

 **the**
FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester

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SUNDAY SERVICES

May, 2005

May 1 **WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?** **Rev. Larry Smith**

Recently a member of this congregation asked me to define spirituality. For Unitarian Universalists, spirituality, like everything else, is in the soul of the beholder. How do we become spiritual people?

May 8 **FAITHFUL STEWARDS** **Rev. Larry Smith**

On Mother's Day we will examine the story of one mother and the lessons she gives about children and parenting.

May 15 **THE LAND** **Rev. Larry Smith**

How did we humans become so detached from our relationship with the natural world? How can we begin to reclaim a relationship with this planet? The environmental crisis is essentially a religious issue requiring a religious response.

May 22 **MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU CAN POSSIBLY IMAGINE** **Rev. Larry Smith**

The Star Wars movies posit a universe that is both mechanical and mystical at the same time, a universe in which power is shared between good and evil – and they are distinct. We will examine the philosophy of Star Wars and what it teaches us about our own universe.

May 29 **STUMP THE HYMNIST** **Don Bristol and Michael Werner**

For the past several years, a highlight of the year's Sunday calendar has been this service. Have you ever wondered how Larry picks the hymns to match his sermon? Do you have a favorite hymn that you haven't sung in a long time? Have you ever wondered whether there is a song in the Hymnal that Don Bristol can't play? Come out for a morning of song and fun as Don Bristol and Michael Werner lead a service of song and singing.

Service, Religious Education & Babysitting at 10:30 AM

FROM YOUR INTERIM MINISTER “PASSAGES”

For the past two months I have been aware of changes in the church, changes in the seasons, changes in the human world, and changes in my own life. As I write this column the trees are popping out with little red buds out the church office window. This week I noticed the yellow daffodils along the walkway in front of the church. This past week we actually experienced two warm days in a row. Clearly the earth is awakening in this part of the northern hemisphere.

In the human world, I learned of my Grandfather Smith's death on the same day that the Pope John Paul II died. It was so strange to realize that as my family was coming to terms with his death that millions of people worldwide were also grieving the death of another man.

Thank you so much for your words of condolence and the time to travel to my grandfather's service. I really needed the time to reconnect with some family members. As is often the case, a funeral became the opportunity to meet with relatives rarely seen. A special thanks to Tilo Stahl and Mike and Katie Farnham for taking me back and forth from the airport. Because I was exhausted, that help was truly greater than it seemed.

The most dramatic change in my life recently came in February. In late February I asked Jennifer Johnston to marry me, and she accepted. Jennifer and I have been dating for eight months and knew shortly after we met that our relationship was probably leading to marriage. Everything seems right. We are both happy together and a bit joyfully surprised that we found each other at this point in

our lives.

A few things that you should probably know about Jennifer – and I know that many would ask. Jennifer is the Communications Director for the town of Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Though she is not a Unitarian Universalist, she has attended Unitarian Universalist churches, and her sister is a member of the Unitarian Church of All Souls in New York City. Jennifer and I have known each other since shortly after I arrived in the Philadelphia area. We expect to live in the greater Philadelphia area after our marriage. Her parents live in Cherry Hill and Jennifer wants to be close by. Currently, we have not settled upon a date for our marriage ceremony, nor a venue, but expect to be married sometime in the spring of 2006. It might even be true that all of that will be settled by the time that you read this.

So, those are some of the passages of the past month. We expect the seasons to change. We are saddened and sometimes surprised by death. Sometimes we are even surprised by joy and by love. As these passages have come to me over the course of the past month I have become more aware of life and felt the deepening of my faith. May all such life passages deepen the lives that we must lead.

See you in church,
Larry

A GRAND SUCCESS! NOW IT'S UP TO YOU!

The big kick-off dinner for the stewardship campaign on April 2 was a resounding success with almost 120 members and friends in attendance. The talents, commitment and untold hours of effort contributed by so many, made it a truly memorable evening. Thank you!

Now we look to our members and friends to give generously so we can accomplish the goals that we as a congregation have set forth.

The upcoming year is critical as we move to double services, add a second religious program, search for a settled minister, and welcome more people into our faith community. Together we will increase our community presence, become more effective in our outreach and social justice efforts, and build a stronger community within.

Please consider pledging as generously as you can. Help make the future of the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester bright. Together we can realize our dreams.

— Stewardship Campaign
Committee
stewardship@ufwc.org



USHERS AND GREETERS NEEDED

It's the time of the year when we organize the September 2005-06 volunteers for Ushering and Greeting. Because of double services we need at least 32 volunteers. Sign up sheets are in the lobby. Thank you.

— Mark Steel, membership@ufwc.org
610-701-9941 days

FROM YOUR INTERIM PRESIDENT

Wow, what an exciting time! The board has nominated a fine slate of members for the Search Committee: Cyndy Bullaughey, Ed Cohle, Curt Hoganson, Eileen Kelly, Jim MacFadyen, Sandy Schaal, and Mark Steel. Once elected, they will meet with the Rev. Howard Dana, the district Ministerial Settlement Representative, do some team building, and then start on a congregational survey. Who are we as a congregation, and what do we really want in a minister? These are some of the questions they will need to answer by fall.

We had twenty people registered out of 300 attendees for the Joseph Priestly District Conference in early April. The JPD covers Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Washington, DC. That is an incredible level of participation by our congregation. Two highlights of the conference were Pam Baxter, our Director of Education receiving recognition for the modules of training she has completed and Rob Sartain accepting the YES award on behalf of our very active Youth Group.

Where do I start and how can I do justice when writing about the incredible effort by the Stewardship Committee this year? I want to especially thank Ed Cohle and Cyndy Bullaughey who worked and worked and worked some more! Thank you also to Pam McKamey, daughter of Bruce and Deanna Koepcke, who designed the lovely graphic of the people supporting the bridge used in the campaign and to Bruce Koepcke and the rest of the committee, canvassers, and all our members and friends who gave generously.

Plans to grow Unitarian Universalism in the area continue. We, along with the other two congregations near the proposed New Large UU Church, have been given the opportunity by the JPD and the UUA to work with Tom Chulak, a consultant on church growth. He will help our congregation develop and execute over the next two years a plan to grow our congregation. We have already submitted the intent to apply for a Chalice Lighter's Grant, which is the first step in the process. I am very excited about working with Tom and am eagerly awaiting the meeting he has planned with some members of our congregation later in May.

There are great opportunities ahead. Don't wait for the nominating committee to call. Consider how your skills and interests can contribute to the momentum we have going, and contact them at nominations@ufwc.org with your offer to help.

— Mary Hepokoski, president@ufwc.org

MAY YOGA CLASSES

Yoga classes will be held Thursday nights in May from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Fellowship. Everyone, regardless of age, ability or level, is welcome. Each person is encouraged to do whatever he or she can do. Assistance is provided individually to modify each posture. Yoga combines relaxation, meditation, breathing, stretching, and flexibility into a healthy mind/body/spirit.

The cost is \$10.00, a reduced rate, per session. Myra will have a few Yoga mats for use in class as well as mats for sale at \$10 each. Contact Mira Tryon, instructor, 610-429-4468.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING APRIL 12, 2005

The Board reviewed and discussed a number of recommended Bylaws changes presented by Erach Patel. Most of the recommended modifications involve term lengths, duties, and the make up of the Board of Trustees. A motion was passed that these changes be considered at our next annual meeting.

A motion was passed authorizing the Board to create a Music Committee. This committee will work on the musical issues raised by our move to double services. The creation of a UFWC Christian Interest Group was approved. This group will provide a forum for the discussion of Christian Theology as it pertains to Unitarian Universalism and to people's individual spiritual journeys.

Attending the meeting representing the Building Committee were Bob Radcliffe and Tilo Stahl. Several issues pertaining to the Fellowship building were discussed. A motion was passed to allow the closure of the Fellowship over one weekend this summer to allow the refinishing of the basement floor. Possible designs for a new sign outside of the building were discussed. Devon Miller and Mary Hepokoski will work with the Building Committee on designing the new sign. The possibility of renovating and enclosing the porch was discussed. This project will be taken up again at the next Board meeting.

— Paul Sapko
Secretary

NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND: R.E. UPDATE

Many parents have told me that one of the main reasons they bring their children to church is so that their children can see that there are more people who think and believe as they do than just the people in their family. These parents want their children to know that Unitarian Universalism exists beyond their home and even beyond our church walls. For that reason in particular, it was wonderful to see families at the Joseph Priestly District Spring Conference on April 8 and 9.

In just a short time, our gathering of more than 300 people started to feel like a large family. The kids got "shipwrecked" on a desert island, and by closing time, some didn't want to leave. The eleven UFWC adults at the Conference attended workshops of our choice, some of us ending up in the same sessions; we have a lot of ideas to bring back to the Fellowship. There were also plenty of group events. Ultimately, while each of us had our own experience, we all came away with a shared experience in common.

If you were unable to attend the Conference, I encourage you to attend next year's. If you would like a group UU experience in the meantime, check out the UU summer camp information on the table in the lobby.

At our April meeting, the RE Committee decided how we will run two RE programs when we go to double services in the fall. What we decided on is an approach called "Way Cool Sunday School." (WCSS) This model is sort of a hybrid, expanding on what we currently do and adding a more cohesive Social Action element.

In WCSS, the (usually) four Sundays each month are dedicated as follows:

1st Sunday – Children's Worship – (This is what we call Group RE.) It is multi-aged, encompassing Pre-K through fifth or sixth grades, and focuses on a theme.

2nd Sunday – Social Action Sunday – We are planning a brainstorming session with the people in our Fellowship who are involved in projects within the framework of the Social Justice Committee, to find ways that the children can add to what UFWC already does. We will also plan other ongoing projects.

3rd and 4th Sundays – Curriculum Sundays – On these days, we will break into classes, working within a specific curriculum. Our theme for 2005-06 is World Religions.

The ongoing program for our seventh, eighth, and ninth graders will remain the same, offering an annual rotation of Neighboring Faiths, Our Whole Lives and Coming of Age. We have not yet determined whether we will

be able to run two completely separate classes for each grade each Sunday, or whether we will schedule one class meeting.

Using the WCSS model at both services has much to offer: parents can make a choice of which Sunday service to attend based on time only, not on which program they would like their child to be part of; since there will be the same number of classes taught, we can run the program with the same number of teachers (Group RE and Social Action Sundays can be run with the help of volunteers); the children will be more involved with Social Action projects, which is something we have wanted to incorporate for a long time; we have the flexibility to incorporate music, drama and art into the Group RE sessions.

Note: There's still time to mark your calendars for our RE Family Hike and Picnic at Valley Forge Park on Saturday, April 30, from 10 to Noon.

— Pam Baxter
Director of Religious Ed.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WORKDAY

Our next workday is Saturday, May 21, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Coatesville. You must be at least 15 years old. While you need not be experienced, you must be willing to learn. Skilled workers are always welcome. We need a crew of six. Several spots are already taken, so call or email early to reserve a place. Deadline to sign up is Wednesday, May 11. Contact Mary Hepokoski at 610-518-9304 or habitat@ufwc.org.

— Mary Hepokoski, Social Justice Committee

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Fellowship Committee is changing its name to the Fun and Fellowship Committee. Nancy Artus and Mary Yeager, committee co-chairs, can be reached at fun@ufwc.org.

NEW UU CLASS

Are you curious about the history of Unitarian Universalism? Do you want to know more about what our Fellowship offers? Do you have any questions about how our Fellowship is run? All this and more will be discussed at the New UU class.

The class was developed for those new to Unitarian Universalism or to our Fellowship, but "old" UU's are also welcome. The class will be held from noon to 3:00 p.m. (after the Sunday service) on May 15, 2005. A pizza lunch will be provided. Childcare will be available if you request it at least one week in advance.

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to become better acquainted with Unitarian Universalism and with our Fellowship. If you plan to attend the New UU class in May, contact Fred Frayer. Fred is a member of the Membership Committee and can be reached at 610-722-9367 (or membership@ufwc). Besides the number of people who plan to attend, tell Fred whether you have any special dietary needs, and the number and ages of children if you need childcare. Please RSVP by Monday, May 9.

If you are interested in the New UU class, but cannot attend in May, please let Fred know that, as well. The class will be offered again in the fall.



FOLK SINGING

Folk singing is Saturday, May 21, at 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. All are welcome. Bring a munchie, if you like. Contact Steve at 610-399-6107 or folk-singing@ufwc.org.

HELP COORDINATE DOUBLE SERVICES

Can you help fuel growth here at the Fellowship? You betcha! And here's a relatively easy way to help us manage an immediate need:

As you know, the Fellowship recently voted to begin offering two services every week, beginning this September. In order to accomplish this goal, we'll need a larger pool of volunteers able to coordinate Sunday Religious Service activities. You won't need to make a huge time commitment but you'll clearly be helping us maintain quality in our most basic mission, the nurturing of our collective Spirit.

You'd make a modest commitment (perhaps three hours on Sunday every month or two), handling these duties:

- Prepare the Sanctuary for service.
- Police the sanctuary after service. Lead parts of the service.
- Assist the minister or speaker as needed.
- Generally expedite the service effort.

Pretty simple, eh?

The Religious Services Committee plans to host an orientation for new service coordinators on Sunday May 15 at 12 noon. Contact Craig Talbot at religious-services@ufwc.org or 610-430-3851 if you think this might be for you! (Last minute drop-ins are welcome, too.)

YOUTH GROUP UPDATE

This has been another excellent month. The Month started with Chilisa Shorten attending the JPDYSC Spring Con - with the acronym PUTSDD (people united to sit down and decide). She had the opportunity to work on bylaws for the District Youth Steering Committee as a representative of our youth. More importantly, she was elected by youth from all over the District to be a member of the District Youth Steering Committee.

In the middle of the month, we celebrated Youth Sunday, with a discussion of the meaning of God to each of us. We also held another Battle of the Bands on Friday, April 29.

The absolute highlight of the month was being awarded the JPD Youth Empowerment and Supporting (YES) award. This is a rare award in the District. This year, we were one of only four youth groups district wide that won this award. To have won it two consecutive years is even more rare. To have won this award, the Fellowship had to demonstrate that our youth group had an active program of learning, worship, community building, leadership and social action. This award can only occur when there is a supporting congregation behind the youth group allowing them to take risks. The youth group and the adult advisors would like to thank the congregation for their continued support.

The youth group is open to Fellowship youth from eighth through twelfth grade. We meet every Sunday night, from 6:00 until 7:30, downstairs in the Fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Michael or David Werner, at 610-429-1176 or youth-group@ufwc.org.

HAVE YOU MET LISA KERSCHNER?

When did you join? March 2005

Why did you join? If someone asked me a year ago if I'd be joining a fellowship or church, I probably would have laughed. That was, obviously, before I started coming here! I had no idea that such a place as this existed. Some of you have heard me say this already, but I'll say it again..."Where have you been for the past 20 years of my life?"

Anyway, now that I've found you...you're stuck with me (and at least my son, Jay, as well...who's anxiously awaiting his 14th birthday so that he can join, too). It has been wonderful for us to find a group that is so accepting, spiritually diverse, liberal, caring and intelligent.

Where do you live? I live nine miles from the Fellowship in Newlin Township on the fruit farm my family operates. My husband, Ike, and I started the farm in 1992. The land is leased, but the trees are ours...so they'll just have to come with us if we ever move!

What are your job/hobbies/interests? We grow heritage and unique apple varieties, Asian pears, and peaches, etc., on our farm. I do the bookkeeping, design and upkeep on our Web site and e-mail newsletter, most of the marketing and hands-on farm work from March through November. I also home school our son, Jay, and really enjoy reading, knitting, writing, listening to music, and doing various art projects. And someday, I'll find the time to learn more than a couple of chords on the guitar!

Are you involved in Fellowship committees/activities

or plan to be? I'm hoping to get involved in RE. From what I've seen and heard, the RE program seems fantastic. There are a number of other activities/classes at UU that I have been or will be a part of as time goes along. I just won't be around much during our busy harvest months (August-October).



Tell us about your family/pets. My husband, Ike, and I have been married for 18 years, and have one son, Jay, who is soon to be 12 (in July). We all work on the farm...although Jay much prefers to help out at the farmers' markets where we sell our fruit. We recently lost our first "child," Lillian, a 16-year-old

Border Collie. Her "sister" Sylvia, another Border Collie, died a few years ago. We are "dog" people by nature, and will undoubtedly get another dog at some point. In the meantime, Jay has a pet guinea pig, a gerbil and several fish to keep us entertained...and he's thinking about getting a new batch of fancy mice. Did I mention the thousands of "pet" bees we keep? I guess they don't really count, though...they're not very cuddly.

What else would you like people to know? For some reason, our email address didn't appear in the 2005 UU Directory. You can reach me at ikeandlis@aol.com or northstarorchard@aol.com.

CHRISTIAN INTEREST GROUP

Did you know that the four Gospels were originally written anonymously and that authorship was assigned at a later date? Did you know that the oldest manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark end when the tomb is found empty? Does being baptized by a Unitarian Universalist Minister mean anything since Universalists don't believe in original sin? Do you have questions about the New Testament that you want to discuss? Do you have some Christian inspiration you want to share with others? Are you on a Christian spiritual path and looking for others on a similar path?

The Christian Interest Group will meet next on Wednesday, May 25, at 7:00 p.m. at the Fellowship. Contact John Gangwisch if you need a ride to the meeting.

EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

CHANGED TO MAY 15

We will discuss Rosamond Halsey Carr's *Land Of A Thousand Hills: My Life In Rwanda*. Ms. Carr moved to the Belgian Congo in the 1940's and after her divorce moved to Rwanda. She lived there 50 years and describes the beauty of the country and the horror of the genocide in this engaging and very readable book. Discussion Leader will be Fatima Patel.

New Members are welcome. Join us at 7:30 p.m. downstairs at the Fellowship. The next meeting will be in September. Contact Shelley Case, 610-431-4011, Ruth MacFadyen, 610-436-5158, or diversity-book-group@ufwc.org.

PLANT SALE

This year's Plant Sale will be on May 7 and 8. We will be offering beautiful hanging baskets for sun and shade. Annual flowers will be offered by the flat along with numerous varieties of garden vegetables and herbs. Contact Sandy Retzlaff at plant-sale@ufwc.org.



ANNUAL PICNIC

Our annual picnic will be Sunday, May 29, at Hoopes Park in West Chester after religious services at the Fellowship. Hamburgers, hotdogs, veggie burgers and all the fixins' are provided for a small donation. There will also be lemonade and ice water, and you can bring other things to drink if you wish. Bring a salad or a dessert to share.



There are basketball hoops, baseball diamond, tennis courts, playground, and plenty of frisbee space, so bring your sports stuff and the whole family. Hoopes Park has a covered picnic area and reasonable rest rooms. This event is always lots of fun, even with some rain. If weather is completely unreasonable we can grill on our porch and picnic in the Fellowship. This event is organized by your Fun and Fellowship Committee (the new name of the Fellowship Committee).

SIMPLICITY CIRCLE

The Simplicity Circle will meet on Sunday, May 1, in the sanctuary after the service. All are welcome. For further information contact Eleanor Sinclair at 610-436-8151 or simplicity@ufwc.org.

POTLUCK AND GAME NIGHT

CHANGED TO MAY 20

Game Night will be Friday, May 20 at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited. Please bring a dish and a beverage to share as well as any game you would like to play. Paper products are provided. Bring a friend and relax and talk or get a little intense with the competition, but most of all have fun. No need to call ahead. Contact Mary Yeager if you have any questions at 610-429-8168 or gamenight@ufwc.org.

Find your treasure at the
2005 UFWC
Annual Flea Market
Saturday, May 7 8:00 a.m. to Noon



See the April *Fellowtarian* for more details about:
What to donate
How to drop off your donations
How to volunteer to help
email: flea-market@ufwc.org



LUNCH GROUP

CHANGED TO MAY 13

The May lunch group will be Friday, May 13, instead of the usual first Friday. The flea market sorting and pricing is Friday, May 7. Those of us who can will probably help out (and still have lunch together nearby).

The UFWC Lunch group meets monthly at the Atlanta Bread Company in West Chester at 11:30 a.m. All are welcome. Contact Linda Sander at lunch-group@ufwc.org to be added to the email reminder list.

FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

- May 1 Sun** **Simplicity Circle.** 12:15 in the sanctuary. See p. 7.
Social Justice Committee. 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Fellowship. Contact Tom Townsend 610-388-9559 or social-justice@ufwc.org.
- May 3 Tue** **Finance Committee.** 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship office. Contact Erach Patel 610-719-8180 or finance@ufwc.org.
- May 5 Thu** **Flea Market Drop-off. 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** See p. 7 and April issue.
- May 6 Fri** **Flea Market Pricing.** 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. See p. 7 and April issue.
- May 7 Sat** **UFWC Annual Flea Market and Plant Sale.** 8 a.m. to noon. See p. 7 and April issue.
- May 8 Sun** **Plant Sale** after the service. See p. 7.
Safe Harbor Dinner. Provided by the Fellowship the second Sunday of the month. Contact Catherine Sachs, 610-692-0991 or safe-harbor@ufwc.org.
- May 10 Tue** **Board Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship office. All are welcome.
- May 12 Thu** **Fun and Fellowship Committee Meeting and Dinner.** 6:30 p.m. at Mary Yeager's home. Contact Mary Yeager fun@ufwc.org or 610-429-8168.
- May 13 Fri** **Lunch Group.** 11:30 a.m. at Atlanta Bread Company. See p. 7.
- May 14 Sat** **Work Party.** 9:00a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Contact Tilo Stahl, e-mail: building@ufwc.org.
- May 15 Sun** **Religious Services Coordination Orientation.** Noon. See p. 5.
New UU Class. Noon to 3:00 p.m. See p. 5.
Exploring Diversity Book Discussion Group. 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Fellowship. See p. 6.
- May 20 Fri** **Potluck and Game Night.** 6:30 p.m. at the Fellowship. See p. 7.
- May 21 Sat** **Habitat for Humanity Workday.** 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. See p. 4.
Folk Singing. 8:00 p.m. at the home of Steve and Linda Sander. See p. 5.
- May 22 Sun** **Annual Congregational Meeting** after the Sunday service.
- May 25 Wed** **Christian Interest Group Meeting.** 7:00 p.m. See p. 6.
- May 28 Sat** **Lunch for the Needy.** Provided by our Fellowship at the Salvation Army. Contact Catherine Sachs, 610-692-0991 or salvation-army@ufwc.org.
- May 29 Sun** **Annual Fellowship Picnic.** Noon at Hoopes Park. See p. 7.

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. 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.
- Yoga Classes.** Thursdays in May. 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. See p. 3.

Don't forget to buy grocery store certificates after the Sunday service.