 meeting we will vote for the president and vice president of the Board of Trustees. Our incumbents, Jody Malloy and Mark Bernstein, respectively, have agreed to be candidates for those positions for a second year. Our Nominating Committee will also present Lowell Young to fill the

remaining 2½ years of the board position vacated by Bruce Bryen. A Call to Congregational Meeting, which includes the agenda, was mailed in December. For detailed information about the candidates, see insert.

In addition to voting on the board positions, we also will vote on our budget for the period of Jan. 1 through June 30. (After we complete that six-month fiscal period, we will have completed the transition to a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30, a change that the congregation voted for during last January’s business meeting.)

Our bylaws say: “To be entitled

to vote at any business meeting of the Society, individuals must have been members for a period of not less than twenty-one days [i.e., by Dec. 31, 2006] and must have made a recorded financial contribution to the Society during either the immediately preceding [2006] or current fiscal year [Jan. 1-June 30, 2007].”

Come be part of our democratic process. Your voice, your opinion, your presence are important.

-- Jody Malloy

NOTICE TO THOSE WITH CHILDREN Child Care is available for those attending Adult RE series, discussions, and Forums. For such care, please contact in advance of the session Jean Campbell, acting director of Religious Education. Tel. 62-0-566-4853, ext. 3 or dre@uucdc.org.

CANVASS (?) CONVERSATIONS OR “WHAT’S IN A NAME

“*What’s in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet*” – William Shakespeare

This just in . . .

Based on extensive feedback from our market-research department (which we don’t have), and field-tested with our many and varied focus groups (none), we have decided that it’s time to change the name for the annual process that has been known as the Canvass, and the name for the folks who visit people in their homes and have heretofore been known as Canvassers.

There was a definite consensus at our last committee meeting for changing the designation of those who will be visiting, because a common misconception is that the person will be there only to talk about money. Likewise, the term Canvass has acquired a lot of extra connotations over the years. This is also a good time for a new name, with the arrival of Rev. Peter and the increase in positive energy within the congregation.

So the obvious question became: OK, what are we going to change the names to?

Those who think all committee meetings are dull should have been there as ideas and suggestions bounced around the room

like laser beams in a hall of mirrors. Despite the usual difficulties in getting a group of UUs to agree on anything, a consensus did emerge around the fact that those who visit people in their homes are, generically, *visitors on behalf of the congregation, and that the overall process is, generically, an annual fund drive* (with, of course, member outreach and feedback components as part of the visits).

So, starting with the Sunday service of Jan. 7, we will be asking people to volunteer to be **Congregational Visitors** to visit people in their homes, as part of the 2007 UUCDC **Congregational Fund Drive**.

When you volunteer to be a Congregational Visitor, the new name will make it more obvious that your job will *not* involve asking people for money. What you will do is stop by for a brief, friendly, structured visit at which you will gather some feedback, and then have people put their signatures on the pledge form for the amount that they’ve *already decided* to pledge.

And when you do volunteer this month to be a Congregational Visitor, you won’t be doing anything until the Congre-

gational Fund Drive in March, other than attend a training session, conducted by Mark Bernstein or me (Fred Kelemen), or both.

We realize the name change might be hard to adapt to at first for people who’ve been using the words Canvass and Canvasser for so many years. Not to mention those of us who are getting older – I know as I age, I find myself inherently more resistant to change of *any* kind. It’s like the story of the woman who turned 100 years old and was interviewed by a local reporter, who said “You must have seen a lot of changes in your 100 years,” to which she replied “Yup – and I was agin’ ev’ry one of ’em.”

We hope many of you under age 100 will step forward this month and volunteer to be Congregational Visitors during the Fund Drive in March. The last time we did a face-to-face Fund Drive we had 50 volunteers, and we’ll need at least that many this time. And besides, the more, the merrier!

Fred Kelemen

*Congregational Fund
Drive co-Chair*

Small Group Ministry to Examine “Stillness”

Hymn No. 352 of *Singing the Living Tradition* begins with the words, “Find a stillness, hold a stillness, let the stillness carry me.”

January, the middle of winter,

calls us to find a place of stillness within ourselves. The holiday furor has subsided and, while the days are lengthening ever so slightly, we are faced with long nights of darkness and cold. If we take our cue

from nature, we find that the bare trees and the frozen earth are suspended between seasons in a stillness that is renewing, a stillness that prepares the plants and animals for the

(Continued on page 15)

CARING CORNER

Church-wide Initiative on Racism/Classism

The 2006 General Assembly resolved that "Delegates to the General Assembly are charged to work with their congregations to hold at least one program over the next year to address racism or classism, and to report on that program at next year's General Assembly."

For the past several weeks, members of the Coordinating Council have been looking at ways to follow through on the charge of the General Assembly in activities at UUCDC. We are happy to announce the beginning of a church-wide initiative to increase aware-

ness of and take action against racism and classism.

Over the next several months, a series of events will occur as the various committees and groups that make up our church life participate in this initiative. We already know that an upcoming service will be devoted to the message of anti-racism. Small Group Ministry discussions will focus on these topics. The book club will pick a book appropriate to the topic and encourage the entire congregation to read it. Adult RE

will hold forums on these issues and children's RE classes will engage in projects and other activities. The Social Justice Committee is considering a number of projects, and the Arts Council will contribute in a creative way.

Look for these events throughout the year and please participate as appropriate and as you are able. If you have ideas or want to get involved, please contact me.

Mark Bernstein,

for Coordinating Council

A Rainbow Flag Sculpture

After the sad and disturbing attack on UUCDC's "rainbow flag," many have expressed concern that a new one might be vandalized again.

The Coordinating Council is happy that a plan is underway to create a permanent, indestructible Rainbow Flag sculpture to be near the UUCDC sign.

The metal sculpture was designed by UUCDC member Mike Mitchell. The flag portion, approximately three feet wide, will consist

of open bands of color, giving the illusion of being blown by the wind. This will be set atop a pole about ten feet high. The flag will be fabricated by Mike and several other volunteers without cost to the church.

There is a small mock-up of the initial design in the church lobby and a full-size mock-up is in production.

The Coordinating Council reviewed the design proposal at its

December meeting and voted to proceed with obtaining a zoning permit, finalizing the sculpture's design, and production. A spring dedication is planned.

Those wanting to help with the sculpture's fabrication should contact Mike Mitchell directly. Bill Henderson, Jean Lenke, Bob McClennen and Judy Ziegler are available to answer other questions.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Big Easy

That's what some people called New Orleans before Katrina.

For us -- a group of 14 post-Katrina volunteers sponsored by UUCDC's Social Justice Committee--our week-long November trip to the Crescent City certainly was big. But easy? Only in the sense of how well we got along, and how well the trip was organized by church members Patricia Lasseter and Regina Pound.

Eight of us were congregation members. The others were friends or people who responded to committee publicity, seeking to help a few of the thousands of people who were still in desperate need 14 months after the hurricane. (As the need continues, so do plans for more trips and the need for donations -- keep reading!)

Before the trip, the volunteers raised about \$10,000, most of which we spent to rehabilitate and buy appliances for the homes of two residents who lost nearly everything in the catastrophe.

The group mostly divided its work time between rehabbing the two homes (mainly installing insulation and drywall) and gutting four others. Those four were among the 80,000 formerly flooded residences that, astonishingly, still hadn't been cleaned out.

Two members lent their nursing expertise to health-care projects.

Our spiritual leader was UUCDC's Social Justice committee chair Marie deYoung, a UU community minister, who combined gutting duties with helping

us examine the religious and emotional dimensions of our work. She also connected with various religious groups. Those largely volunteer organizations are by far the major source of labor helping the area recover.

"Everyone I met in New Orleans told me, 'It's you people, the church people, who are going to save New Orleans,' " Patricia Lasseter said. "And I was impressed with how the churches are partnering, not claiming credit for themselves."

"Helping the residents of New Orleans rebuild their devastated homes can be one of the most gratifying ways to spend vacation time, and I look forward to a return trip in April," Regina Pound said.

Helping us was Emily Danielson, who coordinated volunteers for both the UUA/UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Panel and the local Episcopal Diocese's extensive relief effort.

Our work was taxing, emotional and rewarding, but we also got in a couple visits to the French Quarter for food, music, dancing and people-watching.

Helping fuel all this activity was the indefatigable Jean Taranta. She not only organized menus, bought food, and cooked most of our delicious breakfasts and dinners, she also did some rehabbing.

Besides those already mentioned, church members who volunteered were Don, Barbara and Jenny Keckler, and Neil Goldstein. Rounding out the group were Betsy Breakell, Dan Russo (a News of Delaware County re-

porter who wrote a series on the trip), Jerry Scates, Rev. Tim Thomson-Hohl, Mary Van Rosenstiel and Carol Wertley.

We thank all who contributed, as well as the Carrollton United Methodist Church for accommodations.

Marie says: "It is my hope that we will take several groups of volunteers to New Orleans in the coming year, to help the UU Hurricane Relief Project, which organized out of the Baton Rouge UU Church. We do not have to raise money to do this important triage work -- only pay our way down, and plan to pay for our meals as we go. If you would like to join a team of four or more, please contact me for assistance."

You can reach Marie at mariedeyoung@comcast.net and 267-258-9494.

To help the UU effort, please send donations to the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, 8470 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806. Make the check out to the church and write Hurricane Relief & Social Justice Project in the memo line. Acknowledgement cards are available if you want to donate in someone else's name—just enclose a note with the name or names and the number of cards needed.

Neil Goldstein

Gay Talk Straight Talk—Take 2

After the successful turnout for the October "Gay Talk- Straight Talk" potluck and panel discussion Interweave invites everyone to a second session, Friday January 12, 7 p.m. Perspectives on creating and supporting safe spaces for everyone will be shared.

Interweave is what it sounds like: "interweaving everyone together" -- gay, straight, young, old, new members, longstanding members, men, women, the list goes on.

Join us for fun conversation and fellowship around a table of fabulous food. All are welcome.

The event is child-friendly; nursery care is available by arrangement.

Contact Interweave@uucdc.org.

ARTS, MUSIC, BOOKS, OH MY

"The Laramie Project" Onstage Here, January 7

Events can define a place, sometimes accurately, sometimes not. Take, for example, Laramie, Wyo.

There, in October 1998, a gay college student named Matthew Shepard was lured from a bar, kidnapped, tied to a fence, beaten with the butt of a gun, and left to die. The killing became a national story, with all sorts of generalizations about Laramie being thrown about.

Moisés Kaufman, a New York-based writer and director of the Tectonic Theater Project, and nine members of his troupe flew to Laramie a month later to interview anyone they could about their reactions to the crime. One year later the group emerged with the stage play "The Laramie Project," constructed from segments of the interviews, using only the actual spoken words of the participants.

The result is a breathtaking the-

atrical collage, revealing the effects of an extraordinary event on ordinary people. Their reactions to an act of chilling brutality are by turns unfeeling, indignant, thoughtful, compassionate, but always genuine and surprising. It proved to be much richer a revelation about the people of Laramie, and every other town in America, for that matter, than any news story could be.

The Advance Drama Group of Strath Haven High School produced "The Laramie Project" in November -- coincidentally during the week many UUCDCers were standing vigil over the loss of our rainbow flag. I saw the production and was stuck by some uncanny similarities of feeling. The phrase "not in our town" continues to ring in my ears. The production explored the depth and height of human emotion. There are 60 parts in the play, with many actors play-

ing more than one role. Most striking of all was the cast itself. I was overcome by the courage and integrity displayed by this group of young people.

Now, this fabulous group of young people, under the direction of John Schankweiler, will bring "The Laramie Project" to the stage once more, at UUCDC. Please come see the show and stand by them in the name of diversity, understanding and justice.

The play will be presented at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 7, in Fellowship Hall. Admission is free.

Audience Advisory: The play contains strong language and subject matter.

-- Jean Lenke

Want to Warble?

Singers who want to participate in the Ninth Annual Opera Gala on Saturday, March 3, please contact Martha Smylie at Katisha9@comcast.net for details.

YUCKI's Brew Up Coffee House for January 27

This is the dawning of the Aquarius Coffee House.

That's right, gentle people. Wear some flowers in your hair and join the YUCKI youth group from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27 for a rollicking evening of nostalgic and new music plus loads of other fun.

The "Footlights Stage" will present local talent and open-mike time, so sign up to play, make us laugh with comedy, or read your poetry -- whatever floats your boat. Baristas will be ready to meet your coffee, espresso and non-alcoholic beverage needs, and we'll have loads of wonderful snacks.

Cover is \$5 for adults, \$3 for aspiring hippies ages 3 to 12. All ages, genders and political persuasions are welcome. Watch for talent sign-ups and ticket sales on Sundays after the service. -- *Jean Lenke*

Book Club Chooses Different Kind of Memoir for January

In December, the Book Club read and discussed the short novel, NIGHT by Elie Wiesel. NIGHT is fiction, but it's also a memoir of Weisel's experience in Nazi Germany during World War 2. In this fiction-memoir, a pious, Jewish teenager survives death camps and genocide and asks, "How can God let horrific

events, like the Holocaust, happen?"

Another memoir will be the topic of discussion Friday, Jan. 19, 7:30 P. M. in the Youth Room.

In "The Glass Castle" Jeanette Wallis records her young life and upbringing by two unusual,

self-absorbed parents (an artist and an alcoholic).

The Book Club meets monthly. All are welcome to attend, contribute to the discussion, and enjoy light refreshments. For more information, contact Barb Wray or visit our page on the UUCDC website www.uucdc.org/

A Thespis Thank You; February *Iolanthe* Coming

Thespis, Etc., our resident theatrical troupe, wants to thank everyone for their support during our recent run of "A Gilbert and Sullivan Christmas Carol."

The February 2007 presentation will be "Iolanthe, or the Peer and the Peri," a classic Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Some people think that the composers were at the peak of their creativity when this piece was written.

The music is lively and much of the dialogue applicable to today's world, especially regarding the House of Peers. Beth Youse is the music director and Bob Beavins is the stage director.

Performance dates are: February 16,17,21,23,24, 8 P.M.; and February 18 and 25, 2 P. M.

Rehearsals are in progress Sunday and Monday evenings, so

you may hear a taste of things to come as you pass Fellowship Hall. If you'd like to support the production by working backstage, ushering, etc., please contact Bruce Wyman: tel: 610-565-1699 or email: btwyman11@comcast.net.

Thespis, Etc., is a part of UUCDC's Arts Council and any profits go toward supporting the church's operating budget.

Committee on Ministry to Sponsor Circle Dinners

The Committee on ministry will sponsor Circle Dinners that will include conversation on our Shared Ministry, defined as "all that we do together."

WHO: You

WHERE: In members' homes

it means to minister to one another and how our individual efforts support the mission of UUCDC.

WHAT TO DO: Sign up to host or attend a dinner party and bring a contribution to the meal.

You will hear more about this later this month. To volunteer to host a dinner, telephone Penny Bartlett.

Penny Bartlett, Mary Clinton, Joyce McKee, Gabe Small

WHEN: February weekends

WHY: 1) To have fun; 2) To share our ideas about

Meeting on Gun Violence is Set for Jan. 7

The Rev. Peter Friedrichs has scheduled a Jan. 7 meeting after the worship service to further discuss how UUCDC should address the issue of gun violence.

Rev. Peter first raised the question at the worship service on Oct. 1, when he put aside the sermon he had scheduled and instead spoke of his anguish at the rampant shootings in Philadelphia. He challenged the congregation to work with him to respond to the problem.

Immediately after that service, 36 people gathered with Rev. Peter in the Lounge to discuss their thoughts and feelings about the issue. The spirited session generated many ideas and questions.

Since then, a group of about 10 people has coalesced, wanting to take some action. Rev. Peter reports that four areas of interest have emerged: legislative/litigation, inter-faith and multi-faith work, educational support, and economic

justice and poverty.

Rev. Peter has invited the Social Justice Committee to report at the meeting on what existing initiatives and relationships we might build upon.

Of course, all are welcome to explore possible next steps. Please contact Rev. Peter if you plan to attend or if you have ideas you'd like the group to consider.

-- Neil Goldstein

It All Comes Down to Communication

In "Cool Hand Luke," Strother Martin (as the irascible prison warden) said to Paul Newman (as the unrepentant prisoner), "What we have here is a failure to communicate." Well that was a movie, but this is real life. And we have a Communications Committee to keep the information flowing!

What does the Communications Committee do? (Why, thank you for asking.) It puts together the Focus (this wonderful newsletter) every month. It built the church Web site and keeps it up to date. It even has a mission statement!

To promote the growth and recognition of our church to the community through the Internet and other media, and to keep friends and members informed about what is happening in our church.

Among other things, this dedicated group gets the news out to the media regarding what is going on in our church, whether it be public relations information or hard news. (You can see some of the recent news releases on our Web site. Just follow the link on the About Us menu.)

The Communications Committee also wants to be sure that all

of the other groups in the church have effective publications, and will be happy work with any UUCDC organization trying to get its message out. A web page is under construction that will contain some of the building blocks for putting together flyers and brochures. If you need to contact us, just send an e-mail to communications@uucdc.org.

In case you're wondering what happened in that 1967 movie, Paul Newman got a whuppin', and George Kennedy won the Oscar for best supporting actor.

-- Craig Harris

Thayer Corp. Gives \$2,000 to UUCDC

UUCDC has been granted \$2,000 for emergency plumbing repairs by the Thayer Corp.

The private, charitable trust meets every May to decide how to distribute money to non-profit and religious organizations with financial needs. But Paul Macht, president of

the Thayer board, agreed to contact board members by phone in December to provide our church with welcome financial assistance.

This isn't the first time the Thayer Corp. has helped us, though. The Rose Tree Day School previously received a

\$1,500 grant to help buy playground equipment and trash receptacles.

Our hats are off to this generous organization for the timely gift.

-- Bryan Boosz

Changes at UU House; You Can Help Residents

Much is happening at Unitarian Universalist House, the senior citizens' home in Germantown, and some of the action directly relates to UUCDC.

First, our own Bob Gasparro was recently named acting general counsel.

Also, some bylaw changes are in the making. The changes are designed to strengthen the board by changing membership from an honorary appointment by each UU church in the greater Philadelphia area to one requiring a commitment by each prospective member to

volunteer time and talents while serving.

In addition, UU House is seeking an activities director. The pay is \$18 an hour for 30 hours a week. A minimum of one year's experience providing recreation programs at an assisted-living and/or nursing home is required. For the full job description, see www.monster.com or contact Bob (bob@bobgasparro.com) to have the description faxed or e-mailed to you.

Ann Kriebel and Bob are volunteering one night a month to

provide an activity for UU House residents. If you are interested in volunteering your time to provide an activity for an hour any weekday once a month, please contact Ann (ann.kriebel@gmail.com) or call UU House at 215-843-0809.

The residents are enjoying the reading of Greek mythology by the Rev. Libby Smith weekly on Monday nights. They enjoy reading, discussions and reminiscing, and your time would be much appreciated.

-- Bob Gasparro

Activities Can Be Such a Bother

If you have ever put together any kind of activity or event, you know it is a lot of work. And if you have ever done this all by yourself, with no one to help or guide you ... well, hats off to you if you still have your sanity and a sense of humor.

Or maybe you thought about doing an event, or had an idea for a class that might be fun. Then you sat back, and said: "On second thought, nah! Sounds too much like work."

Well, things are generally not as difficult as they seem, especially if you have a little bit of help and guidance. And we are very fortunate, here at UUCDC, to have an Activities Committee that makes life a lot easier.

The committee is a group of

four people who are experienced in a broad range of activities and events. Mary Schuler is a wiz with kids' activities. And if you want to do something more exotic -- say, set up a camping trip and go hiking through Canyon de Chelly -- Len Finegold would be your man. But [Mary Clinton](#) and [Dot Magargal](#) are the "point persons." They are the ones you should contact, first, if you want to bounce an idea around and get some feedback.

Then if everything sounds good, they will help you with the planning. Among other things, this may involve arranging for space at the church. You might need child care. It may involve putting announcements in the Order of Service and an article in the Focus. You might also find that

someone else has had a similar idea, and you can team up!

What kinds of events has the committee undertaken? Potluck dinners and church picnics. Also, the members handle Deck the Halls (wasn't it great?), and seders, Halloween parties, and game nights, and they have coordinated camping trips and visits to museums.

Would you like to do something entirely different? It is all up to you. Just open your mind, let the juices flow, and come up with something you would love to see happen and want to be involved in. Then contact the Activities Committee and get things started!

-- Craig Harris

Eating Helps the Church

YES! When you purchase coupons for Acme and Pathmark (Genuardi's has a different system, but it also works) a percentage goes to the church. Coupons are sold during coffee hour. No one has given up eating that we've heard of, so let's support the church when we shop. Look for the STORE COUPONS table in Fellowship Hall after Sunday service.

(Continued from page 8)

bursting forth that spring will bring.

During January, our Small Group Ministry groups will reflect on and discuss the topic of "Stillness." Some of the questions they may consider include: Where do you find stillness in your life? What are the challenges that you face in being still, in letting the stillness of this season carry you? Do you have a

particular practice that helps you to be still? How does stillness renew you? How does it prepare you for what is to come? How can we help one another find the stillness?

If you're part of our Small Group Ministry program, you know the power of coming together in groups of 8 to 12 people to discuss important questions such as these. If you've yet to join a group, I urge you to consider doing so. Small Group

Ministry is a way to build close relationships with others in our community and to get to know yourself better.

If you'd like to know more about Small Group Ministry, you can ask me or contact one of the SGM Facilitators: Loretta Orndorff, Phoebe Cassidy, Jean Shatoff, Len Finegold and Nancy Forrest.

-- Rev. Peter

Yo, UUCDCERS

A Big Thank You for Carol

Last spring, UUCDC was searching around for someone to take over organizing our post-Sunday service coffee hours in Fellowship Hall. Along came Carol Burk, who said, "I'll do it. I really like to do that." Was she

real?

Yes, she was. Throughout the summer she alone provided cold drinks and cookies after services on sticky summer Sundays and when fall arrived, she was there to sign up coffee-makers and fill

in when people couldn't make it or there was a blank on the sign-up sheet for that day. Not only coffee addicts, but the rest of us owe Carol a big thank you. Let's hear that applause.

Who Are the People in Your Neighborhood?

Do you know? With over 30 new church members in this calendar year, there may be UUCDCers closer than you think. We'd like you to know who these people are for a variety of reasons. One of them is that when snow comes (and it probably will) we lose several of our parking spots and

the ability to park on the grass. So, if people can carpool to church it will make things easier here as well as reducing the drain on earth's precious resources and our contribution to global warming. Not bad for an act that allows you to get to know folks better too! So, in the lobby

you'll find pins with family names on them and a large map. Please pick up your pin and find your home on the map. Take a moment to look who's pin is near yours; it may surprise you.

Which Room is Our Group Meeting in Tonight?

Is this a common refrain? Do you sometimes find it's not where you expect because other circumstances intervened? This is an incredibly busy church building and circumstances will intervene, but we're trying to do all we can to alleviate confusion. You'll now find that there

is an enclosed bulletin board in the lobby.

It's just to the left of the windows as you reach the top of the stairs. In it, you'll find a weekly posting of what's scheduled to meet, where and when. This is the most official listing of activi-

ties as given to our administrative assistant. Check it out to find out where your group is meeting or to see what else might be going on.

A new list goes up on Monday mornings.



Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County

145 W. Rose Tree Road, Media, PA 19063

Focus

January 2007

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Calendar

January 2007*

Date	Name of Event	Time			
1/2	Yoga	5:45 PM	1/12	LGBT & Friends Potluck Cabaret Rehearsal	6:30 PM 7:00 PM
1/3	Chorus	6:30 PM	1/13	Middle Sch Activity Grp Arts Council Cabaret	3:00 PM 7:00 PM
	Canvass	7:30 PM			
	OUTLooks Discussion	7:30 PM			
1/4	Adult RE	7:00 PM	1/14	Caring Committee	9:00 AM
	Board Subset	7:00 PM		Worship Service & Religious Ed.	10:30 AM
1/5	HERstory Film Fest	7:00 PM		Budget Hearing	12:00 PM
1/6	COA UU Dinner Party	3:00 PM		COA Lunch Fundraiser	12:00 PM
1/7	Worship Service & Religious Ed.	10:30 AM		COA Mentor Check In	12:00 PM
	Visitors' Coffee	11:30 AM		Independent Catholics	5:00 PM
	Gun Violence Action Group	12:00 PM		COA	6:00 PM
	Laramie Project set up	12:00 PM	1/15	YUCKI Youth	6:00 PM
	Laramie Project	2:00 PM		Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM
	Independent Catholics	5:00 PM			
	COA	6:00 PM	1/15	MLK Day of Service	
	YUCKI Youth	6:00 PM		Music Lessons	8:00 AM
	Muslims	7:00 PM		Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM
	Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM		Needle Nook	7:30 PM
1/8	Music Lessons	8:00 AM		RE Council	7:30 PM
	Small Group Ministry	7:00 PM	1/16	Yoga	5:45 PM
	Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM	1/17	Chorus	6:30 PM
	Board of Trustees	7:15 PM		Membership Council	7:00 PM
	Social Justice Committee	7:15 PM		OUTLooks Discussion	7:30 PM
1/9	Yoga	5:45 PM		Media Chamber Chorale	8:15 PM
	DBSA	7:00 PM	1/18	Adult RE	7:00 PM
	INTERWEAVE Mtg	7:00 PM		Worship Associates	7:30 PM
1/10	Chorus	6:30 PM	1/19	Book Group	7:00 PM
	OUTLooks Discussion	7:30 PM	1/20	Membership Event	5:00 PM
	Media Chamber Chorale	8:15 PM		International Supper Club	6:00 PM
1/11	Adult RE	7:00 PM			
	Small Group Ministry	7:00 PM			



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*Printed December 18, 2006

January 2007

1/21	Worship Service & Religious Ed.	10:30 AM		
	Congregational Meeting	12:00 PM	1/29	Music Lessons
	Rental	1:30 PM		Thespis Rehearsal
	Independent Catholics	5:00 PM		Needle Nook
	COA	6:00 PM	1/30	Yoga
	Thespis Annual Meeting	6:00 PM		
	YUCKI Youth	6:00 PM	1/31	OUTLooks Discussion
	Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM		Chorus
1/22	Music Lessons	8:00 AM		Canvass
	Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM		Media Chamber Chorale
	Coordinating Council	7:15 PM		
	Needle Nook	7:30 PM		
	Small Group Ministry	7:30 PM		
1/23	Yoga	5:45 PM		
	DBSA	7:00 PM		
1/24	Chorus	6:30 PM		
	OUTLooks Discussion	7:30 PM		
	Media Chamber Chorale	8:15 PM		
1/25	Adult RE	7:00 PM		
1/26	Yucki Coffee House Rehearsal	7:00 PM		
1/27	Yucki Coffee House Set Up	4:00 PM		
	YUCKI Coffee House Fundraiser	7:00 PM		
1/28	JPD Middle Sch Snow Tubing Trip			
	Worship Service & Religious Ed.	10:30 AM		
	OWL 4/5 Parent Orientation	12:00 PM		
	YUCKI Lunch Fundraiser!	12:00 PM		
	Independent Catholics	5:00 PM		
	COA Movie Night	6:00 PM		
	YUCKI Youth	6:00 PM		
	Side by Side (RE)	6:30 PM		
	Thespis Rehearsal	7:00 PM		