

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 June, 2012

June 3

RE SUNDAY

RE Students and Adults

9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

At the 9:00 a.m. service we'll hear from the individual classes and will have a chance to test our knowledge of world religions. The service will culminate in "bridging" from high school to young adulthood four of our young people who are graduating this year.

At the 11:00 a.m. service, we will celebrate our 9th and 10th graders who have spent the past nine months in the Coming of Age program. We'll hear from their mentors, and also get to hear their individual credos.

June 10

A SUMMER OF STARS

Rev. Deborah Mero

Single Service at 10 a.m.

As many of us get ready for an "official" change in season and the rhythm of life, we end the "congregation year" with a service to send us into the summer – to make the day of a stranger, to celebrate the little things we do for others and they do for us. Let us begin the summer with the charge to spread our light wherever we go. **NOTE: Single Sunday Services at 10 a.m. begin today and continue through the summer.**

June 17

YE OLDE HYMN SING

Michael Werner and

Single Service at 10 a.m.

(PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS STUMP THE HYMNIST)

Alex Marthaler

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, for the past eleven years we have explored our hymnal and gathered 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.

June 24

AFRICAN DANCE WITH JANET PECK

Janet Peck

Single Service at 10 a.m.

This is our annual treat to ourselves and one of our favorite intergenerational services. Remember, "If you can walk, you can dance." Wear loose comfortable clothing and bring a smile. All ages are encouraged to come.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH

Last week Ralph and I went to see the new film *The Best Exotic Mari-gold Hotel*. We weren't the only ones. Several of our UCWC members were leaving the afternoon show as we were waiting to see the early evening screening. We had been looking forward to the film, since some of our favorite actors are in it. There are not a lot of "geezer" movies out that appeal to folks of my age, so when one comes along we're quick to see it.

There were many things that stood out in this film. It is about a group of English retired people who move to India where they think their meager pensions will stretch enough to afford them a decent life style. They are lured by a flashy brochure and web site. What they find when they get there is a run-down building with no working telephones, not enough doors and leaky plumbing.

My favorite line from the film is, "Everything will be all right in the end...if it's not all right, then it's not yet the end." In the context of the film it was very funny, and for the most part it can be seen that way. But if you think about the line for a while, it is a pretty profound statement. My life is far from over, but as I look back on so many of the twists and turns it has taken, I think things have found a way to work out usually in better ways than I could have imagined.

Many religious people put their faith in God to help them get what they think they want or need. For

me, when I have found myself in an uncertain or scary place, the mantra I often used was, "Trust the process." Now, I think I prefer the quote from the film. It reminds me that life is ever unfolding, and we don't always get what we want – sometimes what we get is what we need (whether we know it or not, or like it or not), and sometimes we have to be more patient than we thought we were capable of being before we understand what is happening to us or for us.

All was not happy endings in the film. Not everyone was able to adapt to the new place, the new life. Most found a way to learn and grow, even at their ages. It gives me hope and a reminder to be open to new experiences, to look beyond the surface of things.

Summer is coming, and there will be an abundance of opportunities to learn and grow, not the least of which will be General

Assembly in Phoenix (where it was 103° today!) There will be a total of 11 of us from UCWC including all of the Sweitzer young women. We will be learning a lot more about the realities of the immigration conundrum than any of us know now and will do what we can to serve the mission of our congregation as well as the principles of our Unitarian Universalist faith.

I'm not sure that everything will be all right for so many people who come to this country seeking work and safety. Not now, at least. But

I have to believe that though the struggles persist, and things are not all right, this is not the end. We will have much to share of what we learn.

I hope that we will all look for ways throughout the summer to live our mission, to grow spiritually, to build community and make meaningful connections, and to be a catalyst for a just and compassionate world.

In the meantime, keep coming. Our energy level and joy increase when we see one another on Sunday mornings.

Blessings to all.

– Deborah



Sometimes what we get is what we need (whether we know it or not, or like it or not), and sometimes we have to be more patient...

JUNE 10 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There will be a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, June 10, after the 10 a.m. service. The budget for the upcoming year, a slate of new officers, and other congregational business will be conducted.

Look for a notice late in May with a copy of the proposed budget and a complete list of the congregation's business to be discussed.

While the congregation's friends are welcome to attend, only individuals who have been members for at least 30 days may vote on resolutions and the budget. Members' presence is requested because we cannot conduct business unless we have a quorum.

The Board still welcomes comments and suggestions regarding the upcoming budget.

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

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REMARKS – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

While clearing away things after the last RE class on May 20, I felt a little twinge of sadness: it will be three months before we gather downstairs again for Worship and classes and our continuing, exuberant exploration of what it means to be Unitarian Universalist. Somehow, like the early spring this year, the end of the RE year seems to have arrived ahead of schedule.

But RE isn't over until after our annual services of celebration and ceremony. This year, RE Sunday is June 3. At the 9:00 a.m. service we'll hear from the individual classes and will have a chance to test our knowledge of world religions. The service will culminate in "bridging" from high school to young adulthood for four of our young people who are graduating this year.

At the 11:00 a.m. service, we will celebrate our 9th and 10th graders who have spent the past nine months in the Coming of Age program. We'll hear from their mentors, and also get to hear their individual credos. Do they consider themselves to be Unitarian Universalist at this point? Why or why not? How has their time in religious education classes helped to shape their thoughts and beliefs? To me, this sharing reflects our third UU Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. More on that on the 3rd.

Both services promise to be enlightening, inspirational, and fun. I hope you can join us.

– Pam Baxter

Director of Religious Education

ENHANCED COFFEE HOUR HELP CELEBRATE OUR TEACHERS

Between services on Sunday, June 3, 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 Jen Roth no later than Thursday, May 31, to let her know what you are bringing, so we can fill in any gaps.



TWO, FOUR, SIX, EIGHT! WHO DO WE APPRECIATE!

Mark Steel – that's who! Mark Steel has served as our program coordinator for the last four years. Because this sort of chief executive officer position came from our new management model called "Policy Governance," it was new to us when Mark took it on. Therefore, he has been our only program coordinator. The Board is grateful to Mark for his dedication, good humor, and patience as we tailor Policy Governance to our particular needs.

We are still working out the kinks. Mark's willingness to adapt and cooperate is always seen in his good natured smile and enthusiastic greeting. Come June, however, Mark's second term will be up, and he will pass the role onto another. We thank you, Mark, for blazing this part of our path.

We would also like to thank Marie Steel for her thoughtfulness and service. Marie and Mark have often worked on projects and events together. We appreciate Marie's forbearance when congregational emergencies have arisen and called Mark to rescue our flooded basement or broken front door. Mark's and Marie's support of each other is inspiring and admirable. Thank you – we are doubly fortunate that you decided to make this congregation your second home. As beneficiaries of their good will, we entreat you to express your gratitude to Mark and Marie through heart-felt words to them and by supporting our new program coordinator.

THINKING AND PLANNING AHEAD

Pam Baxter and Rev. Deborah will offer the adult course, "Parents as Resident Theologians" on Wednesday nights starting in mid-September. The course is for parents, grandparents, those who work with children, and anyone who wants to be able to formulate answers to the "big" questions about life and death, God and spirit. Keep this in mind as you plan your fall. More information will come later in the summer.

ICE CREAM WITH THE MINISTER



RE families are invited to join Reverend Deborah and the RE Committee for our annual Ice Cream Fest and UU Scavenger Hunt on Saturday, June 9, from 1-3 p.m. at the Meros' home. We'll provide the ice cream and toppings – all you have to do is show up ready for fun. If the weather is warm, we'll turn the sprinkler on, so bring a bathing suit and towel. If you can, please RSVP by June 7, so we'll know how much ice cream to get. If you can come at the last minute but didn't RSVP, come anyway. Contact Pam Baxter at email: DRE.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our congregation experienced several major changes this year. Changing our name and implementing Hospitality Teams head the list. While we changed other aspects of our environment and accomplished much, none of it could have been achieved without our superb staff and countless volunteers.

I congratulate you for handling the name change so democratically and gracefully. In some ways, that change was simply the last piece of our 2004 growth plan. As many of you will recall, in 2004 we educated ourselves about making our congregation more welcoming, where people could feel a place existed for them. We went to double services so that new people wouldn't feel intimidated or unsettled. We developed priorities such as devoting more of our resources to a director of religious education for our RE Program to better provide our teachers with an effective curriculum for enriching our children's lives. And we implemented a new governance model to better organize a larger congregation. All of this to be ready for anyone who walked through our doors looking for a different spiritual home. The last phase of this journey was to make our presence known so that people could find us. Many thought that the word "Fellowship" hid our presence, hence the name change.

Now that we are the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester, it is time again for some education and self-examination. The Central Eastern Regional Group of the UUA offers a Threshold Congregation Program that helps congregations get past growth plateaus and maturity stagnations. We considered applying to the program this past February but realized that we would get more out of it by taking steps over the coming year to better prepare ourselves. We will do this early in the fall.

Shortly, you will be receiving the annual reports from the congregation's officers. My report will contain a more extensive listing of our accomplishments for the year as well as the goals that came out of our planning meeting in May. For the time being, however, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped achieve our goals for this year and who in any way moved us closer to our Vision of a Just and Compassionate World. My thanks go to our staff who keep us organized and model our ideals for us and our children, our greeters who meet us with a smile on Sunday morning, our Finance Team who count and watch our pennies (often late at night). Thank you all – we could not do it without you. I look forward to the coming year – learning about myself and you – as we meet the challenges ahead with an open mind and a loving heart.

– Mary Yeager

POWER UP FOR THE UCWC

How would you like to save money on the generation portion of your electric bill and raise funds for the Congregation? You can. We are participating in Stream Energy's Power Up fund raising program for non-profits. It's easy.

You sign up through UCWC's own Stream Power Up web-site. Have a recent electric bill handy and go to www.ucwc.streampowerup.biz to sign up. The Congregation receives \$4 every month you are a Stream Energy customer. You save 15 - 20% over PECO's rates and are still a PECO customer for transmission, distribution, service and billing. Questions? Contact Jack Butler, your Power Up representative.



SUNDAY AFTER-SERVICE POTLUCK

Please join us on Sunday, June 17, after the 10 a.m. service for our monthly potluck. If anyone is interested in performing please contact email: fun.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: LOOKING FORWARD

As the congregation year winds down, the Board of Trustees is looking ahead and beginning to plan for next year. The Board met with the leadership of the Congregation on May 5 to set the following goals for the 2012-13 program year:

- create a leadership development process within the congregation;
- take meaningful steps toward improving our physical surroundings — either fix our current building or plan to move to new space — that will allow us to mature as a congregation, and
- complete the Threshold Congregation application process.

The Board's regularly scheduled monthly meeting was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012, at which Board member Helena Graham's resignation was accepted for reasons of health. The Board appointed Shelly Case to fill the remainder of Helena's term.

The Board meeting also focused on budget issues, with Executive Treasurer Mike Miller reporting that the Congregation will finish the year with a balanced budget. Stewardship Chairman Bob Scott reported that, while response to the stewardship campaign was positive, the Congregation is again facing a budget short-fall for the 2012-13 fiscal year. After discussing several options, the Board decided to return to the Congregation with a request for additional pledges or one-time gifts to close the budget gap.

The Board encourages UCWC members and friends to share comments and concerns with Board members, as well as to attend Board meetings, if interested. Meeting minutes are available upon request from the secretary. Members of the Board include Mary Yeager, president; Fred Frayer; Curt Hoganson; Dirk Troltenier; Shelly Case; Rick Marts, vice president; and Sandra Schaal, secretary.

STONES IN THE SAME WALL – SOCIAL JUSTICE

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

As we enter into the summer months, you will notice a slowdown of some of our social justice projects. Others are only just beginning. The summer and fall are times to get involved in gleaning projects for the food bank. Keep your eye on *Connections* and on future *Fellowtarian* articles for more information.

Over the past several years, I have been fortunate to work with some highly motivated and committed social justice committee members. We have worked hard to organize our efforts and bring new ideas, efforts, and opportunities to this congregation. For me, however, it is time to move on from my role as the social justice chair.

Carol Dukes has stepped forward to assume this role alongside Linda Sander in her continued role as co-chair of this committee. With new leadership come new ideas, renewed energy, and renewed commitment to social justice issues. Now would be a great time for some new people to join this committee to help Carol carry on this important facet of our mission. To find out how you can participate contact us at email: social-justice.

It has been my pleasure to serve the congregation in this capacity, and I look forward to great things from this committee.

– Ed Cohle, Social Justice Chair

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Thank you to the folks who joined us last month in Coatesville for house painting. It's always a pleasure to work alongside you, especially when the weather is that perfect. Our next HFH volunteer day is Saturday August 4. For more information, contact Mike Stevens at email: habitat.



FIRST SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT

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

Our monthly food collection is Sunday, June 3. 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 is helping those in need.

IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTARY

The Frontline documentary *Lost in Detention* was shown on May 6 in our sanctuary. About 30 people viewed this informative film followed by a very active discussion. The documentary presented information about how our government is not only implementing tougher immigration enforcement, but in a manner that does not speak well of our national values and reputation.

The new detention camps, which some have referred to as concentration camps, have been built to house thousands of illegal immigrants as they await deportation. Lack of dignity, mistreatment, assaults, sexual assaults, etc., are a part of life in these camps, run by private profit making companies.

SHARE-THE-PLATE GENEROSITY

We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient on June 17 (**third Sunday of the month**) is the **Maternal and Child Health Consortium** (Kennett Square Family Center). 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.



THE OFFICE NEEDS YOUR INFORMATION

It is that time of year again. There will be changes in our leadership for committees, teams and the Board. Please send all updated committee chairs, team leaders and new board member names and e-mail addresses to Barbara at email: office. This will help the office update the Whom Do You Contact list and the ICON database committee members list.

Plus, the office is accepting calendar dates now, for meetings and events for the coming year starting July 2012 through June 2013. This is a first come, first reserve system. Thank you.

FROM OUR COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

In our last article, we reintroduced the Committee on Ministry (COM). There are currently four members of the COM: Betty Grosse, Paul Heck, Sue Johnston, and Michael Werner. Over the next several months we will provide insights and details on our various UCWC ministries and individual COM members. This month we introduce Paul Heck to you.

Our COM is charged with monitoring the heartbeat of the ministries within the congregation; how the members take care of themselves and each other; how the lay ministerial leadership supports the congregation; and how our called minister serves the congregation. This type of role is a long-standing interest of Paul's. He has a lifelong interest in how human beings relate to each other and what our involvement in various groups can do to either add value and purpose to our lives or, conversely, how some environments can wear us down.

Paul believes that many people come to UCWC to seek comfort and support after a tough week. Life is hard at times, and a healthy, caring and vibrant congregation community can be a wonderful antidote for the hurts and losses we may be faced with in our everyday existence. Working on the COM as a resource to our minister and also acting as an advocate for our members and friends feels like a meaningful contribution to Paul, and he is honored to be part of our larger ministry.

Paul's professional training as a psychotherapist and his work experience as an employee assistance program manager for over 30 years allows him to observe and offer insights about organizational and individual issues to the COM and to our minister and staff. He encourages all of us to share thoughts, questions, concerns and comments with any member of the COM at any time so that we can all work together to create a nurturing and comforting environment for all. Contact the COM at email: COM.

SOUL TO SOUL GATHERING

A new covenant group is being organized to explore spiritual and life issues. The group will enable members to "grow your soul" by forming deeper connections with each other in the group. The group will be limited to 8 to 10 people.

Guidelines and topics will be in accordance with *Soul to Soul* by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins (available at UUA Bookstore) for a total of 14 sessions beginning in October. The topics are Thick Stories, Compassion, Boundaries, Trust, Spiritual Experiences, Addiction, Calling, Shadow, After Death, Play, Prayer, Resilience, Aging, and Blessing.

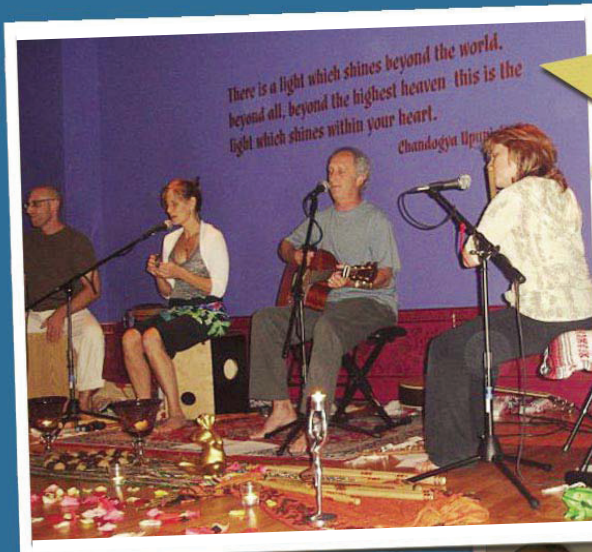
If you are interested in learning more about this group, contact Harriet Singer and Mira Tryon, email: soul-to-soul.

COFFEE HOUSE

The next coffee house is Saturday, June 9, at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Our featured act is singer songwriter duo Fish Castle. This venue continues to be a fund raiser for UCWC with a \$5 suggested donation at the door. Performers may sign up at 6:30.

SWEET SUMMER KIRTAN AT UCWC

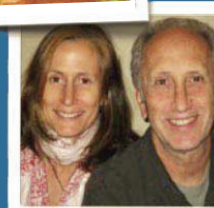
A GREAT WAY TO START YOUR JUBILANT JUNE



Saturday
June 2

We're bringing back Steven Groff, Sarah Halley, and friends to do KIRTAN CHANTING with us again. Your experience may be meditative to ecstatic bliss. No experience necessary. Dancing optional :)

Kirtan is a sacred music tradition using Sanskrit mantras blended with energetic rhythms. Sing along if you like.



The Unitarian Congregation of West Chester
501 S. High St., West Chester, PA

Saturday, June 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Please arrive 15 minutes early so we can settle in and start on time — Thanks!

\$10/person \$20/family (tickets available at the door)

CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR

All email addresses @ucwc.org unless otherwise noted.

- Jun 1 Fri Potluck and Game Night.** 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30). Sanctuary. Contact Mary Yeager, email: game-night. See below.
- Jun 2 Sat Kirtan Chanting.** 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 6.
- Jun 3 Sun First Sunday Food Collection.** Lobby. See p. 5.
RE Enhanced Coffee Hour. After the first service. See p. 3.
Intergenerational Choir Sings. 9 a.m. service only
Youth Group End of the Year Picnic. 6 pm at Steel's. Contact Dan Meyer, email: youth-group
- Jun 4 Mon Embracing Diversity Team.** 7-8:30 p.m. Office. Contact Eileen Kelly-Meyer, email embracing-diversity
- Jun 6 Wed Hospitality Team Meeting HT-3.** 7 p.m. Sanctuary. Contact Mark Steel, email program.
Religious Education Committee. 7-8:30 p.m. Youth Group Rm. Contact Heidi Frayer, email: RE
- Jun 8 Fri Lunch Group.** 11:30 a.m. Panera Bread. See below.
- Jun 9 Sat RE Ice Cream with the Minister.** 1-3 p.m. at the Meros' home. See p. 3.
Coffee House. 7 p.m. Sanctuary. See p. 6.
- Jun 10 Sun Single Summer Services Begin Today at 10 a.m.**
Annual Congregational Meeting. After the 10 a.m. service. Sanctuary. See p. 2.
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 12 Tue Board Meeting.** 7 p.m. Office. All are welcome. Contact Mary Yeager, email: president. See p. 4.
- Jun 14 Thu Social Justice Committee.** 7:15-9 p.m. Office. Contact Carol Dukes, email: social-justice. See p. 5.
- Jun 17 Sun Share the Plate Sunday.** Benefits Maternal and Child Health Consortium (Kennett Square Family Center). See p. 5.
After-Service Potluck Lunch. Following the service. Sanctuary. See p. 4.
- Jun 21 Thu Animal Ministry.** 7-8:30 p.m. Fireplace Rm. Contact John Gribbin, email: animal-ministry
- Jun 28 Thu Parent Support Group.** 12-1 p.m. Off-site. Contact Sharon Meyer-Conroy, email: parent-support
Religious Services Committee. 7:30-9 p.m. Office. Contact Diane Minka, email: religious-services
- Jun 30 Sat Folk Singing.** 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. See below.

LUNCH GROUP

Lunch group will meet Friday, June 8, 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.



FOLK SINGING

The next folk singing get-together is Saturday, June 30, 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.

GAME NIGHT

Our next Potluck and Game night is Friday, June 1, in the sanctuary. Join us at 6:30 for dinner or after 7:00 for games. Everyone is welcome – families/individuals/ couples/children. Bring a dish and beverage to share. Bring a friend too. To be added to the reminder list, or if you have any questions, contact Mary Yeager at email: game-night.

