

FROM YOUR INTERIM MINISTER

Remember those times in your life when you took a risk? Perhaps you can think of the dryness in your throat when you asked your beloved to make a lasting commitment. Perhaps you remember the shaking hand when you signed your mortgage or your college loan papers. Perhaps you remember the day that your physician said that it was indeed a pregnancy. Those were true risks yet your life would have been diminished in many ways if you had not taken them.

On February 13 the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester took a similar risk. As a religious community you chose to risk becoming a different kind of church. On February 13 you chose to make space for the stranger, to try a new way of being a church. This was a risk. It was an educated risk. Church studies show that congregations that go to two services do grow. That is especially true of congregations that have a positive outlook and good programming. The Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester, in my experience, has both.

In the days to come the members of this congregation will be working intensely to plan for the second service. Be patient with each other. One of the things that I have learned from reading case studies of churches that went to second services is that the congregations had to be patient and assume that mistakes will be made. Each congregation that took the risk to go to a second service experienced variables that they had not expected in their planning. The ones that did so successfully learned from their mistakes and grew from them.

Every Sunday we sing "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine" as our chalice is lit. In going to second services, this congregation takes the risk that its light may shine more brightly and its community may serve better the ideals of liberal religion. Ultimately, life offers many risks, many choices. We can only take strength that when we do take risks, we do so for the right reasons.

See you in church
Larry

NOTE FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

Unfortunately I was not able to attend my own election because of illness. There were two other items on the agenda of that special congregational meeting, Sunday, February 13. The proposed bylaws change regarding the search committee election passed, as did the well-received Double Services Committee Report. A procedural error was made when fund raising activities occurred. According to our bylaws, "no business shall be voted upon that has not appeared in the notice of the meeting." The board will address the financial implications of the double services report.

I want to thank the hardworking, productive members of the Double Services Committee: Gerry Giess, Craig Talbot, Sandy Schaal, Pam Baxter, Bob Radcliffe, Mary Yeager, Rev. Larry Smith, and especially the committee chair, Flo Miller. My appreciation goes also to Lincoln Baxter for lighting the fire.

— Mary Hepokoski
610-518-9304

CALLING OUR NEXT MINISTER MEETING

The Rev. Howard Dana, the District Settlement Representative, will be speaking to the congregation on Saturday March 5 at 9:00 a.m. in our sanctuary. Everyone interested in how we will be calling our next minister should plan to attend.



PIZZA WITH VISION



Perhaps Unitarians don't believe pizza can taste "simply divine" but we can use a pizza lunch to express our spiritual cravings as they relate to the future of UFWC. On April 24, immediately following the service, the Vision Committee will host a pizza lunch and a 2-hour "visioning workshop" with Rev. Libby Smith of the JPD. She will help us to develop our ideas as a congregation and assimilate our vision for the future of the Fellowship.

NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

In a discussion of the philosophy of Unitarian Universalist religious education, it would be logical to talk about WHY we teach Unitarian Universalism and HOW we might do it best, both of which are fairly straightforward issues. WHO does the teaching seems so obvious as to be a pointless question – it's the teachers, of course. Isn't it? Well, yes, but not always.

When we start talking about WHAT we teach, the conversation becomes more complex since it can include UU Identity, lessons from the Old and New Testaments and Jesus' life, world religions, social justice and the environment.

At a recent Philosophy of Religious Education workshop I attended in New York City, the discussion included the Why, How, Who and What of Unitarian Universalist RE, but it also focused on two other aspects: the WHERE and WHEN of religious education. And that's where it got even more interesting.

It quickly became apparent that religious education can happen anywhere, at any time. As we heard frequently during the workshop, there are many "teachable moments." Yes, we want to bring our children to church so that they can learn, explore, and question in religious education classes and programs, but they don't learn Unitarian Universalism just in class. They learn from parents and other adults within the church community; from the minister, the greeters, and the service coordinators; from visiting ministers and the choir; from anyone who takes time to speak with them on a Sunday morning or at other church events.

Children learn at home, during the first ten minutes of our service, in the lobby, in a hospital room with a loved one. Children learn about Unitarian Universalism anytime they are among us, wherever that might be, whether at church, at home or in the larger community. These are opportunities for all of us to "teach" Unitarian Universalism. In the words of one of our denomination's best-known religious educators, Sophia Lyon Fahs, "Life becomes religious whenever we make it so."

Lest you think that I'm letting parents off the hook here for bringing their children to church, I'm not. There are things that children will learn nowhere else but in RE classes, and they gain a tremendous amount from regular attendance. But I'm saving a shameless plug for bringing children to church for another column.

On a related topic, one of the goals at our upcoming annual Religious Education Committee Retreat is to work on developing our own philosophy of religious education. We will also revisit the existing Mission Statement and goals for the RE program. As partial preparation for this, each member of the Committee has received a copy of "Essex Conversations," a collection of "visions for lifespan religious education" that touches on all the facets of UU religious education philosophy. It's a fascinating read for anyone interested in religious education or – as we are learning to call it – faith development.

— Pam Baxter
Director of Religious Education

Y R U A UU?

Why are you a UU? Why do you attend UFWC? What is our "call" as UU's? Why do we do what we do? What is it we want to accomplish? Why would people join us? How does, and how should, the Fellowship serve the West Chester area?

The Vision Committee will be working with all members and friends over the next few months to explore these questions. We are specifically charged with identifying your answer to the following: What is our vision for the Fellowship? That is, what do we, as a Fellowship, want to become?

Explore ideas! Bounce ideas off each other at social events, in one-on-one conversations, and online (email your ideas to vision@ufwc.org for posting at www.ufwc.org/vision_committee.htm). Vision Committee members look forward to hearing your thoughts, and you are welcome to contact any of us directly.

The Vision Committee: Heidi Buss, Tom Curtin, John Gangwisch, Bob Scott, Sue Stedman (Chair) and Marie Steele

CARING CORNER

Our condolences go to Paul and Pam Sapko and their daughters Larissa and Hannah. Paul's father died on February 4. Cards may be sent to the family at 919 Wawasett Rd., Kennett Square, PA 19348. Editor's note: We received no Caring Committee article this month due to the flu.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING FEBRUARY 8, 2005

The board approved:

- 1) Holding the Flea Market/Plant Sale Saturday May 7 with the Plant Sale continued on Sunday May 8
- 2) Using the Mrs. Antoinette Vaccaro Memorial Gift to buy 3 hymnals
- 3) Nominating Mary Hepokoski as candidate for President to replace Lincoln Baxter
- 4) The use of our sanctuary by the Chester County Peace Movement (CCPM) on Saturday evening, April 16, for a Peggy Seeger concert
- 5) A request by Mira Tryon to hold a single complimentary Yoga class to be taught in February in the fellowship sanctuary, followed by a series of weekly classes in March

Additionally the board made facilities planning a responsibility of the Building Committee.

President Baxter reported on the scheduling of two meetings important to the congregation. On Tuesday, February 22, Richard Speck, Joseph Priestly District (JPD) Executive, will meet with congregational leadership and members about the proposed new church in Northern Chester County and what the district can do to help affected congregations like us.

The second meeting is with the Rev. Howard Dana the District Settlement Representative, who will be speaking to the congregation on Saturday March 5 in our sanctuary. Everyone interested in how we will be calling our next minister should plan to attend.

The Board accepted the Ad Hoc Double Services Committee report and commended them for their significant commitment of time over the last 30 days in producing the excellent report. They then agreed to present the report to the congregation with some adjustments.

— Mary Hepokoski
Temporary Recorder

JPD SPRING CONFERENCE

Attention Graduating Seniors and Parents: New programming for Bridgers announced to supplement the JPD's annual Bridging Ceremony!

Attention Young Adults ages 18-35: Learn and grow with workshops on all aspects of UU life, from young adult ministry and church membership to social change and "generational personality." Discounted Young Adult registration fee offered.

All this and more at the Joseph Priestley District 2005 Spring Conference!

Faith Development: A Life-Long Journey
April 8-9, 2005
King of Prussia, PA

To view the full program and register, visit www.jpduua.org or call the JPD office at 800-351-6637.

UU CHRISTIAN INTEREST GROUP

What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist Christian? Is your personal spiritual journey leading you toward taking another, deeper look at the teachings of Jesus? Is there a difference between the historical Jesus and the Jesus of the Gospels? Would you like to join with others to find new meaning in the Christian tradition from the perspective of a liberal religious congregation?

If some of the above questions are of interest to you, then maybe there's a place for a Christian Interest Group at our Fellowship. If interested, please contact John Gangwisch at 610-873-8846 or jpgangw@ccil.org.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

What a beautiful Saturday we had for our February 5 Habitat for Humanity Work Day! Rob Sartain, Cliff Retzlaff, and John and Colin Maxwell joined me for a day of putting up dry wall. This was Rob's and my second time installing dry wall. We learn a little more each time we do something and we had a great time. Unfortunately Sandy Retzlaff became ill and was unable to join us. Photos at www.ufwc.org/uuhabitat.htm.

Our next workday will be Saturday, May 21. More details will be in the next *Fellowtarian*.

— Mary Hepokoski
Social Justice Committee

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

The last two months have been a whirlwind for the youth group. We started off the year with the JPDYSC Winter CON event in Annapolis. The UUA provided two anti-racism facilitators, who ran an entire day of excellent workshops. All the while we watched the snow pile up outside the windows and wondered whether we would ever get home.

This event was right on top of an equally outstanding Martin Luther King Day work event. The youth group led a work party of 22 in repainting a huge room at the West Chester Community Center. The best part of this day was proving to the Center leadership that teens were capable of painting without getting more paint on themselves than on the wall. Because of that, we have been invited back for other projects.

February has been busy also. We just finished cooking and serving a meal at Safe Harbor and may have identified some long-term projects there as well.

March and April will be busy. We will be meeting with the director from the Community Center to talk about racism in West Chester and how simple projects can help overcome some of these barriers. We'll be meeting with Larry Smith to talk about Fellowship membership, involve-

FOLK SINGING

Folk singing will be Saturday, March 12, at 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. All are welcome. Bring a munchie, if you like. Brochures with maps are on the Welcome Table. Contact Steve at folk-singing@ufwc.org or 610- 399-6107.

DESIGNING A NEW SIGN

Members and guests of the Fellowship will have noticed that our sign is old, partially destroyed and positioned where it is not easily seen from the street. The Building Committee has proposed, and the Board has approved, that the sign be replaced and moved to the corner of the lot, where it can be better seen from all directions. This is in keeping with our current efforts to make the Fellowship more welcoming and visible in the community.

According to borough building codes, the sign can be 20 square feet per lot frontage – that means that we have the option of actually placing 2 signs, facing High St. and Lacey St. respectively. The code also requires a setback of 10 feet from the right-of-way.

Most churches in the borough have a “wayside pulpit”, a sign with movable letters that is supposed to convey a message. After some internal discussion, it has been decided that this type of sign has disadvantages both in terms of visibility and maintainability, so we plan on installing a new painted sign.

While we are still in the early stages of considerations, we are asking all of our creative members and friends for any ideas for the new sign. We will be happy to consider suggestions for anything from color, script and wording to complete design proposals.

— Tilo Stahl
Building Committee Chairman

ment on church committees, and growth beyond the youth group. We'll be planning a youth Sunday event in April and possibly another film night. We're looking at ending the year with another concert in May. All youth from 8th to 12th grade are welcome.

We meet nearly every Sunday night in the Fellowship basement from 6 until 7:30 pm. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail Michael Werner at youth-group@ufwc.org or 610-429-1176.

THE CANVASSING PROCESS

The Stewardship Campaign Committee has scheduled two opportunities for members of the congregation to find out more about how we will be asking for pledges this year.

In the past, we asked only the canvassers to attend. This year is different. In addition to our canvassers, we are asking for members and friends to attend the training to find out about the process. We do not expect those attending to become canvassers, simply to know more about the process.

Your two opportunities are: Sunday, March 20 and Sunday, April 3. Both meetings will start at noon and will be approximately one hour in length. No RSVP required.

WE ASKED AND YOU TOLD US

Religion is a candle inside a multicolored lantern. Everyone looks through a particular color, but the candle is always there.

— Mohammed Neguib

More and more people are looking to this Fellowship to light their faith. As you hear the comments of members, both new and long time, you will see why we are growing.

The Fellowship has been a constant in my life for 25 years, providing support, spiritual growth, education for myself and my children, and a warm and loving community. — Robin Garrett

The OWL program has touched my life in many ways. I taught the program (when it was called About Your Sexuality) and learned as much, if not more than the kids. My daughter took the program and my son is in it now. I appreciate the information based on facts that the program provides, building a strong foundation for them to base their decisions. — Jack Butler

The people of like-mindedness are a real treat because I always felt alone in my beliefs. — Mark Steele

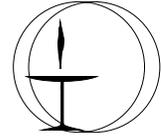
The Fellowship gives me a place to reinforce tolerance to my children in a world that oozes bias, discrimination, and intolerance. We feel we need to give the boys a place where they are exposed to a philosophy that is concerned about fairness. It is the social action, welcoming part of our Fellowship that inspires us the most. — Johanna Spangenberg

The fellowship has given me a sense of a community of like-minded families, people that put schools and the greater good of

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Social Justice has been the theme of several UFWC activities in February.

- February 5 — Mary Hopokoski led a group of five volunteers to Coatesville to assist Habitat for Humanity for a day. See p. 4 for more information.
- February 6 — The youth group prepared dinner for the Safe Harbor homeless shelter.
- February 11 — We had a concert for Tsunami relief to raise money for OUR charity, UUSC, at which we raised over \$2,300. Many members and friends generously contributed food, which was sold at the event.



So February has gotten off to a good start. Of course, there is always more to be done, and you can help. Consider attending the monthly Social Justice Committee meeting, first Sunday evenings at the Fellowship.

— Tom Townsend
Social Justice Chair

the community ahead of their own private causes. The people here have watched my children grow up, and actually helped, not just observed. They have offered me personal support, parenting support, and understood both what my family needs, as well as what we have to offer others. — Janine Bellano

I was looking for a liberal religious group of people where I could still be my own authority on what I believed in the area of spiritual matters. In addition, I wanted a place to meet people and socialize with others who also felt a need to try and make our world a better place. I was looking for a place where there would be opportunities for my children to get some values taught to them in a non-dogmatic way. I was also looking for a place where I could practice my teaching skills. In addition, I was looking for an

opportunity to perform on the piano, keyboard and organ. I found all of this, and more, at the UFWC. — Tom Buglio

I appreciate the loving, supportive community that is our Fellowship and I treasure the diversity of thoughts and feelings that we bring to our worship and our action. — Rob Sartain

Whatever brings you to the Fellowship, you are welcome in this community. But as with any community, its survival is dependent upon financial support. We need your financial support if we are going to keep the UFWC candle glowing.

We hope you will attend the Annual Celebration dinner on April 2. The Stewardship Campaign Committee will begin our annual fund drive the next week.

— Kathy Neary
Stewardship Campaign
Committee

HAVE YOU MET NANCY ARTUS AND CURT HOGANSON?

What do you get when you mix Nancy Artus' passion for biology with Curt Hoganson's love for chemistry? A new experiment in biochemistry — and a loud groan at a bad joke.

Exploring science together — as well as the arts — Nancy, who grew up in California, and Curt, from North Dakota, met while folk dancing as graduate students at Washington State University in 1982. After finishing their PhDs, they married in 1988 and moved to Gothenburg, Sweden, to work as visiting scientists (and explore Europe) for two years. The couple returned to Michigan where they worked at Michigan State University in research positions. Soon after in 1991, their first daughter, Hannah, was born, followed by Sondra in 1994.

In 1998, Nancy accepted a professorship at West Chester University's biology department and the family moved to Downingtown. After working at the university for six years, Nancy started a new position this year as an instructor at the Delaware County Community College's Downingtown campus. When not teaching, Nancy dabbles in cooking, gardening and likes to travel. Curt is an analytical chemist at Frontage Laboratories in Malvern, and enjoys playing the fiddle — especially Scandinavian music — in his free time. Hannah, now 13, is an eighth grader who plays the oboe and enjoys gymnastics. Sondra, 10, is in fourth grade and also likes hitting the mats and playing the cello.

SPRING FLEA MARKET SATURDAY, MAY 7, 2005

Ready for spring! Want to get at cleaning those closets! Please set aside those things that have been sitting neglected or just taking up space in your closets, garage or basement, and help them become someone else's treasures.

As you gather all the stuff you want to donate this year, please take an unbiased look at things and do a pre-sort for us. We want this to be a nice experience for patrons and a small job for the clean-up committee. Please bring only good-quality items. By folks presorting at home, we've been able to sell a larger percentage of what's donated.

We cannot accept the following:

- Shoes.
- Stained, torn or excessively worn clothing — only give us your best discards
- Broken toys
- Individual mugs or glasses — complete sets are OK
- Non-functioning appliances, tools and electronic items
- Broken or stained furniture
- Stained or threadbare rugs
- Obsolete computer hardware
- Old textbooks and encyclopedias or books in bad condition, so please be very selective about books
- Items that require more than one person to carry, unless you are willing to pick them up Saturday at noon if they do not sell

If you have questions about particular items, please contact Mary Hepokoski at 610-518-9304 or flea-market@ufwc.org.

Attending the Fellowship since 2001, the Artus-Hoganson family is involved in several UFWC activities as well. The kids are in RE classes, and Nancy is on the Fellowship Committee and the Auction Committee. She also teaches RE and volunteers for the Safe Harbor and Salvation Army dinners. Curt is on the Canvas Committee, has taught RE, and has attended work parties at the UFWC, among other activities.

So what prompted them to join the Fellowship? "We were looking for religious education and a church to bring our children up in that didn't have all of the doctrine that many do," says

Nancy. "We were also living here a while and hadn't found many like-minded friends (i.e., liberal) so it was nice to find a community where we belonged."

— Sharon Breske



VERNAL EQUINOX POTLUCK

We will have a potluck on March 20 at noon at the Fellowship. Bring a dish to share, or a small contribution toward drinks and paper products.

YOGA AT THE FELLOWSHIP

A free, introductory Yoga class will be offered at the Fellowship on Thursday, February 24, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Assuming an overwhelming response, classes will be offered weekly thereafter for the reduced fee of \$10 per class. So bring a buddy (and a Yoga mat or towel) and enjoy



the experience. Classes are tailored toward the level of the class and encourage self-awareness and honoring the body. They begin with stretching, build toward flow and strengthening, and end with meditation. Contact certified Yoga instructor Mira Tryon at 610-429-4468.

EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

Sunday, March 13, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. This month: *Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America* by Stephen G. Bloom. In 1987 the defunct Hygrade meat processing plant in the small Iowan town of Postville is purchased by Shalom Rubashkin, an ultra-Orthodox Hassidic Jew. The resulting clashes surrounding culture and religion reach a boiling point. Bloom explores both sides of this story in his fascinating account of the town of Postville. Discussion Leader: Sandy Schaal. Contact Shelly Case or Ruth MacFadyen at book-group@ufwc.org.

READY TO CONTRA DANCE?

Come out on April 30 and have a great time dancing with Fellowship members and friends and others from the dance community. The Spring FeetBeat is being held at the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester.

The Contra Dance with Andy Kane and The Rusty Beaus will start at 8 p.m. with pre-dance instruction at 7:45. All ages and experience are welcome. There will be a special clogging demo during the break by Fiddlekicks and Diane Shaw.

Before the dance, two simultaneous workshops will be offered at 6:30: Appalachian Clogging and Old-time Fiddle (bring your violin!). Flyers are available in the foyer. Questions? Contact Cathy Vogt at 610-399-3706 or cvogt@comcast.net. For more information about Spring FeetBeat call 215-643-4397 or www.fiddlekicks.com.



POTLUCK DINNER AND GAME NIGHT

Friday, March 4, at 6:30 p.m. Plan on coming to the Fellowship for Good Food, Fellowship, and Fun. Bring a dish and beverage to share as well as any games you like (games are optional).

This is a mixed social event — we have everyone from young families to single adults coming. If you don't want to play a game you can relax and socialize. This night is a great opportunity to spend time with old friends and make new ones. Please come; it won't be the same without you! Contact Mary Yeager if you have any questions 610-429-8168 or game-night@ufwc.org.

ROCK 'TIL YOU DROP!! RESCHEDULED!!

The "Close-to-the-Equinox" Dance Spectacular!
(The event formerly known as 'Valentines Dance')



**SATURDAY MARCH 19
7-10 pm in the Sanctuary
Featuring Who Needs Nigel?
and two special guests!!**

Everybody welcome! No admission fee!! Light refreshments at nominal cost!! Proceeds to the UFWC Youth Group!! Drat, we're out of exclamation points...

FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

- Feb 24 Thu** **Yoga Class.** At the Fellowship. 6:30-8:00 pm. See p. 8.
- Mar 1 Tue** **JPD Spring Conference Registration Deadline** (without late fee). See p. 4.
Finance Committee. 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship office. Erach Patel, 610-719-8180 or finance@ufwc.org.
- Mar 2 Wed** **Unitarian History 101.** Session 5, 7 pm. at the Fellowship.
- Mar 4 Fri** **Lunch Group.** 11:30 a.m. at Atlanta Bread Company. E-mail Linda Sander at lunch-group@ufwc.org to be added to the e-mail reminder list.
- Mar 5 Sat** **Calling Our Next Minister.** 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. See p. 2.
Potluck and Game Night. 6:30 p.m. at the Fellowship. See p. 8.
- Mar 6 Sun** **Simplicity Circle.** 12:15 after the service in the sanctuary. Eleanor Sinclair, 610-436-8151 or simplicity@ufwc.org.
Social Justice Committee. 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Fellowship. Tom Townsend, 610-388-9559 or social-justice@ufwc.org.
- Mar 8 Tue** **Board Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship office. All are welcome.
- Mar 12 Sat** **Folk Singing.** 8:00 p.m. at the home of Steve and Linda Sander. See p. 5.
- Mar 13 Sun** **Safe Harbor Dinner.** Provided by the Fellowship the second Sunday. Catherine Sachs, 610-692-0991 or safe-harbor@ufwc.org.
Exploring Diversity Book Discussion Group. 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. downstairs at the Fellowship. See p. 8.
- Mar 19 Sat** **Rock 'Till You Drop.** (Valentines Dance rescheduled.) 7-10 pm at the Fellowship. See p. 8.
- Mar 20 Sun** **Vernal Equinox Potluck.** After the Sunday service. See p. 7.
Learn About the Canvass. After the Sunday service. See p. 5.
- Mar 26 Sat** **Lunch for the Needy.** Provided by our Fellowship the fourth Saturday at the Salvation Army. Catherine Sachs, 610-692-0991 or salvation-army@ufwc.org.
- Apr 2 Sat** **Annual Celebration Dinner.** Kathy Neary, stewardship@ufwc.org.
- Apr 3 Sun** **Learn About the Canvass.** After the Sunday service. See p. 5.

Groups meeting multiple times in a month:

Youth Group meets most Sunday evenings 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the OWL/Youth Group Room downstairs at the Fellowship. Contact Michael Werner 610-429-1176 or youth-group@ufwc.org.

Choir Rehearsal. Sundays at 9:00 a.m. New members are welcome. Contact choir@ufwc.org.



Look in the mail for your invitation to the
Annual Celebration Dinner

April 2

*If you are planning to pledge this year,
 you should receive an invitation
 to this entertaining event.*

FELLOWTARIAN DEADLINE

E-mail articles by the fifteenth of the month to: fellowtarian@ufwc.org. Include your name with your article, so the editors will know whom to contact with questions. Contact Steve or Linda Sander at 610-399-6107.