

the FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester

Telephone: 610-692-5966 Web: www.ufwc.org

Our Mission: *As a diverse liberal faith congregation, we make a difference in our lives, our children's lives, and the wider community by creating an environment for spiritual growth and fulfillment, for building meaningful connections, and for actively advancing peace and justice in the world.*

SUNDAY SERVICES December 2010

December 5

WE CARE

Many of you have probably heard bits and pieces about our new Pastoral Care Team. Today we will take the opportunity to introduce you to the team and what it is that they are and will be doing to help Deborah and all of you when the need arises.

December 12

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Rev. Deborah Mero

Christmas is all about traditions and everywhere you go you will find celebrations unique to each country and climate. This will be a multi-generational service for children of all ages We hope you will join us and learn how other countries celebrate the birth of the holy child, Jesus.

December 12

VESPERS – RE-IMAGINING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Rev. Deborah Mero

Special Service at 6 p.m.

For those who are having a hard time with the holidays – dealing with loss, change, or ghosts of holidays past. Come to share or just be.

December 19

KICK IT DOWN A NOTCH

Rev. Deborah Mero

As the holiday week is in full gear we are going to take time to slow down, meditate, contemplate and just be and not do for one morning. Come for a brief oasis in time with poetry and chanting, with prose and quiet. Come and be with us.

December 24, Christmas Eve – Two Services

4:30 p.m. Service

THE BLESSING OF THE STUFFED ANIMALS

Rev. Deborah Mero

An Intergenerational service aimed at the very youngest in age or at heart. All (adults and children) are encouraged to bring your favorite stuffed animals, and if you don't have any, perhaps this is the time for a new Christmas Eve present. We will tell stories, sing Christmas songs and have a jolly time together.

7:00 p.m. Service

A TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE

Rev. Deborah Mero

Christmas Eve is a magical time. It sparkles with light and hope. Join us for the readings and carols of the season, stories old and new, and music from the Spirit Singers, our choir.

December 26

RAMEN NOODLES, TWO RED BULLS AND A SLEEVE OF OREOS

Michael Werner

10:00 a.m. Single Service Only

Join us in a group interview of our returning 2010 graduating class to learn how their expectations for life after high school match the current reality. This year's youth group has developed a list of questions, and the floor will be open for questions from friends, parents and members of the community. Come and learn how our young friends are faring in this first major step towards adulthood. The service title was the answer provided when asked to identify their preferred food for an all-nighter.

Services and Babysitting at 9 AM and 11 AM. Religious Education at 9 AM only.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH

Last week I attended the Harper's Ferry Ministerial Study Group for the first time. It was held in West Virginia at an old lodge that reminded me of a special place from my childhood, Lake Lawn Lodge in Delavan, Wisconsin. Both places were rustic with wood and stone construction and both had a downstairs game room. A lot of Christmas memories from my childhood were stirred by this place a thousand miles and almost fifty years between them.

Christmas was always strange in our household before my parents divorced. My mom wanted to celebrate it and my dad did not, he was Jewish after all. It was a tense time. One year my mom decided we would go away for Christmas, the three of us — she, my brother and I. Lake Lawn was the epitome of fun for us kids. there was an indoor pool, shuffleboard and ping pong in the basement game room, and we could go to the dining room for breakfast ourselves and sign the check while letting our mom sleep in. What a treat for us all. The lodge was at a lake, of course, and one winter, of the three or so that we made the trip, we ice skated on the lake and even took a ride down a huge toboggan slide that fed right onto the frozen lake. Those are memories that will last for my lifetime. It was a fun and safe place that we could enjoy as

kids and our mother could enjoy herself without worrying about us. Back in those days hardly anyone went away for Christmas so there were few people there and probably lots of staff people watching over us without our even thinking about it.

Things change. I went back about nine or ten years later with a boyfriend and found a very different place. The old lodge was replaced by a new one. It had grown into a corporate conference center with a golf course, a spa, and its own air strip. I never wanted to return because we had such wonderful memories of what it was to us in our childhood, and I needed to preserve them. Now, I discovered by looking on the web, that it has been foreclosed on and sold. The lodge I knew is long gone but the memories remain with me. Things do change but not the memories.

Holidays are a time for sharing memories and making new ones. Yes, the crass commercialism of them tries to overwhelm the season, but it is still a time when we make time for family and friends. We want to connect with one another and we do what we can to make the time and experiences meaningful. Each new year is not like the last. People come

into our lives, people leave us, the dynamic changes, the circumstances change. But each year we have an opportunity to make new memories, start new traditions, find something special in the season of light and hope that will take us out of ourselves and connect us with something higher or deeper.

For those among us who have found Jesus to be an impor-

tant part of our spirituality, this is a time to remember the joy and hope that were born that night in Bethlehem. For those of us who learned the story of the miracle of scarce oil lasting well beyond its

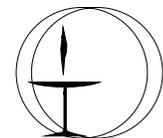
measure bringing light and hope for eight days, this is a time to be reminded that scarcity can turn into abundance. For those of us who feel the weight of this deep dark time of year, it is a time to celebrate the return of light and warmth. No matter what tradition you grew up with, there is an important message with the coming of light, hope, joy, and abundance. The themes are universal. And we need them, one and all.

In this season of the coming light, I wish you abundance in everything that matters most. I wish you joy, hope, warmth, and love. I wish you shared memories past and fond memories to come. May this holiday season bring light into your life.

— With love,
Deborah

The crass commercialism tries to overwhelm the season, but it is still a time when we make time for family and friends.

The Fellowtarian is the monthly newsletter of the
Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester
501 S. High St., West Chester, PA 19382 Web: www.ufwc.org
Rev. Deborah Mero, Minister 610-692-4043 email: ufwc
Barbara Robinson, Office Administrator 610-692-5966 email: office
Diane Cohle, President email: president
Pam Baxter, Dir. of Religious Ed email: dre
Steve and Linda Sander, Editors email: fellowtarian



REmarks – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

If you haven't had the chance yet, go downstairs and take a peek at the arch that has taken shape on the west wall of the Fireplace Room. The arch has two main features: first, each block represents one of the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism that UUs covenant to affirm and promote.

Second, the arch was created with chalkboard paint to allow the members of the 6th/7th grade class to "tag" (write graffiti on) the arch, as they think of, or do things that relate to the principles. Thanks to Nancy Schilling, for sketching and painting the arch.

The arch is the focal point of the new curriculum that I mentioned in the November Fellowship that explores what it means to actually live our UU principles. The arch is a perfect tool for this exploration: it sets Principles 1 and 7 (acknowledging the inherent worth of people, and respecting the interconnected web of life) as the supports for the other five principles. And it places Principle 4 (a free and responsible search for truth and meaning) in the position of keystone.

The arch is also a metaphor for the curriculum, which we have tentatively named "Stepping Through the Arch: An Exploration of Living Our UU Principles." Here's a look at a recent 6th/7th grade class. (Thanks to teacher Vicki Rainer for providing this snapshot.) "We started our RE class with a fun doodle exercise that the kids enjoyed so much that they wanted to repeat the activity multiple times. We then went into our lesson which involved the 7th principle, "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

"We learned about St. Francis of Assisi and [his] ideas on caring for the interdependent web of life.

We took turns reciting the Canticle of the Creatures and reading his life story. Next, we were introduced to Carl Sagan, a man of science, and his thoughts on the interdependent web of existence. We watched a video highlighting distant pictures of earth by Voyager 1 and Sagan's famous "Pale Blue Dot" lecture.

"At the end we brainstormed how we can contribute to caring for our interdependent web of life. The kids started off our ongoing list with some great ideas (see below) and spent a little time "tagging" the arch on the wall with some of them. "Ideas—Work at or contribute to: Food bank, Animal Shelter (such as Faithful Friends), Adopt-a-Highway, Horse farm for kids with disabilities."

Unitarian Universalism is the focus for all our classes this year, exploring our principles and ways to "be UU." Here's a snapshot of

a recent 1st/2nd grade class, **Picture Book UU**," from teacher Susan Sluk:

"This past Sunday our topic was helping to teach people to learn to share. The story for the class was "Stone Soup." I showed two versions on my iPad. One was with aliens visiting the planet and having nothing to eat, and the other was the same story, set in an office. In each version the three travelers trick the people into sharing by pretending to make stone soup. After we viewed the clips, I had the students work as a team to create a class soup. We had a bucket, plastic food etc. After we were done I asked each student "What did the soup taste like to you?" Each gave me an answer, and when they asked me what I thought it tasted like, I answered, 'sharing!'"

– Pam Baxter
Director of Religious Education

INTERGENERATIONAL CHOIR

On November 21 the Intergen Choir joined the Spirit Singers to sing "Go Your Way In Peace," a selection from *May This Light Shine*, a UU Songbook for children and youth. Special thanks to our string trio, Emma Schilling, bass, Jane Krick, violin, and Pam Baxter, cello, who accompanied us.

Our next practice is December 5. Children ages 4 through adults are welcome. On December 12 we will celebrate an International Christmas, accompanied by percussion, guitar, and Dylan Lippiatt-Cook on orchestra bells. The choir will also sing at our 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service, which will be geared for families with children. Email intergenerational-choir for more information.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS ON CHRISTMAS EVE

This year we are having two Christmas Eve services on Friday, December 24. The earlier service, at 4:30 p.m., is oriented to young children and their families. Bring a favorite stuffed animal or two for our first-ever Blessing of the Stuffed Animals and help celebrate this festive time of year together.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, November 9. Paul Heck, chairman of the Long Range Planning Team, presented the plan to the Board. Most of the meeting involved reviewing and discussing the plan, which focuses on achieving our mission for the next five years. The Board also discussed the next steps in the process, including presentation of the plan to the Congregation.

The Board encourages UFWC members and friends to share comments and concerns with Board members, as well as to attend Board meetings if interested. In December, the Board will continue to focus on moving the Long Range Plan forward.

The Board meets in the office at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month. Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board at the back of the sanctuary after being approved by the Board. Members of the Board include Diane Cohle, president; Fred Frayer; Curt Hoganson; Dirk Troltenier; Helena Graham; Rick Marts, vice president; and Sandra Schaal, secretary.

2010 AUCTION WAS FUN AND FRUITFUL

We had a grand time at our Annual Service Auction, held on October 23. We had over 60 guests and netted \$7500 for UFWC.

A big thank you to everyone who donated their services or items, everyone who bid, everyone who made a dessert, and everyone who helped with set-up, clean-up and chores that night. Special thanks go to: Ed Cohle, Mike Miller, Dan Meyer, Christina Brenner, Chic Bach, Brett Goldman, Jen Feld, Mary Yeager, Ellen Schipul, Pat Miles, Steve and Linda Sander, Craig Talbot, Mark and Marie Steel and Nancy Artus.

If you have a question about how to contact the person who offered something you won, or who won what you offered, contact Nancy Artus at email: auction.

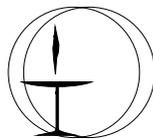
FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year, the Board's focus is planning for the future of the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester. Now, that we have a vision, mission, and end statements, our work becomes more focused on how to accomplish our goals. In the winter of 2009, the Board appointed a Long Range Planning Committee to help with this task. The board charged the Committee with writing a plan that would outline goals for the next five years with the steps needed to accomplish those goals.

At the last Board meeting Committee Chair Paul Heck presented their work. Paul, along with Nancy Artus, Jack Butler, Paul Sapko, and Terry Rotthermel, wrote an exceptional plan that was thorough and reflects the present state of the fellowship. The Committee collected data from a variety of sources. The Board and the committee will continue discussions before final adoption. Many, many, many thanks go out to all of the committee members. I sincerely appreciate their hard work and continued efforts with this difficult task. It is another example of our members' commitment to strengthen our presence in this community and continuing our desire to be a liberal religious voice in the West Chester area.

During this holiday season, I am reminded to be thankful for our Fellowship. I appreciate all the opportunities that our congregation provides. Personally, in the last month, I have taken advantage of activities in all three pillar areas. For spiritual growth and fulfillment, I have attended Sunday services and especially enjoyed Reverend Mero's sermon about "Happiness". I have built meaningful connections with my presence at the auction, coffee house and women's group. The Social Justice event, the screening of *9500 Liberty*, was informational and inspiring. I am thankful to have all these opportunities available to me. It takes all of us to make this happen. Thanks to all of you.

– Committed to working with you to achieve our mission,
Diane



WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION: "BIRTHING OUR DREAMS"

On Tuesday, December 21, at 7:15 p.m. in the sanctuary, join us for a celebration of the cycling of life and honoring the longest night of year with a focus on finding within the darkness the creative spark to birth our dreams. Come raise your spirits, bring a snack for sharing, and join us in our unique solstice celebration.

To help us plan, please let Diane Minka know if you're coming.

SKINNER HOUSE PUBLISHES NEW BOOK BY OUR DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

"Each Sunday, in congregations everywhere, Unitarian Universalists light a chalice." So begins a brand-new book for children, parents and other religious educators about the UU symbol – written by our own Director of Religious Education, Pam Baxter.

In simple, direct language, *A Cup of Light* looks at the separate symbols of fire and chalice, and helps bring meaning to an intangible concept. It explores the transformational power of fire that can turn sticky dough into a loaf of bread, and the embracing strength of a chalice that may hold life-giving water. It highlights the ritual of lighting the chalice, whether at a Sunday service, a church meeting, or family dinner.

A Cup of Light explores other questions about our UU symbol: Where did the symbol originate? Why did Unitarian Universalists adopt it as the emblem of the UU faith? This book provides answers to those questions and also creates a framework for coming to one's own sense of meaning.

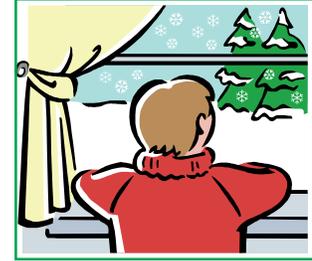
The book is available through the UUA Bookstore. Go to www.uua.org, click on "Bookstore," and then search for "A Cup of Light." Or cut and paste this URL into your browser: www.uuabookstore.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1310, or save on shipping and handling by placing your order with Cathy Vogt (email: re-volunteers), and we will make a group order.

We're planning a book signing in January.

CLOSURE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Winter is upon us. This is a reminder to our members and friends about our closure notification procedure. The process is in place to help everyone be informed if we need to cancel Sunday Services or any other big event due to either inclement weather, power loss or something unforeseen.

- An announcement will be placed on the Fellowship voice mail recording (610-692-5966) if services are cancelled.
- The following radio and TV stations will be notified about Sunday services cancellation due to inclement weather:
Radio: KYW 1060 AM
TV: CBS3, NBC10, FOX 29
- You may be directly contacted by phone, or you may get an email about cancellation of Sunday services.
- If possible, a notice on the first page of our web-site will show a cancellation of services.



We hope, by using all types of media, everyone will be informed and most of all safe. If in doubt, call or check the web site. Also, we urge everyone to always keep one "old fashioned" telephone, one that is not wireless or does not require electricity to work, plugged into a telephone outlet somewhere in your house. Should there be a power outage, you may want to be able to make or receive phone calls.

OUR CHALICE LIGHTER MEMBERSHIP DRIVE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS

Thanks to everyone who responded to our Chalice Lighters membership drive and signed up to be a part of this very worthwhile program. We received 25 new Chalice Lighter memberships from our Fellowship, which should be sufficient to earn us Honor Society status. The Joseph Priestley District office was impressed with the response, and let me know that! We can all be proud.

If you missed me during our four sign-up Sundays and are interested in becoming a Chalice Lighter, please look me up at any time. I can provide a sign-up form. Look me up also if you want general information on the Chalice Lighter Program or on anything else connected with our denomination.

The West Chester Fellowship never ceases to amaze me. You always come through, and you certainly did this time around. Your generosity will help fund Chalice Lighter grants for many congregations — maybe even our own sometime in the future.

– Flo Miller
Denominational Affairs Chair

THE COMING DAYS HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS AT UFWC

There is much going on over the month ahead. Here are the special happenings. (More details for each event can be found throughout this issue.)

- Dec 4** **Holiday Party** at the home of Flo and Mike Miller at 7 p.m.
- Dec 11** **Deck the Hall!** Please join us at 11 a.m. as we transform our sanctuary into its festive holiday beauty. Music, hot chocolate and goodies will be provided. If there is enough interest we will also decorate cookies to be brought to Safe Harbor for their Sunday night meal.
- Dec 11** **Holiday Party** at the home of Diane and Ed Cohle at 6 p.m.
- Dec 12** **Christmas Around the World** – an international, multi-generational service for all, at 9 and 11 a.m.
- Dec 12** **Vespers Service** at 6 p.m. for those who are struggling with the holidays this year. All are welcome for a quiet time to acknowledge loss or sadness.
- Dec 19** **Holiday Party** at the home of Rick and Sandy Marts at 3 p.m.
- Dec 21** **Celebrate the Solstice** at 7:15 p.m. As the days turn away from darkening into light we will celebrate the turning of the Wheel of the Year.
- Dec 24** **Christmas Eve.** This year we are trying an experiment. We will have two services on Christmas Eve in hopes that all will enjoy their time with us. There may also be some carol singing before the late service.
- At 4:30 p.m. we will have a special service especially for young children and families including blessing our stuffed animals (so please bring them) and music and a story.
- At 7 p.m. we will have our Christmas Eve Candle Light Service. With festive music and stories old and new we will light up the hope and joy of Christmas.
- Anyone will be welcome to either service or both. We want to make the evening meaningful for people of all ages.
- Jan 1** **New Year's Day Party** at the Fellowship at 6 p.m.



EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

DEC 12 7-8:30 PM

*TIME AND PLACE CHANGES THIS MONTH

This month we will discuss the 1998 film *Smoke Signals*. This Sundance Audience Favorite winner is the first major feature film written, directed by, and starring Native Americans and tells the story of Victor Joseph and Thomas Builds-the-Fire, two young Indians traveling from their reservation in Idaho to a reservation in Arizona to collect the ashes of Victor's long estranged father. Their bus ride through this "foreign land" begins as a clash of cultures and becomes a journey of self discovery, forgiveness and loss. Ruth MacFadyen will facilitate.

*We will gather at Kerri Petterson's to watch the movie at 5 p.m. followed by our discussion beginning at 7 p.m. which is our regular meeting time. Please bring a brown bag dinner and beverage. Kerri will provide chips and dessert.

Please feel free to contact us: Shelly Case or Ruth MacFadyen or email: diversity-book-group. All are Welcome.

BRAZILIAN WORKSHOP

Walk the beat, play the rhythm, hear the stories, sing the song. We got to do it all at the first of our world music workshops in October. Alex Shaw and Eduardo Santos, specialists in Afro-Brazilian music and culture, graced our sanctuary and a crowd of eager participants with a joyful, hands-on experience.

We're planning to have several more world music workshops in the future. We'd love to have Alex and friends back again. Also suggested are our old friends who came and treated us to their music a few years back at our last series: Tony Vacca (percussion ensemble), Sule Greg Wilson (blues & percussion), Ubaka Hill (spiritual & play circles), and Sister Alice (gospel singing). All of these folks connected us to the greater community who came and enjoyed these special events with us. Another idea is to host an evening of Kirtan chanting. If you have other ideas, let Debby Kern or any member of the music committee know.

STONES IN THE SAME WALL – SOCIAL JUSTICE

Each event, each action is another stone in the wall of social justice

The holidays are upon us, and they offer a time to give thanks for what we have. As tough as things seems, for us at times, we forget that we may be the lucky ones who have a job, home, food, transportation, etc. Recently, I found out that a person I know from work was selling toy stuffed bears and homemade candles. I discovered that she was doing this because her sister had passed away less than a year ago, and her family couldn't afford a stone to mark the grave. There were several siblings and between them they could not afford the \$1400 that was needed so they were reaching out to others to help pay for the stone. Imagine a family that cannot even pool their resources to afford a gravestone.

It made me angry and then sad that this family of good people could not honor their sister in a way that might ease some of the pain of losing someone so early in life. I didn't really want any of the items she was selling but made a contribution to the fund for her sister. She cried, amazed that someone who didn't even know her sister would do that. Living out our UU values can be done in so many small ways on a personal level. In this season of food, gifts, family friends, let us not forget those who are struggling just for the basics.

– Ed Cohle
Social Justice Chair

GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

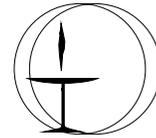
Please fill your "Guest at Your Table" box with coins, dollars, or a check (made out to UUSC). These small boxes can be obtained after the service. Put them out on your table and encourage others at your holiday table to make a donation. You can also use the box to join the UUSC. For the past four years we have been stuck at a membership level in the low 70%s. If we could just reach 75%, we would get a new banner, a new listing in the UUA magazine, and join just eleven other congregations in the entire U.S. that have achieved that level.

So won't you help? Join the only human rights organization that begins with the letters "U.U." It supports our values around the U.S. and around the world every day. Membership is only \$40 per year (\$75 per couple, \$20 for seniors, \$10 for youth/students). And in this holiday season don't give your friends and family more stuff they can't use; give them a gift that they can savor—a membership in UUSC. For more information, see the UUSC website (www.uusc.org), or talk with Robin Garrett, Linda Sander, or Tom Townsend.

Guest at Your Table Challenge: Good news! This year we have \$3,500 in advance/pledged donations to UUSC's Guest at Your Table, which the congregation is challenged to match.

FIRST SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT

Our monthly food collection is on Sunday, December 5. Look for collection baskets in the lobby. *Suggested items for December are **canned meats**.* Let's make this month's donation especially big for the holidays. Reminder: Please check expiration dates. Items past expiration cannot be distributed. As always, other donations are gratefully accepted, too.



BEYOND WAR

John Gribbin recently resigned as chair of the Beyond War subcommittee. A huge thanks to John for all his hard work. Under his leadership this subcommittee sponsored a number of educational events, panels and classes in the past several years.

Interest in this group has decreased in the past year, and it may be time to move on to other issues. There had been some discussion about rethinking the group to be more of a Beyond Conflict group than Beyond War. Some interest in conducting anti-bullying programs was expressed in the past.

If you are interested in championing this group and reviving interest or taking the group in a new but related direction, please contact the social justice committee at email: social-justice before the end of December, so that this subcommittee will continue on.

SHARE-THE-PLATE GENEROSITY

We are pleased to announce that our share-the-plate recipient on December 19 (third Sunday of the month) will be Children Creating Bridges (CCB). Children Creating Bridges' mission is to encourage children to be active participants in cultural and educational exchanges with the goal of bringing hope and celebration of diversity to their own communities and throughout the world. CCB provides free yoga classes to youth in our area. They also have a free book program for children of low-income families. Arts and Crafts programs and language classes are offered to children and adults.

SHARE-THE-PLATE NOMINATIONS NEEDED

We are in need of nominations for our share-the-plate program. Recipients should be local Chester County groups that help people in the area. Preference is given to small, local organizations that do not have large amounts of funds from government or other sources to sustain them. The Social Justice Committee will choose the recipients from the nominees. Nominations for Share-the-Plate must be submitted on the Share-the-Plate Nominations Form.

Forms can be obtained by contacting Ed Cohle or Linda Sander (email: share-the-plate-nominations). Forms need to be submitted by December 7 for this round of nominations but may be sent anytime to be kept on file and presented at the next nomination period in late spring.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING COMMITTEE

Let us help you send a message to newly elected officials in Harrisburg telling them to protect Pennsylvania from the environmental destruction caused by Marcellus Shale gas drilling. As a result of the November 2 election, there will be many new representatives in the Pennsylvania House as well as a new governor this January. We need to inform them about how we Unitarian Universalists think about this issue.

During the month of December, members of the Sustainable Living Committee will be available after services with information and letters which you may sign which will be hand delivered to Harrisburg after the governor's inauguration. Please take this opportunity to speak out on this critical issue.

For more information on gas drilling, see the UU PA Legislative Action Network website: www.uuplan.org/page/marcellus-shale.



BEYOND FUNDRAISING

This month four members of the Fellowship attended a workshop on stewardship conducted by Wayne Clark, Congregational Stewardship Services Director for the UUA. Wayne used as a text for the workshop his book *Beyond Fundraising*, which speaks to the need to look at stewardship as more than simply raising money. Wayne takes a more holistic approach, wherein we learn to cultivate a spirit of joyful giving by learning to appreciate the many gifts we already enjoy, by taking up the work and causes of our religious community, and by celebrating the good works we have already accomplished and plan to accomplish.

We also learned that many UU congregations in our area struggle with the same issues we face, and a number are implementing or are considering the implementation of a multi-year program of stewardship education described as "Forward Through the Ages". A pivotal part of this process is the concept of the Visiting Steward. The Visiting Steward is more than a "canvasser". He or she is a conduit for sharing information, receiving feedback, and exchanging questions and answers between the members and the leadership as to how our congregation is doing and what members feel are the most important issues in their spiritual lives.

The Stewardship Committee would like to know if there is support for such a program of Visiting Stewards within the Fellowship, and we will hold a workshop on Saturday morning, January 15, at the Fellowship to discuss the concept and provide details of the program. We need as many people as possible to participate. There is absolutely no obligation to participate beyond the meeting, but if you attend and are moved to help, we will be glad to have you, and you will find it rewarding. A make-up session will follow shortly after the first meeting. If you are asked to attend by a member of the Stewardship Committee, please say, "Yes". We do our best work when we work together, and this requires our best work.

— Mike Miller

UFWC HOLIDAY PARTIES ARE HERE

Please join us in celebrating the holiday season and our community by attending one or more of the parties we have lined up in December and on New Year's Day. Below are the hosts, dates, times, addresses, and RSVP information. To help our hosts with their planning, please try to RSVP a week in advance if you plan to attend, but you are still welcome if you forget to RSVP or decide at the last minute to go. Directions will be available in the back of the sanctuary and as a link from the Connections emails.

All of the parties are pot-luck. The hosts will provide beverages and one dish, and all guests are asked to bring a dish. Finger food and hors d'oeuvres are preferred since we do not eat at a table. All UFWC members and friends are welcome to any or all of the parties. Families and children are particularly welcome to the New Year's Day party at the fellowship.



The Fun & Fellowship committee thanks all of the hosts and hostesses. To those who offered after our calendar was full, there is always next year.

For general information about UFWC holiday parties, or if you would like a ride, contact Barbara Long or Sharon Sweitzer or email: holiday-parties.

- Sat, Dec 4: Time: 7 p.m.
Hosts: Mike and Flo Miller
1143 Fielding Dr., West Chester
- Sat, Dec 11: Time: 6 p.m.
Hosts: Ed and Diane Cohle
1255 Upton Circle, West Chester
- Sun, Dec 19: Time: 3-7 p.m.
Hosts: Rick and Sandy Marts
115 Violet Dr (off of Street Rd), Kennett Square
- Sat, Jan 1: Time: 6-10 p.m.
Host: UFWC Fun & Fellowship Committee
More info to come in the January *Fellowtarian*
RSVP: email: holiday-parties

THEATRE GROUP

A group is forming of people interested in play reading and possibly a presentation with a focus on spiritual or social justice issues. Although we have a couple of ideas, the more input the farther we can take this new venture. If this is something you have always wanted to try, or have done in the past, let's get together to discuss our ideas. Contact Mira Tryon at email: theatre.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

JANUARY 7-9

Registration is open now for our second Women's Retreat weekend. Last year we had 19 women from UFWC head off to Reading for a weekend of making spiritual and personal connections. It was a fabulous time. We laughed a lot and had some deep conversations as well.

The retreat will be held at Mariawald Renewal Center, which is about 50 minutes away from the Fellowship. We have room for 20 people max. More information and the registration form can be found at <http://web.mac.com/revdeb/page19/page19.html> (click on "Retreat 102 Registration" on Deborah's web-page) along with contact information for our registrar.

If you wish a paper or e-mailed copy ask Deborah or Amanda Lipnack. We also will have funds for those needing financial assistance. The registration deadline is December 10. Sign up now.

LUNCH GROUP

Lunch group will meet Friday, December 10, at 11:30 a.m. at Panera Bread, 1103 West Chester Pike, near Shop Rite. Newcomers are welcome. To be added to the e-mail reminder list, contact Linda Sander at email: lunch-group. The reminders are an easy way to RSVP, so we can save enough seats for everyone.

If you don't have e-mail or you change your mind at the last minute, come anyway. Everyone is welcome.

FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

All email addresses @ufwc.org unless otherwise noted.

Dec 1	Wed	Religious Education Committee. 7 p.m. Youth Group Room. Contact Clarke Arnold, email: RE
Dec 2	Thu	Religious Services Committee. 7:30 p.m. Office. Contact Gerry Giess or Diane Minka, email: Office.
Dec 4	Sat	Holiday Party. 7 p.m. Hosts: Flo and Mike Miller. See p. 9.
Dec 5	Sun	Sunday Food Collection. Lobby. See p. 7. Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal. 10:10 a.m. See p. 3.
Dec 6	Mon	Embracing Diversity Team. 7 p.m. Office. Contact Helena Graham, email embracing-diversity.
Dec 7	Tue	Share the Plate Nominations Deadline. See p. 8.
Dec 8	Wed	Parent Support Group. 7 p.m. Office. Contact Sharon Meyer-Conroy, email: parent-support.
Dec 9	Thu	Social Justice Committee. 7:15-9 p.m. Office. Contact Ed Cohle, email: social-justice.
Dec 10	Fri	Lunch Group. 11:30 a.m. Panera Bread. See p. 9.
Dec 11	Sat	Deck the Hall. 11 a.m. Sanctuary. See p. 6. Holiday Party. 6 p.m. Hosts: Diane and Ed Cohle. See p. 9.
Dec 12	Sun	Safe Harbor Dinner. 6 p.m. Provided by the Fellowship the second Sunday of the month. To help, contact Sharon Mayer-Conroy, email: safe-harbor Exploring Diversity Book Group. 5 p.m. film at Kerri Petterson's home, followed by discussion at 7 p.m. See p. 6.
Dec 14	Tue	Board Meeting. 7 p.m. Office. All are welcome. Contact Diane Cohle, email: president
Dec 19	Sun	Share the Plate Sunday. Benefits Children Creating Bridges. See p. 8. Holiday Party. 3 p.m. Hosts: Sandy and Rick Marts. See p. 9. Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal. 10:10 a.m. See p. 3.
Dec 21	Tue	Celebrate the Solstice. 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 4.
Dec 24-27	Fri-Mon	Office closed.
Dec 28	Tue	Fellowship Council. 7-9 p.m. Office. Contact Mark Steel, email: program
Jan 1	Sat	New Year's Day Party. 6 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 9.

Groups meeting multiple times in a month:

- Spirit Singers** Practices 7:30-9 p.m. Generally the three Thursdays before the third Sunday (which is when they sing at services). No practice on the fourth Thursday. Contact Helen Meacham, email: choir
- Youth Group** Most Sundays, 10:45-noon. Youth Group Room. Email: youth-group.