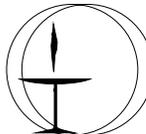


UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF WEST CHESTER
501 S HIGH ST
WEST CHESTER PA 19382

 **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

June 2011

June 5

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Rev. Deborah Mero

As we make the decision at our Annual Meeting whether or not to take the next step in looking at possible new names for the congregation, the whole issue of names and what they say about us brings forth many thoughts both personal and institutional.

June 12

9 a.m. Service

RE SUNDAY: EXPLORING THE UU PATH

Pam Baxter, DRE

Join us for our annual retrospective of the year's Religious Education classes and honor our volunteer teachers. Find out what's in the Treasure Box and the Toolbox of Faith, get advice from Answer Mountain and explore the possibilities of the universe with Carl Sagan. After the service, enjoy our traditional Enhanced Coffee Hour in honor of our teachers. Come help us celebrate!

11 a.m. Service

YOUTH BRIDGING CEREMONY

Youth Group

We celebrate this year's graduating seniors and their transition from Youth to Young Adulthood. This promises to be a moving service, full of music, song, and spirit. Join in welcoming these young people of our congregation into the adult community.

June 19

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Rev David Long

10 a.m. Single Service

As students are graduating across the nation, we will examine the difference between education and indoctrination, universalism and sectarianism. How does the power of the educator affect the interaction of the student with his/her world? Can suppression of thought lead to suppression of life and action? Decide for yourself.

June 26

YE OLDE HYMN SING

Michael Werner and

10 a.m. Single Service

(PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS STUMP THE HYMNIST)

Helen Meacham

Please join us in raising up your voice in a song-fest of your favorite hymns. In what has become a favorite service for many over the past eight years, we will once again explore our hymnal and gather together to sing our favorite hymns. We've given up trying to stump the pianist; now we focus our energy and voices on old favorites, new melodies, and general good fun as we celebrate our congregational voice. Bring your hymnal and a list of hymns which you want us to try, a sense of humor, a warmed up voice, and be a part of the largest pick-up choir in Chester County.

Services and Babysitting at 9 AM and 11 AM. (10 AM during summer schedule)

THE SONG OF DEBORAH

The 2010-11 year is drawing to a close. I just finished writing my annual report that went on for three pages and only touched on what we have been doing together this past year. No wonder so many of us are tired, we have done a lot this past year. One of the things I mentioned in the report which I think bears repeating here is that this has been a year of stabilizing. Between the transition to a new minister (four years ago already!) an economic great recession, a new UU congregation starting in the neighborhood and the general stresses on everyone's lives, it's been quite a ride. We lost some members, we gained others. We seem now to be hitting a more measured and regular stride. Hopefully this will be the new base upon which we will grow.

I know that many years ago you had conversations about growth. You worked to put systems in place with that in mind. I think it is time to have the conversation again. What do we mean by growth? What would it look like? What do we have to do, change to get there? Those are important questions. Some of the people who answered them the last time are no longer with us, and there is a whole new group of people who have not been brought into that conversation. I hope that will be on the agenda as we move into the 2011-12 year.

Along with that conversation, there is an opportunity to adopt a successful program being used in another congregation in the district. The program was presented in a workshop at the JPD conference. They were so enthusiastic about it that Mark and I caught that enthusiasm. It involves hospitality, and it involves teamwork, both of which we do pretty well. After

meeting with Mark and with our incoming President we are looking to spend a chunk of time at our August retreat focusing on how we could adapt that program to our situation. It is a missing piece of the puzzle that is our congregational life, and we are hopeful it will do for us what it did for the other congregation – build teams, build relationships, engage people at the periphery, provide an easy entry point for new people. And it also involves parties! It sounds like it is made for us.

The other thing I wanted to say in this forum is how much I have appreciated working with Diane Cohle these past two years. She has served as an exceptionally talented president and brought innumerable skills to the task. I've enjoyed getting to know her and

am so grateful for our collaboration. Many, many more thanks are included in my annual report but I wanted to especially thank Diane here.

Congregations are nominally institutions, but they are far more organic than what the word "institution" implies. Everything depends on the character of the

Congregations are...far more organic than what the word "institution" implies. Everything depends on the character of the people involved, the level of engagement, and the level of support.

people involved, the level of engagement, and the level of support. I have been blessed to be a part of this very organic institution and look forward to our efforts together to continue to build and grow. I wish

you a summer of peace, joy, friendships, and personal growth. May we return in September to take up the work again together.

– In faith and love,
Deborah

PRELIMINARY SUMMER SCHEDULE OF THE MINISTER

Deborah will be in the pulpit or participating in the services for the first half of June. She will continue to be in the office through June 17 and generally available until the 24th. From June 25 to July 14 she will be on call for emergencies but not attending meetings. From July 15 through August 12 she will be on vacation. During the summer the Pastoral Care Team will be fielding general non-emergency needs. More detail will be contained in the July *Fellowtarian*.

SINGLE SUNDAY SERVICES BEGIN JUNE 19

Beginning June 19, UFWC will have single services (rather than two services) each Sunday at 10 a.m. This will continue throughout the summer. The September *Fellowtarian* will announce the date on which double service resume.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I can hardly believe that we are coming to the end of another year. The year began with a retreat where the members of the Board of Trustees and chairs of key committees met to make plans for the new year. This leadership retreat established directions and goals for the UFWC, as well as, generated energy and enthusiasm for the plans. Participants at this retreat identified goals for 2010-11. The group had many ideas but decided to focus on the following: complete the development of a Long Range plan, begin the implementation of the Long Range Plan, embrace diversity within and beyond our walls, establish the use of neighborhood group gatherings to increase the strength of our community, expand the Stewardship Committee, and develop a capital campaign to address building issues.

As we are nearing the closing of the year, I am very appreciative of all of the work that has been accomplished on these goals. My annual president report which will be available at the annual meeting gives more details. Please plan on attending the annual meeting on Sunday, June 5, at 7 p.m. Information from other leaders in the fellowship will also be available. The meeting will be preceded by a potluck dinner at 6 p.m.

At the last meeting of the name study committee, the members discussed an issue brought to our attention during the last several months. Several people have asked why "church" has not been included in the process. The name study committee was working with information from four years ago. Now our membership has changed and has expressed concern in not even considering the word church. If there is a vote to continue to look into a name change for the UFWC, the committee recommends that this issue be addressed during the discussions that will be held next year. The vote to be taken at the annual congregational meeting only addresses if we want to move forward with considering a name change. The wording for the vote is as follows:

Our mission guides our important work. I encourage you to support our fellowship financially and by volunteering your time.

Resolved,

That the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester continue to explore changing its name through a process to be determined by the Board of Trustees and a committee to be created by the Board with the goal of proposing a name change to the congregation within the next fiscal year.

I have just completed my term as your president. I want to take this opportunity to thank Reverend Deborah Mero for her dedication to our fellowship. Through her leadership and commitment to the UFWC, she continues to work on all aspects of our mission. I want to also acknowledge my fellow board members: Rick Marts (vice president), Sandy Schaal (secretary), Fred Frayer, Helena Graham, Curt Hoganson, and Dirk Troltenier. I appreciate their dedication and willingness to serve. Many thanks go to Mike Miller for his skill in the financial area and to Mark Steel for his coordination of all of the work completed by the committees. Your involvement in work parties, social events, religious education classes, to name a few, contributes to the vitality of this congregation. THANK YOU!

I feel honored to have served this congregation as board president. All of my efforts have been influenced by 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.

Our mission guides our important work. I encourage you to support our fellowship financially and by volunteering your time. Together with all of your help, I am certain that we will continue to accomplish our mission to create spiritual growth, to build meaningful connections, and to advance peace and justice in the world.

– Respectfully submitted,
Diane Cohle

REMARKS – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

Sometimes when I'm out walking I amuse myself by finding a stone and kicking it ahead of me as I go. A good stone is one that tracks straight and travels far. One day recently, I found a small stone and gave it several tries. It was pretty much a dud, going only a few crooked feet before coming to a stop. A bit in frustration I gave it one last kick, with more energy behind it. The stone took off, to land about 30 feet away, right in the middle of the street. So, was the stone a dud or the person trying to move it?

Of course I thought immediately about how this experience ties in perfectly with UU religious education and RE Sunday (coming up on June 12). And now you will know for sure that I am a little obsessed with RE.

On RE Sunday, as we celebrate the accomplishments of the RE classes and acknowledge the efforts of our volunteer teachers, we might stop and reflect: Where are our children now, relative to where they started in September? How far has our collective energy propelled them?

I pose those questions with the awareness that in UU religious education we recognize that each child is shaped differently from the next and may very well go in a direction we didn't plan. But their way will suit them. We also know the importance of leaving plenty of space for children's questions and their own ideas. Part of UU religious education is providing a safe and respectful place for children to explore and test what they think they know and believe. All these things help shape them. Unlike a small stone, children can – and will – morph. They can choose their path.

Whatever their "shape," and whatever their path, much of the energy propelling our children forward obviously comes from the energy we put into the RE program and from our congregation as a whole modeling what it is to be UU. We provide the space. We provide energy and direction. But the children add their own unique energy and put their own spin on their spiritual quest.

I hope you will be able to join us at 9:00 on June 12 to enjoy some of the energy of RE and help thank the members and friends of

the congregation who devoted their time and energy to moving our children farther along on the UU path this year. Then, at 11:00, enjoy the annual Youth Bridging service, which celebrates those students who are graduating from high school this year. Please also consider bringing something to contribute to our annual Enhanced Coffee Hour, to honor our volunteer teachers. (See box below.)

– Pam Baxter

Director of Religious Education

ENHANCED COFFEE HOUR

Between services on Sunday, June 12, the Religious Education Committee invites you to join us for our traditional "enhanced coffee hour" to honor our dedicated and creative RE teachers. We would greatly appreciate it if friends and members, especially non-teaching parents, would bring in some kind of brunch-type treat that morning: muffins, scones, coffee cake, bagels & cream cheese, bake-ahead egg dishes, fruit, juice, milk, etc. Please contact Nancy Schilling nancschi@yahoo.com no later than Thursday, June 9, to let her know what you are bringing, so we can fill in any gaps.

YOUTH GROUP

The Fellowship year is winding down for your Amazing Youth Group. Our last Sunday meeting will be June 5, but until then we're planning the bridging service we'll present at 11 a.m. on June 12. Please come to this fantastic service where we will celebrate our seniors as they step into being young adults.

We're also working on a summer picnic with other Unitarian Universalist Youth Groups in the area, and we're looking forward to Summer CON July 8-10.

Thanks to everyone – youth, advisors, parents, the congregation and Deborah and Pam – who helped our Youth Group be Amazing this year.

Join us downstairs in the Youth Room at 10:45 on Sunday mornings until June 5. Questions? Want to get on our e-mail list? Contact us at email: youth-group.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: COMMUNICATION, GROWTH, AND SAFETY

The Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, May 10, 2011. As an offshoot of our Communication Committee's activities, the Board briefly discussed ways of intentionally marketing UFWC to attract visitors and new members. Direct mail and Facebook were two opportunities discussed. This, in turn, led to a general discussion of membership growth. The newly completed Long Range Plan recommends that a team be created to focus on the implications of growth on our facility's location and condition. The Board agreed to move forward with the creation of a Growth Implications Team.

Director of Religious Education, Pam Baxter, discussed work underway to create a "Safe Congregation" policy. She noted progress on several key issues – including the "unwanted intruder" – that directly involve safety within the RE program and space. At the next meeting, the Membership Committee will present their team-update.

The Board encourages UFWC members and friends to share comments and concerns with Board members, as well as to attend Board meetings if interested. The June meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 31, in the office at 7 p.m., rather than on the regularly scheduled date. Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board at the back of the sanctuary. Members of the Board include Diane Cohle, president; Fred Frayer; Curt Hoganson; Dirk Troltenier; Helena Graham; Rick Marts, vice president; and Sandra Schaal, secretary.

GROWTH IMPLICATIONS TEAM BEING FORMED

Are you interested in helping the Fellowship work through one of its most important decisions of the last – and the next – 20 years? If so, keep reading this article.

Our growth over the last decade has been impressive, increasing 46 percent from 127 members to our present level of 185. And a survey of the congregation in 2009 revealed our overwhelming desire to continue growing. But while growth in numbers provides us with unprecedented opportunities to more meaningfully achieve our mission and goals, it also presents a significant dilemma.

Many believe that our existing facility at 501 High Street is limiting – and increasingly so – the effectiveness of our programs, ministries, and even our ability to attract new members. Moreover, continuing our life in this facility is likely to require hundreds of thousands of dollars in repairs (roof, windows, mold) in the near future. Our dilemma is how and when do we face the question of whether we move to a new location that could better meet our needs or remodel our current facility to remain in a safer, more efficient, and more appealing (especially to visitors) structure.

This question was addressed in a 2008 report that concluded our facility was, at that time, adequate to meet our needs. However, our current 2011-2016 Long Range Plan recommends that this issue be restudied in light of today's membership and growing concerns with our current facility.

Your Board of Trustees, therefore, will soon charter a Growth Implications Team to explore this question. We plan to staff the team with at least seven thoughtful and energetic members who, over the next year, will explore the constraints and possibilities that surround an issue as important as this one. The team will answer many questions about our facility and congregation, as well as the experiences of other congregations who worked through this issue. The team might also consider such issues as safety, image, versatility, emotional ownership, and mission that could influence our decision-making.

Please consider saying, "Yes!" if asked to join the Growth Implications Team.

– Rick Marts and Fred Frayer, Board Members



The Fellowtarian is the monthly newsletter of the **Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester**

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Pam Baxter, Dir. of Religious Ed email: dre

Steve and Linda Sander, Editors email: fellowtarian

STONES IN THE SAME WALL SOCIAL JUSTICE

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

FIRST SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT

**This month's Suggested Items:
Pasta, Rice, Mac and Cheese**

Our monthly food collection is on Sunday, June 5. Look for collection baskets in the lobby. We participate in a special program that assures the food bank of specific items on any given month so please keep this month's needs in mind when you donate – see above. As always, other donations are gratefully accepted, too. Reminder: Please check expiration dates. Items past expiration cannot be distributed.

SHARE-THE-PLATE GENEROSITY

We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient on June 19 (third Sunday of the month): **Maternal & Child Health Consortium (Chester County)**. The Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County provides bilingual, bicultural Family Health Advocates in Chester County who provide prenatal and postpartum home visiting, health insurance enrollment, health education, medical interpretation services, transportation assistance and connections to community resources to increase self-sufficiency.



GROCERY STORE CARD PROGRAM

It's easy – you purchase a gift card from UFWC to use in a participating grocery store. Spend the full amount exactly like cash, while the Fellowship earns 5% of the value of the card.

For example, you buy \$100 worth of grocery cards for \$100. You use them like cash at the store for \$100 worth of goods. But the Fellowship has only paid \$95 for the cards, so we earn \$5 (or 5% of the purchase).

Giant, Acme, Shoprite and Superfresh participate and give us the 5% discount. See us after each service during refreshments. Simply write a check to UFWC, or use cash, to buy cards for the stores of your choice. We'll answer any questions you might have.

PASTORAL CARE AVAILABLE ALL SUMMER

With summer just around the corner, many are concentrating on well earned vacations, family time and retreats, including our own minister, Rev. Deborah Mero. The dedicated members of the UFWC Pastoral Care Team will remain available throughout the summer months.

The Pastoral Care Team, consisting of Cindy Heck, Sharon Sweitzer, John Gribbin, Jon McCormack, Eileen Kelly-Meyer, Amy Spears, Bruce Neff, Fatima Patel and Ellen Schipul, assists Rev. Mero in providing help and support to those who are faced with challenges that life sometimes offers.

The members of the Pastoral Care Team have personally experienced, worked through, or overcome many difficult situations and have collected information about resources and services available within the greater West Chester area.

The PCT encourages those facing a hard time to know that they do not have to do it alone and encourages them to contact us. Whether it is organizing meals or rides to doctors, offering an empathic and non-judgmental ear, or making visits to a shut-in or hospital patient, there is someone who cares and is willing to help out. The PCT never gives out any personal or contact information without permission.

To contact the Pastoral Care Team in Rev. Mero's absence, just contact us directly and confidentially at email: pastoral-care or call the main office number to request someone to call you.

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP PLANNING MEETING

The Fun & Fellowship Committee plans social events to help us meet and get to know each other. Making meaningful connections is one of the main reasons we come to the Fellowship. Social events and activities are good ways to establish and strengthen our relationships.

We will meet on Saturday, June 11, at 12:30 p.m. at Mary Yeager's home to plan activities and events for the upcoming Fellowship year. I invite you to come to our planning meeting and participate in organizing our fun and enriching events.

Some of the activities we have in the works are a family pool party, a summer eve campfire, our annual fall picnic, and monthly game nights. Maybe you have an idea for enriching our community; come to our planning meeting at a member's home and share your ideas. Together we can do great things.

You don't need to bring anything except your enthusiasm. Contact Mary Yeager at email: fun to let us know you are coming and to get directions.

FOLK SINGING

The next folk singing get-together is Saturday, June 25, at 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. All are welcome. No singing talent or experience is necessary. Bring a munchie, if you wish. Maps are in the foyer. Contact Steve at email: folk-singing.

This will be the last folk singing get-together until September.

THEATRE/PLAY READING GROUP

The Theatre/Play Reading group has been active. Our next meeting for play reading will be Father's Day, Sunday, June 19, after the service. We have an assortment of plays for two to six people, depending on who attends. No experience is necessary, just the desire to have fun and maybe fulfill that wannabe actor in you. If there is interest, a short theatrical skit might be performed some time. Anyone is welcome to join us reading on the 19th, or just sit and listen. For more information, contact Mira at email: theatre.



GAME NIGHT

Our next game night will be on June 3 at 6:30 p.m. What a great way to end a busy week! Bring a main dish or a side dish to share as well as a beverage and games to play.. Please don't be shy about coming; everyone is welcome. You are encouraged to bring a friend. We play a variety of games – board games, card games – new ones and old favorites too. So bring what you want to play and relax; it's supposed to be fun. You can message Mary Yeager at email: game-night if you have any questions.

COFFEE HOUSE

The next Coffee House is Saturday, June 11. The featured act is Carolyn Colt and Michael de Niro, singer-songwriters. There will be no Coffee House in July and August. The next one is September 10. Contact Judy Perri, email: coffeehouse.

POOL PARTY

Cool down the summer heat and turn up the music on Sunday, July 10, at noon with a Pool Party hosted by one of our members. Look for more info in next month's *Fellowtarian*.

LUNCH GROUP

There will be no lunch group get-togethers June through August. See the September *Fellowtarian* for the date, time, and location for the group's resumption in the fall.

SQUARE DANCE, MAY 29

On the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend, May 29, from 7:30 - 9 p.m., Fun and Fellowship is hosting a square dance at UFWC.

For more information, contact Nancy Artus at email: community-dances.

Please see the May *Fellowtarian* for a more detailed article. If you can walk, you can dance.

FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

All email addresses @ufwc.org unless otherwise noted.

- May 31 Tue June Board Meeting** (rescheduled from June 14). 7 p.m. Office. All are welcome. Contact Diane Cohle, email: president. See p. 5.
- Jun 1 Wed Religious Education Committee.** 7 p.m. Youth Group Room. Contact Clarke Arnold, email: RE
- Jun 2 Thu Animal Ministry.** 7-8 p.m. Fireplace Rm. Contact John Gribbin, e-mail animal-ministry.
- Jun 3 Fri Potluck and Game Night.** 6:30 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 7.
- Jun 5 Sun First Sunday Food Collection.** Lobby. See p. 6.
- Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal.** 10:10 a.m. Downstairs. Contact Abby McGillivray, email: intergenerational-choir.
- Annual Congregational Meeting.** Potluck dinner 6 p.m. Meeting 7 p.m. Contact Diane Cohle, e-mail president.
- Last Youth group Meeting of the Fellowship Year.** 10:45 a.m., Youth Group room. See p. 4.
- Jun 6 Mon Embracing Diversity Team.** 7 p.m. Office. Contact Helena Graham or Cate MacFadyen, email: embracing-diversity
- Jun 9 Thu Social Justice Committee.** 7:15-9 p.m. Office. Contact Ed Cohle, email: social-justice
- Jun 11 Sat Coffee House.** 7 p.m. Sanctuary. Contact Judy Perri email: coffee-house. See p. 7.
- Jun 12 Sun RE Sunday Enhanced Coffee Hour.** Between the RE Sunday service and the Youth Group Bridging service. See p. 4.
- Membership Committee Meeting.** 3 p.m. Barbara Long's home. Contact Barbara Long, e-mail membership
- 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
- Jun 18 Sat Fun and Fellowship Planning Meeting.** 12:30 p.m. Mary Yeager's home. Contact Mary Yeager, e-mail: fun. See p. 7.
- Jun 19 Sun Single Sunday Services Begin** at 10 a.m.
- Share the Plate Sunday.** Benefits Maternal & Child Health Consortium (Chester County). See p. 6.
- Theatre/Play Reading Group.** After the Sunday service. See p. 7.
- Meditation Group.** 5 p.m. Sanctuary. Contact Harriet Singer or Deanna Gabe, email: meditation.
- Jun 20 Mon Women's Circle.** 7-9 p.m. Youth Group Room. Contact Debby Kern, email: women's-circle
- Men's Discussion Group.** 7:30-9 p.m. Office. Contact Ralph Mero, e-mail mens-group
- Jun 22 Wed Parent Support Group.** 7 p.m. Office. Contact Sharon Meyer-Conroy, email: parent-support
- Jun 25 Sat Folk Singing.** 8 p.m. at the home of Steve and Linda Sander. See p. 7.