

FOCUS

September 2008

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
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www.uucdc.org

E-mail:

churchoffice@uucdc.org

**Sunday Services,
Nursery Care &
Church School**

(PreSchool - 8th)

10:30 a.m. Sept.-June



FROM THE MINISTER

FROM THE MINISTER

I awoke on the morning of July 1 feeling strangely different. I had a tingling in my fingers and toes and my head was buzzing. My muscles seemed somehow stronger and I had an overall feeling of power. What was happening to me? I wondered whether I had, like Peter Parker, been bitten by some radioactive spider that imparted super powers. Then I realized that it was first day of the new church year, the day on which our new system of church operation, "Policy Governance," went into effect. I was the "Lead Minister" of UUCDC! Now I had all the power and authority I needed to mold the church in my image, to take it where I wanted to take it, to get done the things I wanted to get done. I did, in fact, now have "super powers."

None of this, of course, is true. July 1 was unremarkable for me. I felt a little tired, having returned the day before from our Association's General Assembly in Ft. Lauderdale. I was looking forward to a few weeks of travel, rest, and relaxation. It wasn't until I received an email from one of our members that I even remembered that the church was now officially operating under Policy Governance.

I know that this new way of "doing church" is a mystery to many. Even for those at UUCDC who have worked for years to study and implement it, there are many unknowns about how, and how well, Policy Governance will work for us. We shall undoubtedly spend much of this year coming to understand both the benefits and the limitations of Policy Governance, learning the roles of the Board, the Lay Leadership Council, the Ministry Teams and church

(Continued on page 2)

Speakers for Sept. Services (10:30 a.m.)

September 7 Intergenerational Ingathering Service

Rev. Peter Friedrichs and Jean Campbell,
Director, Religious Education (See back
cover.)

September 14 Rev. Peter Friedrichs

September 21 Rev. Peter Friedrichs

September 28 Rev. Peter Friedrichs

Who's Who

Staff

Rev. Peter A. Friedrichs,
Minister

Jean Campbell,
Director of Religious
Education

Chris Schroth,
Music Director

Rina Jurceka,
Administrator

Chrissy Drummond,
Administrative Assistant

Jason Schafer-Valerius,
Accompanist

Jack Shaffer, Sexton

**Jennifer Pinto, Meghan
Pomeroy,** Child care

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Vice President

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Secretary

Bryan Boosz

Marylin Huff

Mike Mitchell

Jean Wallace

From the Minister

(Continued from page 1)

committees. We will surely stub our toes and sometimes step on those of others, but I'm confident that together we'll find our way to a system that works for us.

Amidst all these uncertainties, there is one thing about which I am crystal-clear: I am first and foremost your minister, called to serve this faith community. While Policy Governance gives me a great deal of responsibility for implementation of Board-established policies, my role in church governance does not and will not alter the covenantal relationship we entered into two years ago. It is a relationship based on mutual respect, care, compassion, and love. It is grounded in shared values, vision and purpose, and it thrives on collaboration and cooperation. No minister worth his salt exercises power over his congregation or pursues his own agenda. Power and authority (and decision-making) must be shared and exercised in pursuit of the congregation's (not the minister's) goals. You did not hire me to work as the Executive Director of your non-profit organization. You called me to be your minister, and I pledge never to lose sight of that fact.

As your minister, one of my responsibilities is to encourage all of us toward spiritual growth and to offer opportunities to deepen our relationships with each other and with the ground of our being, that ineffable source which I choose to call God. The underlying theme that I'm offering for this church year is "Growing in Spirit." As we begin another year together, I ask you to consider what that phrase means to you. How might each of us individually grow in spirit? How can we grow together in spiritual community? What do you need from the church to help foster your own spiritual growth and, equally important, what gifts can you offer to others to help them foster theirs?

In this issue of FOCUS, you'll learn about two major opportunities that we're offering in support of this theme. One is in the area of Adult Religious Education, where two new programs will be available. Spirit in Practice will explore both individual and communal spiritual practices, giving participants the opportunity to experience and reflect upon both ancient and modern methods for grounding ourselves in our lives. Spirit of Life, to be offered in the Spring, will help us discover ways to deepen our spiritual awareness and connections with the world.

The other major initiative that will be offered this year is a comprehensive program to put us on the path of becoming an anti-racist, anti-oppression, multi-cultural congregation. A planning team spent several months last year developing a series of programs and activities that will help us explore how issues of race, class and culture affect our lives and the lives of those around us. This is deeply spiritual work that seeks nothing less than the transformation of ourselves and our community.

I am excited about the year ahead, and look forward to joining you in facing all the challenges and reaping all the rewards that undoubtedly lie before us.

Love,
Peter

FOCUS INFO:

Editors:

Bette Austin
& Neil Goldstein

Production:

Rina Jurceka

The deadline for October is September 15.

Please send your text
via email to:

Focus@uucdc.org

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

Focus Folding, 10 a.m.
September 26. Come
help!

BOARD PERSPECTIVES: HOME, SWEET HOME

From the President/Mark Bernstein

I attended General Assembly in June in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. I went there looking for inspiration. I didn't find it.

I found joy ... in sharing this wonderful experience with my friends and fellow congregants who attended along with me. I found peace and wonder ... in the eloquent and moving sermons that highlighted each of the worship services. I found wisdom ... in the ideas and experiences of other UU churches gleaned through my participation in many of the workshop offerings.

But, alas, I did not find inspiration.

I returned home and began attending summer worship services again. As I reunited with my church brethren, I began to see all around me what I had been expecting to find in Florida.

I found inspiration in the efforts of a small group of our lay leaders who, with very little notice, organized and led a vigil service for the victims of the shootings at the Tennessee Valley UU Church in Knoxville -- a service, by the way, that was attended by more than 65 of our congregants.

I found inspiration in the efforts of Jean Taranta, who single-handedly led a drive this summer to replenish the dwindling supplies of our local food bank.

I found inspiration in the efforts of our dedicated Worship Associates, who worked so hard to maintain in our summer worship services the level of excellence and spirituality that we have come to expect all year long.

I found inspiration in the efforts of Scott and Tabby Parsons, who opened their home and extended their compassion this summer to help a homeless family in need.

I found inspiration in the actions and commitment of the members of this extraordinary church community. And I realized that I had been looking at this thing all wrong.

I had been expecting to find at G.A. inspiration that I could bring back and that would compel members of UUCDC to do great and heroic things this year. But I realized that inspiration does not precede action. Instead, it is action that precedes and generates inspiration. I had to return to UUCDC to witness the actions of this congregation to find inspiration.

As we begin a new church year, and the first full year of Policy Governance implementation, let us commit to taking action that will inspire one another. Let's get involved and explore all the ways we can practice our faith as Unitarian Universalists. We are a strong and vibrant community, and together we will do great things in the coming year for ourselves, for each other, and for the wider world.

Welcome back. Welcome home. Welcome inspiration.

Mark

Save the Date: January 24, 2009 for the first annual Chili, Chocolate, Beer Challenge. So brewers, get the brew started!

Good News Budget Report

Dear Members and Friends:

I have good news to share about our final budget for the July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009 fiscal year!

As we do every May, the congregation approved a budget for the upcoming fiscal year at our May 18, 2008, Congregational Meeting. However, when we pass budgets in May, we don't have our final results for the current fiscal year since the fiscal year does not end until June 30. The year-end final results could cause us to predict income or expenses for the next year differently and, thus, change our final budget. At our May Congregational Meeting, when we passed the motion to approve the budget, we gave our Lead Minister, Rev. Peter, the authority to decide where we would spend any additional, predicted income.

At our July Board meeting, a revised budget was presented to and approved by the Board. Based on the final results of the just-completed fiscal year, especially the pledge collection rate and building rentals, and additional pledges received, this budget includes predicted additional income of \$16,000 more than the budget passed at our May Congregational Meeting. This additional income has allowed us to:

--Increase the Music Director's weekly hours from 10 to 15 per week, and increase the Music Director's salary to the minimum UUA guideline.

--Provide four per cent cost-of-living increases to our Minister, Administrator, Administrative Assistant, Sexton, Childcare Providers, and Special Events Coordinator. The four per cent increase was also applied to the vacant position of Accompanist and Member Talent Coordinator to keep the positions attractive to potential candidates.

--In keeping with our plans to realign our Director of Religious Education's salary to create more equity among our staff salaries, the reduction of the DRE's salary voted at the May Congregational Meeting will remain in effect and her professional expense budget will be increased by four per cent.

--Partially fund the RE Children with Special Needs program. The Board approved the RE Council's Special Needs Policy nearly two years ago. This policy provides accommodations so

that children with special needs can attend RE and their parents can attend services. Until now, we have not been able to fund this policy. The estimated cost is \$4000. This revised budget provides just under \$2,000 to start the program.

Additionally, we ended the 2007-2008 year with a surplus of \$35,345 due to more than \$19,000 in unanticipated income, and more than \$16,000 savings in expenses. The surplus was not rolled into the current year to balance the budget as we had done in previous years. Instead, it was distributed to our long-term reserve funds:

--The remaining social justice budget of \$730 was transferred to the social justice reserve fund.

-- The sum of \$27,798 was transferred to the general reserve fund. A portion of that amount, \$7,998, was already spent in the remaining roof payment for the repairs made this spring. (Note that we had no need to use a line of credit to pay for the roof.) This will leave \$20,000 in our general reserve for emergencies.

--A sum of \$6,817 was transferred to our Endowment Fund to continue building for our future.

The entire budget is available for your review in the church office, or contact Jody Malloy, our Stewardship Ministry Team Leader, at jody-malloy@aol.com.

Mark Bernstein,

President, Board of Trustees

*Almost always, the creative
dedicated minority has made
the world better.*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Board Notes: Summer Report

Will Rogers once said that "most people are hitting at nothing ... and hitting it with remarkable accuracy. "

Fortunately, this fate is not likely under Policy Governance. This new way of governing our church, which officially began July 1, calls for the Board of Trustees to focus on setting their aims for the future, while leaving the day-to-day running of the church in the capable hands of our staff, lay leaders, and volunteers. At the Board's summer retreat in late May, therefore, a top order of business was to set our three main goals for the new church year. These are:

--Develop a long-range, strategic plan for UUCDC, through working with staff and congregation members to plan for the future of our church.

--Implement and evaluate Policy Governance, so we can collectively learn how to work together to successfully adopt this new model.

--Initiate the by-laws revision process, as agreed upon by the congregation at our May congregational meeting.

At the Board's July meeting, the focus again was on the future. We discussed the eight "Ends statements" -- the desired policies that will guide our collective efforts at church -- that were approved at the congregational meeting. Although all the Ends statements are important (and each will be addressed in varied ways throughout the year), the Board prioritized just three for concrete and concerted action this year. These high-priority Ends are:

Stewardship: We believe that a healthy church grows from the inside out and that if people take care of each other, they also will take care of the church. To that end, we hope to see progress measured by a greater commitment from our congregational members in terms of time, talent, money, and volunteerism.

Justice: We believe that in reaching beyond our walls to the greater community, we better live our UU principles and beliefs. We see the work of the Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism Task Force as one way to realize the ideals in this Ends statement. We believe that anti-oppression work should include all groups that are oppressed in today's society, including those who refer to themselves collectively as LGBTQ.

Spiritual Growth: We believe that a greater understanding of Unitarian Universalism and of our own theology leads to a deeper commitment to each other and to our church community. We would like to see continued, and, in some cases, more opportunities for members to discover, gain insight and achieve spiritual growth.

At the Board's next meeting, September 8, we plan to finalize an easy-to-read, visual map of what Policy Governance at UUCDC looks like, so members and visitors can more easily understand this new process of governance at a glance. We also will determine participation of committees, ministry teams and others in Board meetings.

Finally, the Board is pleased to announce that Jane Sealaus will serve on the Committee on Ministry, helping to aid communications between the congregation and our minister.

Also, please join us in thanking Bob McClennen for keeping a roof over our heads! Because Bob worked closely with Jim Miller Roofing -- and the contractor was flexible and did excellent work -- we now have a much-needed roof over Fellowship Hall.

Jean Wallace

for the Board

Help Out, Have Fun at Memorial Garden on September 27

Please come out to help keep our Memorial Garden looking beautiful on Saturday, September 27, from 9 a.m. until noon.

Bring gloves and tools if you have them. No need to know a lot about gardening -- we'll be

glad to teach you what needs to be done. Any time you can give will be appreciated.

We've had a few new people come out this summer and would love to see more of you. Thanks to all who have helped.

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sunday School Registrations Due September 7

Registrations for Sunday School will be collected on Ingathering Sunday, September 7 and 14. All children and youth, preschool through 12th grade, who will be participating in Sunday school or youth programs, must be registered. Please fill out registration forms before or after church services September 7 and 14. A registration form also may be downloaded from the website: uucdc.org, then mailed or dropped off at the church.

Sunday School classes begin September 14. Chapel will be held for teachers and children at preschool through 6th grade. Chapel will begin at 10:30 a. m., followed by Sunday School classes.

As a reminder for Sunday School teachers: Orientation is Saturday, September 6, at 9 am. Policies, procedures, expectations, Sunday morning procedures and more will be reviewed. Teachers

will meet with their teaching teams to plan lessons and schedule Sunday teaching. Please make every effort to attend this orientation for a smooth-running year ahead.

Attention parents of kindergarten and first-grade children: A parent orientation for Our Whole Lives (OWL) will be held September 14, 12:30 p. m. You must attend this orientation for your child to participate in this class.

Members interested in Adult RE workshops: You must register now for workshops offered September through January. Registration period ends September 15. A spring registration period will be held in January for workshops offered February through June.

Registration forms can be found in the Prospectus, on the website, and at RE tables before and after church, September 7 and 14. Registration is important so that workshops will not be cancelled for a

Adult Religious Education—RE is Not Just for Kids!

The Fall Adult RE classes offer something for everyone:

UU101: Rev. Peter Friedrichs will facilitate three before-church sessions this Fall.

Spirit in Practice, a Tapestry of Faith: Rev. Peter will conduct this ten-session course starting in September and continuing to June, 2009. Spirit in Practice helps UUs establish regular practices of the spirit that enrich our faith journey. Minimum enrollment: 18.

Poetry Workshop: Ed Krizek will lead this three-session workshop in September and October. Subjects are: Writer's Block; Finding Your Voice; Some Thoughts About Your Craft. Minimum enrollment: five.

T'ai Chi: Three sessions will be offered in October by David Child. He describes T'ai Chi as a moving meditation, emptying out the mind and allowing solutions to enter. Minimum registration: eight.

Talk So Your Kids Will Listen -- Listen So Your Kids Will Talk. Laura Cleland will lead seven sessions in the Fall and repeat the program in the Spring.

ChiWalking and ChiRunning: Craig Strimel

will facilitate these two separate courses in the Fall and Spring. ChiWalking and ChiRunning are based on principles of the ancient Chinese art of T'ai Chi, teaching how to use the body correctly.

Mind/Body/Spirit Workshop: will be offered in October, led by Dawn Baliff. She is author of "Notes From a Minor Key." Baliff believes that what we create in the spirit manifests itself in the physical. Minimum enrollment: 10.

Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: Jean Lenke and Nancy Henderson will offer five sessions in January and February, 2009. Cakes is an updated version of the popular feminist theology curriculum, discussing ancient goddesses, religious issues of feminism, and how these issues have affected our cultural attitudes.

Registration for Adult RE is September 7 and 14. A registration form also is in the Prospectus that has been mailed to members and friends. Registration also can be emailed to Chrissy Drummond in the Church office: assistant@uucdc.org.

The registration form describes programs, dates, times, fees and enrollment minimums. Classes will be cancelled if minimum enrollment is not met.

Decide, check calendars, get registered!

On November 15, the Auction Cometh!

It's just around the corner. The Fall Auction, we mean. On November 15.

Bring your friends! Bring your relatives! Bring anyone who likes to have fun!

We'll have a wonderful evening with something for everyone, including the opportunity to spend social time with members of our community and their guests. The organizing team is thinking up new ideas to add even more fun to this yearly event, but you can always count on the expert craft of our veteran auctioneers, who guarantee a fine time.

The best part is that you will have a great night, and that all proceeds will go directly to the church. We're counting on your support and participation to make this auction the best ever.

What Can You Donate?

Always popular: dinners, game nights, vacation-home weeks and weekends, home-baked goods and musical performances. Also: services such as tax preparation, simple wills, child care, gift wrapping and pet sitting. Everyone has something to offer.

An Update and Thank You

Dear Reverend Peter Friedrichs and the entire Unitarian Universalist Church Of Delaware County Family,

I pray that all is well with each and every one of you. I wanted to take this time to touch base with you to inform you of some of the exciting things God is doing in my life!

I was selected a 2008 INROADS Scholar and am currently participating in the Target Stores Internship Program. My internship is ten weeks in length. I have been learning a large amount of information about Target specifically and Corporate America, in general. My goal for the internship is to apply everything that I've learned in an effort build upon my career in the field of Business and Marketing. This internship program has been both rewarding and informative.

Please give serious thought to what you can offer, and stop by the auction table after services to fill out a contribution form -- or to get more ideas.



How Can You Help?

Running the auction requires many hands, and the Auction Committee warmly welcomes whatever help you can provide. We will need help with poster and catalog creation, preparation of mailings, donation collection, computer data entry, hospitality, setup and cleanup (and on and on).

If you'd like to be part of making this auction a huge success, please stop by the poster in the lobby and add your name to what is shaping up to be a solid team.

Remember to mark your calendar for November 15 --we'll miss you if you're not there!

Truly it is a blessing to be connected to people who care about young people's education. I am grateful and thankful for every contribution you've invested into my college endeavors. In the Fall of 2008, I will be entering into my junior year of college. Time is flying by. I am excited about what God has in store for me this upcoming school year.

Again, I would like to thank Reverend Peter Friedrichs, Mr Bob [Bob Beaney], and the entire church family for being a financial blessing towards my college education. It will never go unnoticed.

Peace and Blessings,

2006 NAACP's Unitarian Universalist
Scholarship Recipient

Lay Leadership Council: Getting Started

The new Lay Leadership Council held its first meeting on July 28. It replaces the Coordinating Council and reports to the Lead Minister, Rev. Peter Friedrichs, under the new Policy Governance system the church is implementing.

The LLC is chaired by Joe Miller, and its role is to work with the Lead Minister and staff to develop programs and activities that advance the mission of the congregation.

At its initial meeting, the Council focused on the three Ends Statements that the Board had set as 2008-09 priorities. These are stewardship, justice and spiritual growth (see Board Notes on Page 5). The LLC will continue to discuss how to support the Ends Statements as well as coordinate all church activities.

One of the Council's major features is the splitting of the group into Ministry Teams. Each team focuses on a particular issue, has a goal, a team leader (or "lead") and alternate, and a group of committees that report up through it. One objective of the Ministry Teams is to coordinate activities within and across the teams, always with a focus on our mission and the Ends Statements.

Listed here are the current teams, the leads and their alternates, the initial goal statements, and the committees that report to the teams.

Membership Participation and Vitality

Goal: To encourage interaction and participation among church members

Team Lead/Alternate: Bill Henderson/Barbara Wray

Committees:

Membership Council

Family and Friends Group

Interweave

International Supper Club

After Service Lunch Bunch

Arts Council

Denominational Affairs

Spiritual Growth and Enrichment

Goal: To promote and support the spiritual growth and enrichment of the congregation through programs and activities

Team Lead/Alternate: Jean Lenke/Ed Krizek

Committees:

Religious Education

Sunday Services

Small Group Ministry

Community Outreach

Goal: Using words and deeds to bring UU principles into the larger community

Team Lead/Alternate: Craig Harris/Sayre Dixon and Patti Fiske

Committees:

Social Justice

Communications

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Day School

Stewardship

Goal: To effectively and cooperatively promote, preserve and enhance the resources of the church

Team Lead / Alternate: Jody Malloy/to be determined

Committees:

Property

Finance

Endowment

Fund Drive

Personnel

Financial Planning (formerly Stewardship)

Congregational Care

Goal: Striving to enhance the body, mind and spirit of each congregant, including the minister.

Team Lead/Alternate: Joyce McKee/Patti Garver

Committees:

Committee on Ministry

Caring Committee

Lay Pastoral Care

Come Join Our Intergenerational Team

Calling all creatives!!!!

Rev. Peter and Jean Campbell, Director of Religious Education, are seeking a few good men, women, youth, and children to help plan our intergenerational worship services.

Each year we conduct seven or eight such sessions. These services seek to engage the hearts, minds and spirits of our entire community, from our youngest members to our oldest, through the use of story, movement and song. Each service revolves around a story that is scripted into a play that presents a message in what organizers hope is an entertaining and engaging way.

Jean and Peter want to bring together a group of

church members to participate in the creative process for these services. Ideally, the Intergenerational Worship Planning Team would include members from across the generations.

Peter and Jean invite seniors, young adults, youth, parents and children to come together to help select the stories, create the scripts, enlist the actors and coordinate the services.

If you love our intergenerational services and want to be a part of this process -- or if you're not so fond of them and have some ideas about how they might be improved -- please consider joining this team! Please see Peter or Jean for more information.

Family & Friends News

The UUCDC Family and Friends Group is gearing up for lots of family oriented fun during the upcoming church year! We invite your family to join other UUCDC families and friends in informal social and recreational events designed with kids in mind. Mark your calendars for the following events scheduled at the church:

Sat., 9/27 Campfire and Campout

Sat., 10/25 Halloween Party

Fri., 2/20 Family & Friends Potluck and Party

Sat., 4/4 Seder

Michele Yerger and I are again the overall coordinators, but we are seeking volunteers to help organize the above events. Note that the time commitment for volunteers is not large. We also welcome ideas and leaders for additional off-site activities, such as hiking, bowling, snow

tubing, etc., etc.

Please join us for a brief organizational meeting on Sunday 9/14 after services, at 12:00. Location will be announced.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Social Justice Committee Wants You!

The Social Justice Committee will hold its first meeting of the church year on Tuesday, September 9, at 7:15 p.m.

We have many exciting plans about ways to support our successful programs and to start new efforts to reach out to the community. If you are interested in volunteering, working toward legislative change, networking with other UU social justice organizations, or leading social justice projects, we need you. We hope you can join us and contribute your ideas and efforts.

UUCDC on the Journey Toward Wholeness

Last year the Coordinating Council authorized Rev. Peter to assemble a team of members to plan a comprehensive program that would help move the church toward becoming an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multi-cultural (ARAOM) congregation. This decision was based on the learnings of several attendees from the church at last year's District Racial Justice Conference: that anti-racism was an area that needed attention by our Unitarian Universalist congregations. The Anti-Racism Program Planning Team was assembled last winter. The team, consisting of Rev. Peter, Sayre Dixon, Mardys Leeper, Irene Freidrichs and Kelli Schweitzer, has established the following goals of the congregation's work in the ARAOM arena:

- to help UUCDC actively live out its values.
- to become proactive inside and outside the

Although we didn't meet during the summer months, we maintained our support of the Share the Plate program, which raised \$90 for the Task Force on Hunger in July and \$160 for the Knoxville Relief Fund in August. In September, we will support the Domestic Abuse Project of Delaware County.

congregation on issues of race

- to provide opportunities for 75 per cent of the UUCDC congregation to have an "A-Ha" moment regarding race

- to help participants come to realize what it means to be "white" in our society

- to help us view all church life through an anti-racist/multi-cultural lens

- to integrate multi-culturalism throughout church life.

The ARAOM Planning Team has worked diligently to put together a range of activities that will be presented to the congregation over the course of the next two years to further these goals. During this year, issues of racism will be examined through a variety of church events and activities, such as ser-

(Continued on page 11)

Your Weekly Food Donation Can Help Feed Our Neighbors

Job loss. Mortgage foreclosure. For whatever reason, people are suffering right here in Media. They're going to local food banks for help. And UUCDC has been helping.

In recent weeks, church members have collected a modest amount of food and taken it to the First Methodist Church to be distributed each Thursday to up to 50 families.

To continue, we need *everyone's* help.

If each of us brings one or more items to church each Sunday, we will make a substantial contribution to the supply. A large plastic container stands

next to the sanctuary door for your contributions.

Needed: Peanut butter, grape jelly, mac and cheese, pasta and sauces, rice, cereal and canned goods -- especially vegetables, including baked beans.

Trader Joe's is contributing large quantities of bread each Sunday. If someone has a large freezer, we could pick up additional amounts, as it needs to be frozen until Thursday morning. Fresh Grocer in Drexel Hill has contributed \$40 to the cause.

Please help – every week. Thank you.

mons, book groups, movie series, Lifespan Religious Education, speaker series, pajama night, etc.

The ARAOM program will kick-off in September with two significant events. On Sunday, September 21, Rev. Peter's sermon will address the spiritually, transformative nature of anti-racism, anti-oppression work. On the following Wednesday, we shall convene the first ADORE group. ADORE is an acronym for "A Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity." ADORE groups will meet monthly, bringing

together members and friends who are willing to engage in deep, intentional conversation about their experience with issues of race and ethnicity.

To make this program a success, the church needs your support, both in the form of your participation and your willingness to engage in deep dialogue during the year regarding this important topic. We also need your help in delivering the programming. Please do not hesitate to ask questions or find out how you can help by contacting

Friday Night Film and Discussion Series

As part of our Anti-Racism programming, each month we'll view a feature film that touches on issues of racism and oppression. The first movie of the new church year will be "Crash," so mark your calendars for Friday, October 3 at 7:30 p.m. "Crash" challenges viewers to confront their preju-

dices as they witness the intersection of the diverse lives of people living in post-9-11 Los Angeles during a 36-hour period. A time for discussion will follow the movie

New Suburban Coalition Seeks Answers to Shared Problems

A coalition of community leaders from four suburban counties have formed the First Suburbs Project to seek answers to common challenges facing these communities.

A group of UUCDC members has expressed interest in the First Suburbs Project and in establishing a core group that might participate.

A Public Forum, with local and state legislators will be held September 28, at 4 to 6 p. m.

at a location to be announced later.

The coalition includes community leaders from older suburbs of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and

Montgomery Counties, concerned with diminishing economic development, declining infrastructure, struggling school districts, and social services lagging behind community needs. The coalition hopes to affect policies and practices that will lead to the stabilization and revitalization of their communities.

September Meeting Listed for UUPLAN at Main Line Unitarian

UUPlan has scheduled one of two workshops for September 20, 10 a.m. to 5 p. m. at Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon.

Theme of the workshop is "How UUs Can Be the Keystone of Change in Pennsylvania."

Some of the topics to be considered are:

What can UUs bring to social action distinct from other issue groups?

Advocating at the state level vs. the federal level -- a louder voice. Election timetable, legislative calendar.

How do we work inside our congregations to build social justice participation?

How to engage congregations in UUPLAN advocacy -- building a UU voice, one congregation at a time.

UUPlan, Years 1 and 2: Lobby days, visits to local legislators.

How do we select issues? Three different models.

Who does what by when and a timeline.

If interested in attending, email info@uuplan.org and provide name of church and how many are attending. If interested in staying over, inquire about home hospitality.

The second workshop will be held in Pittsburgh, November 14.

A Chance to See and Hear This Year's Ware Lecture

Please join the Denominational Affairs Committee on Sunday, September 21st from 7:30- 9:00 p.m. for coffee and dessert in the lounge as we present the Ware Lecture from General Assembly 2008. Here are some words by Kimberly French about Van Jones from the UUA website:

Van Jones, the eco-justice activist, who leads the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights in Oakland, CA, gave the keynote address at this year's General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. Laughing and applauding, amen-ing and yes-ing throughout his 50-minute talk, the crowd of 2,705 devoured his words.

"The time of protesting and critiquing is over," Jones told the Assembly. "Prepare to govern. Prepare to pull together to get this country out of the environmental and economic mess it's in."

"This denomination, this community, has held up the banner for human rights and for justice through a very difficult period in this country's history," Jones said. "And as we begin to move forward now, it's a result of your resolve, your persistence . . . that we stand on the threshold of a new era in American politics. . . . You will make the difference between success and failure for this new president, this transition to a clean, green economy, our exit from this horrible war."

Jones compared his presentations to what "Al Gore would do if he were black"—and, if he were an A-list stand-up comedian."

Jones detailed his own solution to the nation's oil addiction and economic crisis: a Green New Deal. "Cut demand and diversify the supply: Inside those few words is the key to a new America," Jones said. "We cannot drill and burn our way out of our energy problems, out of our economic problems. If we do so, we will bake the planet. . . . But working together we can invent and invest our way out."

When he'd finished with his recipe for economic and ecological recovery, the crowd leaped to its feet. And the handsome 40-year-old activist leaped from the stage to embrace people up and down the aisles, until he was caught at last in a group hug by the Assembly's youth, jumping and chanting and raising their fists.

Join us for this inspiring, funny, and thought-provoking lecture. Please bring a dessert if it is convenient.

Wanted: Growth Director for JPD

The UUA's Joseph Priestley District is seeking a Director for Growth.

That person will be responsible for programs that move congregations toward health and enhance the growth of Unitarian Universalism. The position includes leading the JPD Growth Committee, regional growth committees and growth workshops. The director also will consult with congregations, supervise adjunct growth consultants, and help organize new congregations.

The application deadline is Friday, September 19. For more information, go to <http://jpduua.org/> or contact the Rev. Dr. Richard Speck, District Executive, at 1-800-351-6637 or rspeck@uua.org.

ARTS, BOOKS & MUSIC

Thespis, Etc., Announces New Christmas Production

In a departure from a long-time tradition, Thespis, Etc./UUCDC will present a musical version of O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi" for its 2008 pre-Christmas production. It replaces A Gilbert and Sullivan Christmas Carol, a Thespis highlight for many years.

Set around the turn of the 20th century, "The Gift of the Magi" tells the story of Della and Jim, a poor, young couple who sacrifice their most valued possessions to provide Christmas gifts for one another and in doing so, discover the value of their love.

The performances are scheduled for December 5, 6, and 7, with the show running approximately one hour.

It calls for a cast of more than twenty, with parts for adults and children. All roles are open. Stage director is Bruce Warren, assisted by Bob Beavins. Rehearsals will be held Sunday afternoons, at

2 p.m., beginning September 14.

All stage-struck and theater-minded are welcome, including those who can help backstage or with refreshments and ushering. A music director has yet to be chosen, so that opportunity is available, too.

Interested persons in any aspect of the production should contact Bruce Warren, 610-558-2409. No formal auditions are scheduled, but there may be calls at the discretion of the directors.

Make this new production part of your holiday plans, have fun and help support UUCDC at the same time. What better way to begin the holiday season!

Life in the Circus Is Book Club's September Subject

Sara Gruen's novel, "Water for Elephants," is the September choice for UUCDC's Book Club, meeting September 26, 7:30 p.m. in the Youth Room.

The novel is a story of life in the circus. The drama, characters and passions swirl together into a fine tale that is as intriguing and fun as going to the circus.

At its August meeting the group read, "Three Cups of Tea," an inspiring story of how a disastrous attempt to climb the Himalayan peak, K2, brought Greg Mortenson into contact with kind, but illiterate and poor, people in Pakistan.

Mortenson has made it his life's mission to bring education to these people and argues that the best, long-term way to fight Islamic extremism is to combat the region's endemic poverty and allow more people to become educated, especially girls.

In July, the club members discussed the novel,

"Embers," by Sandor Marai. In this tale, two old men meet for the first time in 41 years to have dinner and to bring some resolution to past events and to recall a woman they each loved in a different way. Themes covered in the novel include friendship, betrayal, how a society shapes our consciousness, and how the passage of a large chunk of time permits a sober reflection on events motivated by passions that have long burned out.

The Book Club meets once a month to discuss interesting books. It is open to everyone, even if you only want to drop in now and then to discuss a book that interests you. Of course, everyone is welcome to join us on a regular basis. Our reading list is posted on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall and on the UUCDC website. (Plug in "book club" on the website search engine.)

IN OUR BACKYARD

Murray Grove Marks September Homecoming

Murray Grove Retreat and Conference Center will hold its annual homecoming celebration September 27, 10 a. m. to 4 p.m. in Lanoka Harbor, NJ.

Dr. Tracey Robinson-Harris, who describes herself as a UU Evangelist, will speak on "Truth, Repair, Reconciliation: A Journey in the Spirit of Universalism." Workshops, music and fellowship are also a part of the agenda.

A limited number of spaces is available for overnight guests. A coffeehouse will be held Friday night. Cost of coffeehouse and overnight accommodations is \$40; the day-long homecoming celebration, \$10.

Women's Retreat at Murray Grove

Searching for the Goddess in Nature/Finding the Divine Within.

That's the theme of the Joseph Priestley District Women & Religion retreat at the Murray Grove Conference Center in New Jersey on the weekend of Oct. 17-19.

The leader will be Sarah Campbell, a community herbalist in Lancaster County who was ordained by UU theologian Starhawk and has been teaching women and girls for more than 15 years. This will be an experiential weekend using song and movement, stillness and contemplation, storytelling, the labyrinth, altar-building and art-making.

The fee (bed and board) is \$205 for a double room (per person) with meals. This amount includes a \$50 registration fee. Registration deadline is October 1, but you'll get a \$5 discount if you register by September 15. The retreat will run from Friday afternoon (dinner at 6:15) through Sunday lunch.

Beth Israel Plans Raffle-Auction

Congregation Beth Israel of Media will host a Raffle/Auction Extravaganza Sunday, September 14, 5:30-9:30 p. m. at Edgmont Country Club, 5180 W Chester Pike, Newtown Square, PA.

To get a running start on those not-so-distant holidays, the event offers a broad selection of artisan jewelry and accessories, gift certificates for local businesses and restaurants, hand-crafted sculptures and artwork in a range of prices.

Tickets may be purchased by check through the office at 610-566-4645 or, for a small processing fee, with credit card online: www.ticketleap.com/buy/tickets/other-charity/congregation-beth-israel-raffleauction/edgmont. The event tickets cost \$25 per person.

Performance Activist at Imago Dei Sept. 19 and 20

On September 19 and 20, the Imago Dei Metropolitan Community Church will present Peterson Toscano, whom Imago Dei describes as a theatrical performance activist who thoughtfully and humorously explores queer issues.

On September 19, his show is "Now I Know My gAy, B, C's." On September 20, it's "Transfigurations – Transgressing Gender in the Bible."

Tickets are \$12 for one show or \$20 for both. The shows start at 8 p.m. at the church, 1223 Middletown Road, Glen Mills. (Some UUCDCers may recall that Imago Dei used to hold services in our building.)

Part of the proceeds will benefit the SPOT, which is an LGBTQI youth group hosted and facilitated by Planned Parenthood in Chester County.

To buy tickets, call the church at 610-358-1716.

THIS, I BELIEVE / Annie Haines

From the Editors,

This is the seventh installment of the occasional series, "This, I Believe." We invite you to send us a concise statement of your own core belief. We hope that through these short essays, we'll get to know each other better, and we'll enjoy provocative food for thought. Please submit your work to focus@uucdc.org. It should run between 350 and 500 words. For the full guidelines -- and for an easy, one-step way to submit your work to the FOCUS -- go to <http://uucdc.org/thisibelieve.html>. For more information, contact Bette Austin or Neil Goldstein.

Some people grow up being told there is only one, true, "correct" religion. Others need to find a religion that gives their life meaning and think hard about it. Me, I have a combo of both!

At my mom's house, I was raised a strict Christian and told that God was my Savior and Jesus the son of God. In my dad's house -- he's a UU -- I have the right to discover my own truths. This was harder than it sounds, because I don't believe in a god. It's a no-brainer, choosing a religion -- right? If you think that, you may be wrong.

What about my conservative, Christian mom and my best friend? What will they think? They believe there is only one God and all should believe the same thing or they will burn in the flames of hell! And, what would my mother say after she learned I had "devoted my life to evil"?

As a UU it was easy to see that my mom and my strict, Christian friend, Susan, would have a hard time with my religious choice. I told a close UU friend, Megan, who tried to convince me that it was just the Christian God I didn't believe in. I didn't think so. I had looked into other religions and had taken a class on world religions. No god, nor higher power was for me.

I knew that telling my mother and Susan that I didn't believe in God was a bad idea. I finally did tell Susan. We decided it would be best to avoid the subject of religion altogether, but we came close to not being friends.

Only my UU boyfriend, Natesh, was able to help me and enable me to salvage my relationship with Susan and keep our sisterly bond. Natesh and my parents may also be the reason I am able to follow what I believe in -- not listening to what others say about atheism, that not believing in any God is a bad thing. Instead, I realize that it's a good thing and a part of me. I thank them for this.

As a Christian girl, life was hard. I knew inside that I felt I was praying to an on-going "nothingness," but I still said my prayers. When I began dating, I only dated Christian boys. They treated me poorly, but thought it was all right because I was a woman. When I got home and prayed for forgiveness, for what I might have done to upset them, I questioned what I was praying to. I realized that I didn't think I was praying to anything. Even as a little girl, I felt that the cross hanging on the wall shouldn't be there. Jesus had only been a teacher or a magician, but not the son of God.

I am an atheist because I don't believe in any higher power. I don't believe in the Christian God or gods of any sort. I am proud to call myself a UU atheist! This, I believe.

UUUCD's annual Ingathering Service on September 7 marks the official kick-off of the church year. This Intergenerational Service celebrates our community as we gather again after our summer vacations and journeys. You may recall that, back in June, we gave out stones for people to leave in places during their summer travels, and Rev. Peter asked us to bring back stones for Ingathering. Please bring to the service the stone or stones you collected during the summer which we'll use during the church year for our sharing of joys and sorrows. Also, please visit the church web site, www.uuucd.org and add your thoughts to the message board, telling us where you left your stone this summer and where you gathered the stone that you're bringing with you, and what those stones and those places represent to you. On September 7 we also return to our regular worship schedule, with service starting at 10:30 a. m.

10:30 A.M. SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 INGATHERING SERVICE



**Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County
145 W. Rose Tree Road, Media, PA 19063**

Focus

September 2008

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Calendar

September 2008*

Please note: We have experienced several glitches in our calendar software this past summer. Events in September are reflected to the best of our knowledge. Please check this listing over carefully. Any exceptions should be brought to the attention of the administrative assistant at assistant@uucdc.org. Please also go to our church website and check dates for the remainder of the upcoming year.

Date	Name of Event	Time			
9/1	Ramadan	7:00 PM	9/9	UUMA PK Yoga Social Justice Ramadan	10:00 AM 5:45 PM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM
9/2	Yoga Ramadan	5:45 PM 7:00 PM	9/10	Ramadan MCC	7:00 PM 7:30 PM
9/3	Calendaring Party Ramadan Yucki Advisor Meeting Interweave Meeting	7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:15 PM	9/11	Ramadan SGM Chorus	7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM
9/4	SGM Ramadan	1:00 PM 7:00 PM	9/12	Muslims Wedding Rehearsal Ramadan	10:00 AM 5:00 PM 7:00 PM
9/5	Muslims Ramadan	10:00 AM 7:00 PM	9/13	9th grade Rafting CHI Running Cancro Wedding Rental HTF- Feeding at Shelter Ramadan	7:00 AM 9:00 AM 2:00 PM 5:00 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM
9/6	COA Leader Training RE Teacher Training Ramadan	9:00 AM 9:00 AM 7:00 PM	9/14	Worship Service and Religious Education OWL K/1 Parent Orientation Personnel Meeting Independent Catholics Yuckis Ramadan	 10:30 AM 12:00 PM 12:00 PM 6:00 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM
9/7	Worship Service and Religious Education Independent Catholics Yuckis Ramadan	10:30 AM 6:00 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM	9/15	Voice Lesson Rental DRE AC Ramadan RTDS Board Meeting	8:00 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:15 PM
9/8	Voice Lesson Rental Ramadan REC Meeting Board Meeting	8:00 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:15 PM			



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*Printed August 26, 2008

June, July & August 2008

9/16	Yoga Ramadan	5:45 PM 7:00 PM	9/26	Rental Muslims Yucki Retreat Ramadan Book Group	9:00 AM 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM
9/17	Membership Council Ramadan MCC	7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM	9/27	Rose Tree Piano Tuning Yucki Retreat Family and Friends Camp Out Ramadan Memorial Garden Work Party	10:00 AM 12:00 PM 5:00 PM 7:00 PM 9:00 PM
9/18	Muslims ARE Poetry Chorus	5:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM	9/28	Worship Service and Religious Education COA Team Yucki Retreat Thespis Rose Tree Concert Independent Catholics Ramadan	10:30 AM 12:00 PM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 5:00 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM
9/19	Muslims Mabon Ramadan	10:00 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM	9/29	Voice Lesson Rental Ramadan	8:00 AM 7:00 PM
9/20	Wedding Ramadan	12:00 AM 7:00 PM	9/30	Muslims Yoga	6:00 AM 5:45 PM
9/21	Worship Service and Religious Education COA Interest Meeting Thespis Yuckis Independent Catholics Thespis Auditions Ramadan Ware Lecture	10:30 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 6:00 PM 6:00 PM 6:30 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM			
9/22	Voice Lesson Rental RTDS Back to School Night Thespis Auditions Lay Leadership Council Ramadan	8:00 AM 6:00 PM 6:30 PM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM			
9/23	Yoga ARE Ramadan	5:45 PM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM			
9/24	ADORE Group Ramadan MCC	7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM			
9/25	DSAREC ARE Poetry Ramadan Chorus	9:00 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:30 PM			