

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



the
FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

Telephone: 610-692-5966 Web: www.ucwc.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 May, 2012

May 6

MUSIC SUNDAY

Our annual service where we lift up the musical talents of our members and friends.

May 13

THE FIRST AMERICAN FEMINIST

Rev. Deborah Mero

No, it wasn't Susan B. Anthony or Julia Ward Howe. Margaret Fuller was a writer, critic, editor, transcendentalist, and the inspiration for generations of women to follow her. On this Mother's Day it is fitting to look back on the mother of the movement that continues to this day with still many hurdles to overcome.

May 20

TO THOSE WHO DESERVE IT

**Ed Cohle
and the Social Justice Committee**

Many people today say they support welfare, affordable healthcare, unemployment insurance funds, food programs, etc., but only for the "people who deserve it". What is our responsibility for the common good, for everyone in our communities? The phrase "people who deserve it" needs to be looked at closely to see what (or perhaps who) that really means.

May 27

A FAITH WITHOUT FEAR

Rev. Deborah Mero

For many of us, the faith that we grew up with had many elements designed into it to keep us afraid—afraid of a number of things. Unitarian Universalism is different in this regard. Do we need fear to motivate us into being good people? If not, what does?

Services and Babysitting at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Religious Education at 9 a.m. only.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH

Spring is swiftly moving by us and summer will be here before we know it. In our yard we have re-constructed our "cold frame," a metal frame with a reinforced plastic tent over it with a variety of flaps to let in air and water or close them out depending on how we zip or fasten the Velcro. Clever people designed it and we have used it for four years now to get our seedlings ready to go into the ground.

This year with the crazy weather we never got around to starting the seeds in our basement with the grow light and seed trays and all of that stuff we have carefully done in the past. Instead, we set up the frame and tent and just started our seeds in the trays outside under the protection of the tent. The lettuce just went into the ground sans tent. Lo and behold they are doing fine—so far.

I'm not used to skipping steps in processes I've repeated over the years. There is something missing by not observing the usual ritual—at least psychologically. Whether or not that will matter in the end result, time will tell. But it does remind me that we all have rituals that we follow in so many of the simple things we do, and any change to that ritual can give us pause. The Little Prince, in his story was taught to observe the proper ritual in taming his fox—gradually getting to know it and befriend it.

Ritual is an essential part of our lives, from the motions we go

through when we get up in the morning to the things we do as we get ready for bed at night. Those motions and things ground us and set the tone for the day or allow us to end it in peace.

Obviously, religious communities are places where ritual plays an essential role. When we worship together we give worth to something we value and we do it with a predictable frame around it. Even though

Growth is a wonderful and mysterious thing needing just the right care and attention.

our service can have a wide variation of styles and topics from one week to the next there are elements that remain steady and consistent from week to week. We sing, recite our vision statement, welcome visitors, note the announcements, celebrate our joys and lift up our sorrows, take up a collection and hear something, hopefully, of value to help us live our lives and make them a blessing to the world.

Trying to determine well ahead of time what that something will be can often be tricky. We each enter the sanctuary on any given Sunday with different needs, different from any one else's and different, even for ourselves, from one week to the next. We challenge one another to learn more about our faith and those who helped form and shape it, to decipher the intricacies of the human condition, to find meaning in the grand and little things that we are called to do just to live our days with some measure of dignity and worth. It is an important part of

the week to take the time for that ritual.

Our days, weeks, and years are filled with so much that distracts us, that overwhelms us, that challenges us. At the same time, if we look we can also find the things that feed us, nurture us, help us grow. Sometimes we have the luxury of a temperate greenhouse atmosphere to germinate the next phase we are to grow into. Sometimes we have to fend for ourselves and quickly adjust and adapt to a whole new set of conditions for which we are not prepared. I hope that being part of our congregation is something that helps ground you and prepare you for some of the twists and turns of the journey of life.

We are all a part of a spirit or force far greater than ourselves. The more we connect with one another, the more support and guidance we have for that. In a way, our community serves as that covered frame to protect us from the elements when needed and yet offer us the opportunity to let the sunshine, air and rain in when the time is right.

Growth is a wonderful and mysterious thing needing just the right care and attention. May we continue to provide that care and attention, that protection and invitation to risk for one another within our sacred community.

– In faith,
Deborah

The Fellowtarian is the monthly newsletter of the
Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

**501 South High Street
West Chester, PA 19382**

Web: www.ucwc.org

All email addresses @ucwc.org

Rev. Deborah Mero, Minister 610-692-4043 email: minister
Barbara Robinson, Office Administrator 610-692-5966 email: office
Mary Yeager, President email: president
Pam Baxter, Dir. of Religious Ed email: dre
Steve and Linda Sander, Editors email: fellowtarian

**Don't forget to
buy grocery store
coupons after each
Sunday service.**



REMARKS – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE ON THE TRAIL OF OUR UU ROOTS

In April, I accompanied the Coming of Age class on a trip to Boston to explore the roots of Unitarian Universalism in America. Boston is the logical destination for such a pilgrimage, having been home to renowned and acclaimed Unitarians of the day, including William Ellery Channing and Theodore Parker.

Our tour guide told us that Channing (minister of Arlington Street Church from 1803 to 1842) was like one of today's rock stars – known around the globe and with

people eagerly awaiting his next sermon, address or essay. A bronze statue of Channing stands at the edge of the Boston Public Garden, across the street from the church. Theodore Parker* was minister of the 7,000-member 28th Congregational Society -- founded by his supporters -- preaching to crowds upward of 5,000 and beyond. Even by today's Boston population, that's a lot of people.

Boston was also the landing place for Hosea Ballou – sometimes

called the father of Universalism in America -- who served as pastor of the Second Universalist Church there from 1817 to 1852. And Boston houses the UUA offices at 25 Beacon Street.

While I already knew something of UU history and had been to Boston before, I was surprised by how much more there was to see and how different it looked when viewed from the perspective of a UU explorer. Unitarian Universalism seems to live and breathe on the Boston streets.

Our group toured Kings Chapel, Harvard Divinity School (we sat in the room where Ralph Waldo Emerson gave his pivotal address to the graduating class in 1838), the UUA offices and attended Sunday morning services at the Arlington Street Church. It was interesting to get a sense of the Christian roots of Unitarianism, and to imagine how Emerson's words – suggesting that belief in Jesus and miracles is not necessary

to a moral life – would have fallen on ears of that time.

Another great part of the trip was the opportunity to spend some time in the company of our Coming of Age students. They are smart, funny, fun, inquisitive, responsible, sensitive, capable, flexible, and self-directed young people. And they said they, too, got a lot from the trip.

One final thing that was driven home to me: It's easy to think of Unitarian Universalism as a relatively new faith. I think that's because we constantly re-evaluate what we're about, and challenge beliefs that no longer serve, so that UUism always feels fresh. Unitarianism has roots that go back to the first centuries after the death of Jesus. Universalism has roots going back to 17th-century England, but as a branching off from the Christianity of the day, it too has deeper roots. In order to understand how fresh Unitarian Universalism is, it's helpful to step into the past.

– Pam Baxter

Director of Religious Education

In order to understand how fresh Unitarian Universalism is, it's helpful to step into the past.

*Parker's name may not be well known outside of UU circles, but his words live on in speeches by Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Do these words sound familiar?:

"Democracy is direct self-government, over all the people, for all the people, by all the people."

"I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice."

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

April has flown by, and May and June aren't far behind. If you are planning on attending the UUA General Assembly (GA) on June 20-24, let us know (email: minister) so that we can connect you with others in our congregation's contingency. While anyone can go to GA, our congregation has a limited number of delegate positions. If you wish to be a delegate to represent us, you must notify the board by May 4, so that the Board can make the delegate selections at our May Board meeting.

If you are interested or want to know more, contact us so that we can connect you to people who have gone in past years.

– Mary Yeager

ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

The Congregation's Board is hosting our annual planning meeting on Saturday, May 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. While all committee chairs have been individually invited, this workshop is open to all members and friends of our Congregation. Our purpose is to discuss where to focus our energies in the coming year and what is important to us. Topics include revisiting our growth initiative and discussing our social justice goals. There will also be opportunities for new ideas that attendees bring.

Come and share your ideas. Together we can do great things. Contact Mary Yeager at email: president for more information, or if you wish to attend.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Late April includes the observation of National Office Administrator Day. It seems a good time for the Board to remember a member of our staff who is a bit of an unsung hero. Barbara Robinson has been with us for over four years, and many of you may not know her or what a great asset she is to our congregation. The Board wants to bring the good work of our staff and volunteers to your attention, so look for our *Notes of Appreciation* in this and future issues of *The Fellowtarian*. We began with Barbara because she does a great job often behind the scenes. We want you to know that she is a great resource for you as a committee member or a first time visitor. I encourage you to forward her a personal note of thanks or to call her with questions pertaining to our congregation.

While late April is traditionally time for our Stewardship drive to be winding down, our plan is for Stewardship to be a year-long process in the future. It makes sense, since stewardship isn't just about our finances; it is about supporting our Congregation and its mission. Supporting the congregation's mission is what next year's budget is all about. Those of you who haven't responded to the annual pledge drive could be holding us back from completing our annual budget plan on time. As you make your pledges, please keep in mind that last year we needed an average pledge of \$1,500 per family to meet our budget. I include this information as a resource for you in planning your contributions. Of course, only you know what you can and should contribute.

The Board heard a great deal of testimonial evidence about the superlative performance of our staff...

I appreciate the feedback many of you provided to the Board in March. Your input clarified the will of the congregation for us. The Board heard a great deal of testimonial evidence about the superlative performance of our staff including many examples of how the staff performs far beyond their expected duties and how the staff is vital to the life of the congregation and crucial to the success of our mission. The overwhelming conclusion was that we are indeed fortunate to have our staff, and that as a UU organization that believes in fairness and honesty, the Congregation should continue to provide our staff equitable compensation.

For these reasons, the Board believes that during times of potential budget shortfalls—such as what occurred last year—instead of first reducing critical committee budgets or staff compensation as solutions to our revenue shortfall, we need to focus on finding additional revenue to balance our budget. But this search should not occur at the last minute. Thinking about and planning for revenue generation in the form of pledges (the vast bulk of our revenue) and fund raising activities need to go on continuously during the year—hence the transition to the yearlong Stewardship Program.

Looking ahead has prompted us to move our annual planning meeting to May. This change gives the Board, our minister, the Executive Team, and our committees more lead time for our plans to blossom. Saturday, May 5, is our chance to brainstorm where we want to lead the Congregation in the year ahead. We need your participation in order to make the decisions which take us on the road to our future. Without you, it just won't be the same.

– Mary Yeager (email: president)



GROWTH!

WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

Don't worry, I am pro-growth – and not just growth in our numbers, but growth in many other valuable and important ways.

In fact, references to growth are popping up with increasing frequency. In last month's *Fellowtarian*, contributors mentioned growth at least three times. Deborah said, "Growth is essential to life...may we all continue to learn, to risk, to grow. Rob Sartain wrote, "Our congregation is alive with a brilliant energy... Let's use that energy to grow the congregation, to welcome the stranger as we were welcomed..." And our president, Mary Yeager, said that during our May 5 planning meeting an important issue will be "revisiting our growth initiative."

But what do we mean by growth? More faces, more pledges, more people signing the book? Yes, to some extent. But more importantly – according to a UUA consultant working with our Board of Trustees – we need to grow in at least four additional ways, including increasing our ability to

- challenge, support and encourage our members to grow individually in the maturity of their faith, deepen their spiritual roots, and broaden their religious imaginations;
- build community, create organizational structures, manage conflict, nurture leaders, and enhance our network of human relationships;
- become a catalyst for a just and compassionate world; and
- participate in UUA activities at the district, regional, and national levels.

Fortunately, this year we hope to become part of the Threshold Congregation Program, which will be a significant, 3-year opportunity for us to partner with our regional UUA offices and other UU churches as we focus on our growth in all its possible manifestations. Stay tuned.

– Rick Marts, Vice President
Board of Trustees

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Who is the behind the scenes genie that makes everything we do run so smoothly? It's Barbara Robinson, our Office Administrator.

The volunteers running the many activities here at UCWC know how much her support matters. Her close tracking of our many goings-on starts when she puts together our calendar and continues as it is updated and activities take shape. Barbara is so reliable that many of us take her support for granted... so it is entirely right that we openly recognize the gift she is to us.

Barbara is keenly aware that most volunteers have other full-time responsibilities, so she is careful to give reminders of deadlines far in advance. This helps the volunteers to fit their UCWC commitments into their busy schedules, while helping Barbara get her work done more efficiently and effectively.

When she began at UCWC in August of 2007, Barbara was asked by the board to establish a central home for information. Those of us who remember the pre-Barbara days know that activity files often went home with the chair and committee members and weren't always readily available to next year's volunteers. Thus, we can appreciate the gentle but firm reminders to submit activity files to Barbara (much aided by the nearly universal use of computers in accomplishing our volunteer tasks).

Likewise, the Board and Rev. Mero have come to depend on Barbara to be a welcoming voice on the phone to both newcomers seeking information about us, and to members and friends as we all work to achieve our mission. She keeps us organized and on track—not an easy task. She pays attention to the needs of the rest of the staff as well as the needs of our aging building. She is persistent in her practice of saving us as much money as possible in our operations—something few pay attention to in the detailed way she does.

Prior to joining the UCWC staff Barbara spent six years as Building and Office Administrator at Congregation Or Shalom in Berwyn, and previous to that she worked in business. Her innate tendency to be detail-oriented and highly organized was honed in these positions.

Barbara has found working at non profits especially satisfying because their interest in money is not for its own sake, but for the purpose

of carrying out good works. She appreciates that at UCWC she does not "have to leave my ethics and values at the door."

Barbara and her husband Alan greatly enjoy music and theater and fit as much into their schedules as they can.

Thank you again, Barbara, for all of your talent, support, organizational skills and energy!



FINANCIALLY YOURS

Spring brings tax time, and every year it also brings budget time for UCWC. If you are like me, one set of numbers is enough to make your eyes cross, and two are double jeopardy. But at least with our budget we have a better chance to understand the numbers and influence them. We start with a proposed expense budget which is made up of estimates of future expenses for goods and services such as office supplies and telephone and internet, insurance and utilities and building mortgage and maintenance. To this we add our recommendations for staff compensation and benefits and finally the program expenses of our committees.

Next comes the income budget, the biggest part of which is pledges. They make up at least 70% of the budget. This is supplemented by gifts, rentals, fundraisers and collections during Sunday services. Last but not least we balance the income against expenses and present the result to the Congregation for approval. Not quite that simple, but the rest is commentary.

At this point the budget looks like our tax forms, a bunch of numbers on a piece of paper. And it's easy to focus on and argue about how each dollar is raised and allocated and spent. But take a step back and refocus. Those building expenses? They provide the infrastructure for our mission, for our spiritual services, our community building potlucks and our social justice forums.

Our staff expenses? They support the maintainers of our mission. The people who plan and carry out our mission while we are busy doing other things. They divide their time between growing spirituality, building community and advancing peace and justice in the world. They are dedicated to this service and we thank them for it.

And so on with all the lines in the budget. They are there for one purpose, to support our mission. In this way we can divide each expense according to how it supports the pillars of our mission and create a whole new way of looking at the budget only this time as a program budget. Think about this as you make your pledge. We covenanted together to declare and support our mission. There is no better way to do this than by making and fulfilling a generous pledge.

– Mike Miller
Finance Chair

STONES IN THE SAME WALL – SOCIAL JUSTICE

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

Every now and then, you may notice a change in some of the wall hangings in the lobby and the sanctuary. A visitor once told the Embracing Diversity Team (EDT) that although our congregation strives for diversity, there were no wall hanging, pictures, etc., that would speak to those who are different from most of our current members, should they visit us. As someone from the Hispanic community, there was nothing in our building that made her feel welcomed and comfortable.

This was a hard pill to swallow, as we have always looked at ourselves as accepting and encouraging diversity. Maybe we really weren't taking that extra step. It's amazing how sometimes we can view ourselves as one thing only to find out that those looking in from the outside see something completely different. What we want to be and what we are in reality can be two different things.

The EDT took on that challenge and wants to honor the diverse group of people that comprise our communities. You may have noticed pictures of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ghandi in the lobby. You will certainly notice the new quilt hanging in the sanctuary. This quilt was commissioned and made especially for us by a member of the St. Paul's Baptist Church here in West Chester. While we need to honor our roots, we need to move forward honoring diversity and the many traditions that are represented in our communities. Have an idea; feel free to contact the Embracing Diversity Team.

– Ed Cohle, Social Justice Chair

GLEANNING

It's time to think about summer. The Congregation helps alleviate hunger in Chester County on two different levels: let's call them External and Internal.

External. The motto of the Chester County Food Bank is that, "No one should go hungry," and we agree. UCWC is one of several religious organizations that help the Chester County Food Bank glean extra crops at several commercial gardens. We are scheduled for Wednesday, August 15, and Friday, August 27, at Pete's Produce (on Route 926, five minutes east of Route 202.) from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. to pick whatever is ripe.

Internal. The Yeagers' have generously devoted part of their huge garden to gleaning. This year the crop is Edamame (soy) beans. The times are varied and will be announced—just a few times during the summer and then the harvest in the early fall. By the way, the past two summers our little congregation has produced almost a ton of food each year.

So please help. Save just a few hours this summer for this magnificent effort. Help us demonstrate what a caring and giving bunch of people we are. For more information, contact Tom Townsend at email: gleaning.

See how our government is enforcing immigration law.

Maria Hinojosa and PBS Frontline Documentary

LOST IN DETENTION

Sunday, May 6

12:30 p.m.

Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

501 S. High Street

West Chester, PA

Bring a brown bag lunch. Come see and discuss.



From NPR: For 25 years, Maria Hinojosa has helped tell America's untold stories and brought to light unsung heroes in America and abroad. She is the anchor and managing editor of NPR's Latino USA.

From the Unitarian Universalist Association: Her investigative journalism presses the powerful for the truth while giving voice to lives and stories that illuminate the world we live in. Frontline correspondent Maria Hinojosa will deliver this year's Ware Lecture at the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly in Phoenix.

Presented by the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester Embracing Diversity Team

FIRST SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT

This month's Suggested Items:
Condiments
(mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup, salad dressing)

Our monthly food collection is **Sunday, May 6**. 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 headline. Please make sure that the date on the food item has not expired.

As always, thanks for participating in this project. **It's just one more way UCWC helping those in need.**



SHARE-THE-PLATE GENEROSITY

We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient on May 20 (third Sunday of the month) is **Citizen Advocacy of Chester County**. Citizen Advocacy of Chester County is based on the belief in the power and competence of the ordinary citizen. The organization initiates voluntary one-to-one relationships between a person with a disability and someone else from their community who has corresponding qualities and resources. These "matches" are a means to promote, protect and defend the welfare and interests of, and justice for, people with mental, physical and/or emotional disabilities who are impaired in competence and either diminished in status or seriously physically and socially isolated. Their vision is a world in which each life is valued, protected, and celebrated for its uniqueness through a vested relationship.

Thanks to everyone who donated a whopping \$395 to the Domestic Violence Center in March.

PANEL DISCUSSION GIVES FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The panel discussion on March 25 entitled **A Faith Response to Illegal Immigration** was attended by over 50 people, many of whom came from outside our congregation.

The afternoon started with a talk by someone who had emigrated here legally from Venezuela. Even with her law degree and ability to pay lawyers here and other costs (a total of \$30,000), the path to citizenship was taxing and very hard to navigate. Small mistakes with the paperwork created significant problems.

Our four panelists spoke about their own journeys and provided an incredibly rich knowledge base to answer questions from the audience. One of the speakers had been a lawyer for the U.S. government and helped deport 50,000 people throughout his career. At some point, he had a change of heart about the processes used and the decisions made. He left government service and now defends people who are in danger of being deported.

Another panelist came from Mexico as a child when his parents settled in Philadelphia. His parents worked hard to build a life here, and it wasn't until he wanted to apply to colleges that he found out that he did not have a social security number. He is here illegally, yet this is his home.

Many other stories and facts were recounted at what turned out to be one of the best panels we have ever sponsored.

UUSC

Did you know that Bill Schulz, who was the past president of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the past president of Amnesty International-US, is now the CEO of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)? That's right—this consummate human rights warrior is now the leader of the only human rights organization that begins with the letters, "UU".

We have a tradition here at UCWC which is to be members of UUSC (we have by far the greatest percentage of members of our congregation who belong to UUSC of any of the "medium" or "large" congregations on the east coast). So please join or renew your membership today. It's easy—just click on www.uusc.org. And you can find more information about this wonderful organization on-line or just by asking Linda Sander or Tom Townsend.

EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

MAY 20 7-8:30 P.M.

In Louise Erdich's novel *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, Father Damien Modeste, a minor character in some of Erdich's earlier books, is revealed to be a woman. After she has lost everything, Agnes, AKA Father Damien, begins a masquerade as a man to replace a dead priest whose body she comes across when she has literally, nothing to wear. "So begins nearly a century of stewardship, Agnes' life as the beloved eccentric celebrator and confessor to the Catholic Indians and Meti people in her charge."

Lorrie McKinley will lead our discussion. For more information contact us at email: diversity-book-group or call Ruth MacFadyen or Shelly Case. All are Welcome

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

Are you buying Fair Trade coffee or tea at the grocery store or on-line? Did you know that you can buy it right at UCWC? Just look for the display on the landing of the stairs going up to the office. Please take what you want and pay via the manila envelope, which contains change. (It's the honor system.)

SWEET SUMMER KIRTAN

Coming up Saturday, June 2, 7:30 p.m., Steven Groff, Sarah Halley and friends will return to bring us the blissful experience of kirtan chanting again. Everyone will sing along with these energetic and eclectic musicians who will share call and response Sanskrit mantras along with beautiful music. Absolutely no experience is necessary. Some of the chants are meditative and some get you dancing (if you want to) – they all bring a warm glow to your heart. Bring your friends or bring your family for a fun night of joyful fellowship.

The concert is sponsored by the Music Committee. Tickets are \$10 per person or \$20 per family, and profits support the UCWC. If you have questions, call Debby Kern.

FOLK SINGING

The next folk singing get-together is Saturday, May 26, at 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. All are welcome. No singing talent or experience is necessary. Capable musicians should bring instruments. Bring a munchie, if you wish. Maps are in the foyer. Contact Steve at email: folk-singing.



COFFEE HOUSE

The next coffee house is Saturday, May 12, at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Our featured act is singer songwriter Eileen Tippin. This venue continues to be a fund raiser for UCWC with a \$5 suggested donation at the door. Performers may sing up at 6:30.

THE 2012 YES AWARD: CELEBRATING OUR YOUTH GROUP, CULTIVATING YOUNG ADULTS AND TALKING TO CHRISTIANS

On behalf of the UCWC, the Youth Adult Committee, the Youth Group and friends everywhere, we would like to recognize the Congregation and our esteemed youth group for winning the **2012 Joseph Priestly District's (JPD) Youth Empowering and Supportive (YES) Congregation Award**. This is the **NINTH** consecutive year our congregation has won this award – a feat unprecedented and unmatched by any other congregation.

The JPD's YES award is given to those congregations which support a youth-led and adult-advised program of leadership, learning, worship, community building and social action. Any congregation can establish a youth group. It takes an exceptional congregation to provide the leadership and the support to grow a youth group which can achieve the program goals underlying the YES Award. As a denomination we conspicuously avoid bragging about our faith community. This achievement warrants a little. We each should celebrate this accomplishment.

Our youth group provides a unique combination of leadership training with hand-on learning, worship, community building and social action...

The UCWC youth group grows adults. Our youth group provides a unique combination of leadership training with hands-on learning, worship, community building and social action in a setting unlike any other. This experience provides the foundation for some rather compelling adults. Recent graduates of our small youth group include teachers, social workers, engineers, pharmacists, scientists, mathematicians, musicians, philosophers, economists, consultants and computer specialists, to name a few. The youth group experience was an essential part of their preparation for the adult experience.

Our youth group strives to provide each participant with an understanding of their faith in the context of the larger community. It is easy to be part of a liberal faith tradition when all of your friends follow that same tradition. Outside of our walls, it is not always so easy. I encourage you to take a quick look at <http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/oncampus/you-have-got-to-stop-talking-to-christians/>, which highlights our own Mary Ellen Giess' travels through a not so liberal college experience and how that has changed her life and her life goals.

You can be a part of this larger community. We are actively seeking candidates who share an interest in the cultivation of young adults. Eligibility criteria are easy to state, but not always easy to achieve: Be a member of the Congregation for at least two years, be at least 25 years of age, have a sense of humor, have a high tolerance for chaos, and be willing to listen and guide. Sound compelling? If so, please let Michael, Dan or Marie know.

– Marie Steel and Dan Meyer, Youth Group Adult Advisors and Michael Werner, Youth Adult Committee Chair

LUNCH GROUP

Lunch group will meet Friday, May 11, 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.

CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR

All email addresses @ucwc.org unless otherwise noted.

May 2	Wed	Religious Education Committee. 7 p.m. Youth Group Rm. Contact Heidi Frayer, email: RE
May 3	Thu	Spirit Singers Practice. 7:15-9:15 p.m. Sanctuary. Contact Miriam Davidson, email: choir
May 4	Fri	Potluck and Game Night. 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30). Sanctuary. Contact Mary Yeager, email: game-night.
May 5	Sat	Annual Planning Meeting. 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 3.
May 6	Sun	First Sunday Food Collection. Lobby. See p. 7. Spirit Singers perform at both services. Intergen Choir sings opening song first service only. Lost in Detention. Video and Discussion. Bring a bag lunch. 12:30 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 6.
May 7	Mon	Embracing Diversity Team. 7-8:30 p.m. Office. Contact Eileen Kelly-Meyer, email: embracing-diversity
May 8	Tue	Board Meeting. 7 p.m. Office. All are welcome. Contact Mary Yeager, email: president.
May 10	Thu	Social Justice Committee. 7:15-9 p.m. Office. Contact Ed Cohle, email: social-justice. See p. 6.
May 11	Fri	Lunch Group. 11:30 a.m. Panera Bread. See p. 8.
May 12	Sat	Coffee House. 7 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 8.
May 13	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
May 17	Thu	Animal Ministry. 7-8:30 p.m. Fireplace Rm. Contact John Gribbin, email: animal-ministry Religious Services. 7:30-9 p.m. Office. Contact Diane Minka, email: religious-services
May 18-20	Fri-Sun	Women's Retreat. Mariawald Renewal Center. Contact Rev. Mero.
May 20	Sun	Share the Plate Sunday. Benefits Citizen Advocacy of Chester County. See p. 7. Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal. 10:15 a.m. Downstairs. Contact Abby McGillivray email: intergenerational-choir Spring Picnic. After services to 3 p.m. Details to come. Exploring Diversity Book Group. 7 p.m. Office. Contact Shelly Case or Ruth MacFadyen, email: diversity-book-group. See p. 7.
May 22	Tue	Council Meeting. 7-9 p.m. Office. Contact Mark Steel, email: program
May 24	Thu	Parent Support Group. 7 p.m. Office. Contact Sharon Meyer-Conroy, email: parent-support
May 26	Sat	Folk Singing. 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. See p. 8.
May 28	Mon	Memorial Day Holiday. Office Closed. Communications Team. 7 p.m. Office. Contact Sandy Retzlaff, email: communication

Groups meeting multiple times in a month:

Youth Group. Meets most Sundays, 11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Youth Group Room. Email: youth-group.