

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

July, 2012

July 1

JUSTICE GA

Sharon Sweitzer and Other GA Attendees

Those attending the General Assembly in Phoenix, Arizona will give an overview of the experience and synopsis of lessons learned at the "Justice GA on Immigration". Join us to hear about and enjoy the GA experience vicariously through the Sweitzer family, Meyers, Steels and other attendees.

July 8

A UNITARIAN? WUT'S THAT?!?

Rob Sartain

How many times have you told someone you're a Unitarian only to be asked, "What's that?" From classic theologians like Rev. William Ellery Channing, through the ministers of the Iowa Sisterhood, to contemporary ministers and lay leaders, we'll explore what it means to be a Unitarian and discover some possible answers to the question of just what IS (and what ISN'T) a Unitarian.

July 15

WHAT IS THE WORST WAY TO DIE?

Michael Werner

An ecologist, a lawyer and an agnostic walk into a mortuary... Not the start of a joke, but the starting point for exploration of this question. The world is a dangerous place. Everyone is going to die, and some are certain to die in a brutal or painful way. This service will explore how biology and law define life and death, and how personal experiences with death provide the foundation for optimism, perseverance and resilience in this UU. Suggested reading: *Sound of Thunder*, by Ray Bradbury.

July 22

RESILIENCE CIRCLES

Deanna Gabe

It seems that you can't swing a reusable grocery bag made of recycled plastic without coming across the word "transition" these days. No matter what our personal comfort with change is, it's coming on many fronts. Personal and community resilience can help us view change as an exciting opportunity. Find out how you can build personal and community resilience.

July 29

VOICES OF ANIMAL MINISTRY

John Gribbin, et. al.

The UCWC Animal Ministry group hosts a panel conversation on the many dimensions of mankind's intersections with other species. Themes include animal-human bonding, a reverence for life, and the Ethical Eating statement of conscience promoted by the UUA. Our members who will participate are Alan Pittenger, John Gribbin, and Rev. Ralph Mero. Also presenting will be Jodi Button, Executive Director of the Francisvale Home for Small Animals, accompanied by several four-legged guests. *Fellowtarian* readers are encouraged to go online for the [UUA Ethical Eating Statement of Conscience](#) and for the [Animal Ministry Reverence for Life program](#).

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

THE SONG OF DEBORAH

Some of you may remember that in the past, I have asked you to be open to wisdom from life that comes your way through the summer and be ready to share that wisdom when we come together in the fall. I have a different "assignment" for you this summer.

At our June 10 service I deputized those in attendance to be "fairy godmothers and godfathers," to take sheets of foil stars I gave everyone (there are some still at the meeting house, and more can be bought at K-Mart or Dollar Tree or almost anywhere), and to give out stars to strangers who do good deeds that you witness. See how it affects them as you do this through the summer. See how many lives or days you can brighten. Then come back in September and tell us about your experiences of giving people stars. What was the reaction of the recipient? How did it make you feel?

Look for the divine light in the people you encounter, and lift it up.

As an extra added bonus, if someone asks you why you are doing it, tell them you are from the church of the open minds, helping hands, and loving hearts, and your minister gave you this idea. And if they want to know more, I made some cards for you to hand out. You can print your own if you wish. The template can be found here: <http://revdeb.org/page21/page21.html>.

One side has our vision statement, a brief paragraph on what we "believe" and our contact information. The other has our seven principles on it. Who knows, we may become the "church of the stars" before we are done. I hope to see people around town and in the wider community wearing stars on their shirts and smiling this summer. When I see a star, I will know that one of you has been spreading the light. I will also know that the person with the star did something special to earn it.

We are living in anxious times — I don't think anyone can doubt that. So much of life weighs on us in ways we often cannot describe. If we take the time to look for the good, look for the kind, look for those who practice random acts of kindness and reward them by noticing, it can change our outlook, even for a while.

Look for the divine light in the people you encounter, and lift it up. And if you come across someone who is having an especially hard time or hard day, perhaps a star can lift them up for a while. Come back and let us know how it went, what it did for others, and what it did for you? It would be great if you run out of stars and want to get more or even give out sheets to friends and ask them to join the effort.

This is how we become evangelicals for Unitarian Universalism, circuit riders spreading not fear, but hope and courage. When we do so, it gives us the hope and courage that we all need. A star, a smile, a word of encouragement. Wouldn't it be great to see stars everywhere we go? To start a movement of goodness and cheer? And one cheery person can start a chain reaction. How little it takes to brighten someone's day.

You are all stars to me. Spread your light and let it shine. Have a great summer!
— Yours in faith,
Deborah

FINANCIALLY YOURS

As you fade away into summer vacation, a few things to remember:

Remember to pay your pledge. Summer recess comes with lower expenses for UCWC, but we still have staff to pay and other bills to meet. With a budget of \$253,240 for the 2012-2013 fiscal year, we can expect monthly expenses of about \$20,000 throughout the summer. We need your regular contributions to stay solvent.

If you are part of a hospital-ity team or any group that collects money for an event, thank you, but also remember to fill out a Cash Receipts Voucher to document any income. This is very helpful to our Income Treasurer, Tom Townsend, so he knows how to record the money or whom to contact if he has questions. Cash Receipt Vouchers can be found in the bottom right mail box in the office together with envelopes for holding the voucher and money. Deposit the envelopes in the mailbox on the back of the office closet door. **Note:** this does not apply to contributions to the plate made during the service.

Remember to think about a legacy gift to our Endowment Fund. Pam Sapko and Ralph Mero worked hard this year to create an endowment program to sustain UCWC for the future. Talk to one of them or a member of the Finance Committee, if you would like more information.

And I must remember to say thank you to our Treasurers and Finance Committee members for their dedication this past year. So thanks go to Income Treasurer Tom Townsend, Expense Treasurer Janine Galen, and Accounting Software Administrator Cyndy Bullaughey. Please thank them again the next time you see one of them.

— Mike Miller
Executive Treasurer



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REMARKS: SUMMER — TIME FOR GROWING

With warm weather, longer daylight hours, and opportunities for vacation, summer is a time that most of us — especially children — look forward to. But along with more leisurely days, time at camp or on vacation, or just hanging around home, summer may come with new experiences that might make children anxious.

So, here's a simple activity from a lovely book, titled *Nurturing Spirituality in Children* by Peggy J. Jenkins, Ph.D., that I'd like to share with you.

Change Is Needed For Growth — *This lesson is especially useful when a child is facing a change or a risk, perhaps like joining scouts or a soccer team, going away to camp, staying overnight with a friend for the first time, or entering a new school.*

Materials

A real houseplant that has become root-bound and needs transplanting. If this is not available, use a tiny clay flowerpot or a small cardboard transplanting pot, a tangled mass of string stuffed into the pot, and an artificial flower inserted into the string mass.

Lesson

(If you don't use a houseplant, explain that the mass of string represents the roots of the flower.) "Roots need a lot of soil to grow in, but these roots have grown so that there is hardly room for any soil. We need to remove the plant from the old pot and put it into a larger one, or the plant will always be limited in size."

Explain that people are just like the plant, and at times we, too, need more room to grow. Compare the pot to the child's old ways of thinking about him/herself. The old pot, or the old ways, can be so comfortable that sometimes we need to push ourselves out of our "comfort zone." If not, our growth will become stunted just as the plant's growth is stunted when it's in a container that's too small for it. The old pot met the needs of the plant at one time and was good for the plant. Now that the plant has grown, a change is necessary so it can continue its growth.

If you are at the beach and find hermit crabs, you can use them as an example of how animals, like plants, sometimes need more room to grow, too.

Discuss how, in order to grow and become all that they can be, children must change their old ideas about themselves. Help them see change as a means of "becoming," and use examples like an acorn breaking apart to sprout a new tree, or a caterpillar becoming a butterfly.

Suggested Affirmation

I welcome change in my life because it helps me grow.

Have a wonderful summer!

— Pam Baxter

Director of Religious Education



SUMMER ICE CREAM AND FRIENDS

The RE Committee has picked the dates for our two **Summer Ice Cream and Friends** get-togethers, one in July and one in August:

Thu Jul 19 7 p.m. Milky Way Farms (Rte. 113 in Lionville)

Wed Aug 15 7 p.m. Maggie Moo's (Main St. at Exton)

People of all ages, with or without children, and regardless of which ice cream flavor is your favorite, are welcome — please join us.

THE MOST INTERESTING YOUTH GROUP IN THE WORLD

Hopefully you've all heard the news that your support of our AWESOME Youth Group earned the congregation its ninth consecutive Y.E.S. award. (Y.E.S. stands for Youth Empowering and Supportive.) Many of you attended the 9 a.m. service on June 3 and welcomed our bridging seniors, Cyrus Ratajczak, Jolene Sweitzer, Erin Steel and Alex Vogt, as they enter the next stage of their UU lives. For all your support and encouragement, we thank you.

But while June 3 brought the end of the RE year, it doesn't mean the Youth Group activities end. On July 13-15, several of our youth will attend the Summer CON at Main Line Unitarian Church in Berwyn, accompanied by Marie Steel. It's not often we get a JPDYSC CON this close — they're usually in Maryland or Virginia. I wish all Youth Group members could attend. Summer CON (like all CONs) is full of fun and fellowship. It's a great opportunity to make new friends and renew acquaintances.

We're also planning a mid-week Hershey Park outing on August 8. All 8th through 12th grade UCWC members are invited (and any who have that urge to play hooky from work for a day) to join us. For more information contact **email: youth-group**.

Then, in September (probably September 16), we're planning to kick-off our Youth Group activities for the 2012-2013 year with a trip to the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire. Watch for more information coming during the summer, and plan to join us.

We're looking forward to a fun summer and great next year. Imagine being part of the "Most Interesting Youth Group in the World" (and helping our congregation earn an unprecedented 10th consecutive Y.E.S. award).

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thanks to all who attended the annual meeting in early June. It allowed us to celebrate our successes this year and to bring some concerns to your attention. Our building, as lovely and spacious as it appears, presents multiple challenges. While the main hall is large, other space is limited. There are no kitchen facilities for large events. We have no parking lot. Of mounting concern is the state of our roof, drainage from the roof, and latent water damage.

Over the course of this year we must continue to gather information and estimates regarding our building so that June next year, we will make an informed and deliberate decision regarding the future of our congregation in this building. Do we stay and make repairs or do we sell our property and move? This is a time for big ideas and thinking creatively. We need a team of volunteers to help the Board and the congregation think through our options, so that a year from now we can choose our course together.

This summer your Board of Trustees will participate in a Policy Governance workshop, work on a process for our staff's sabbatical request, and collaborate on development of a Leadership Development Program for our congregation. The Board will also make plans to educate our congregation about growth and to revisit our Vision Statement.

In addition, the Board will reexamine our budget for the next fiscal year. At the annual meeting, the Board asked the congregation to support our budget at its current levels to give the Board time to reexamine our finances and return to the congregation in June 2013 with a budget that is restructured for the current economy.

Be assured that the Board heard your concerns regarding the decision to reduce denominational support. The intention is for this to be a reduction for this year only, giving the Board time to make a circumspect decision about our finances. While many of you are worried about our finances, let me be clear that we have met all the financial obligations of our 2011-12 budget, and we have every expectation of doing so in 2012-13. We are just responding to trends and planning ahead. Mike Miller, our executive treasurer, will continue to send out monthly budget updates. Please use this information to stay informed.

I look forward to working with our new Board recruits in the coming year — Clarke Arnold, the new Board secretary; Hugh Sutherland, trustee; Rick London, trustee; and Shelly Case, trustee — as well as Cindy Heck, our new program coordinator. What a great group of volunteers! With thoughtful discussion and planning, we will strive to be a thriving, caring, welcoming community that supports each person's spiritual journey, embraces diversity, challenges us to live responsibly, and is a catalyst for a just and compassionate world.

Notes of Appreciation: I would like to personally thank Helena Graham, Curt Hoganson, Dirk Troltenier, and Sandy Schaal for their service on this congregation's Board of Trustees over the last two years. Each brought a unique perspective to the work before us, and each cared deeply about the mission of our congregation. I can't list all the accomplishments of the past two years for these volunteers, but I would like to particularly note Helena's work on the Embracing Diversity Team, Curt's past efforts on the Religious Services Committee, and Dirk and Sandy's help with the Stewardship Campaign. Please let them know how much you appreciate their dedication and willingness to serve as we endeavor to change lives in our community through spiritual growth, meaningful connections, and the struggle for peace and justice.

— Mary Yeager



SOUL TO SOUL

In last month's *Fellowtarian* we introduced a new Gathering ministry that will start in the fall. Each session is a different topic with prescribed activities. Since this is a new spiritual concept for us, an outline of a session might be helpful for anyone considering becoming a part of the Gathering.

The book we will use is *Soul to Soul* by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins. It can be purchased through the UUA Bookstore for \$14 or from other on-line sellers. There is reading to do to prepare for each session, so having your own copy is important.

Each session starts with Candle Lighting to the Four Directions, then a short time called On Our Hearts, followed by Silence. There will be shared readings followed by an hour of discussion of the readings. It ends with a Closing Activity, Closing Words, a Song, announcements, and Extinguishing the Candle.

We look forward to making new, or stronger, connections, among this spiritual group. Direct questions to Harriet Singer and Mira Tryon at **email: soul-to-soul**.

THANKS FROM THE BOARD

The Board, Council, and Minister would like to extend our deepest appreciation to the Stewardship Team who shepherded us through our annual pledge drive. A special thank you goes to Bob Scott who led the Stewardship Team of Gerry Giess, Mike Kristzman, Jim MacFadyen, Ralph Mero, Koreen Olbrish, Rhonda Price, Sandy Retzlaff, Pam Sapko, Sandy Schaal, Sharon Sweitzer, and Dirk Troltenier. The Stewardship Committee has become a year-round committee because of the realization that supporting the congregation's mission should be in the forefront of the work that we do. Let us all give thanks for their hard work and dedication.

STONES IN THE SAME WALL – SOCIAL JUSTICE

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

NOTE: Ed Cohle was in Arizona at GA the week of *Fellowtarian* production and was unable to write his regular Social Justice column this month. This would have been Ed's final column as Social Justice Committee chair. He is stepping down after many years of dedicated service. The editors would like to take this opportunity to thank Ed for coordinating and editing the social justice section of the *Fellowtarian*. Of course, Ed will continue to be involved with UCWC social justice activities.

We also want to welcome Carol Dukes, the new Social Justice Committee chair. We look forward to working with her as she works to carry on UCWC's tradition of strong social justice education, advocacy, and action.

– The Editors

VOICES OF ANIMAL MINISTRY

If you're interested in exploring the multi-dimensional aspects of mankind's intersections with other species, don't miss the panel discussion format service on July 29. Hosted by the congregation's Animal Ministry group, the service will focus on the multitudinous ways in which humans and animals interact. Come with an open mind, and you'll be informed, inspired, and challenged. After the service, information on the Animal Ministry's goals will be offered as well as related articles, resources, reading lists and copies of the UUA Ethical Eating Statement.

In addition to presentations by Animal Ministry members John Gribbin, Ralph Mero, and Alan Pittenger, Executive Director of the Francisvale Home for Small Animals Jodi Button will offer insights on the outstanding services and volunteer opportunities offered at this Radnor-based facility. She will be accompanied by several animal residents from the no-kill shelter which has operated since 1909.

SHARE-THE-PLATE GENEROSITY

We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient on July 29 is the **Francisvale Home for Small Animals** based in Radnor. The Share-the-Plate date was changed from the usual third Sunday in order to coincide with the Animal Ministry service.

UUSC JUSTWORKS SERVICE-LEARNING TRIPS

Life changing – that's how people who have traveled with UUSC and the UUA describe their journeys. If you want to have that experience, join one of the **JustWorks** service-learning trips around the country and around the world. Participants work with people in local communities on direct-service projects, learning about human-rights issues firsthand. Here are some of the trips planned for the coming year:

North-South Worker Justice Journey: Focus on the Food Chain – Explore how changes in the global economy have affected workers in the food chain on both sides of the border.

Rebuilding New Orleans: Turning the Tides – Experience New Orleans with people dedicated to a holistic and equitable recovery for the city.

U.S./Mexico BorderLinks – Your chance to delve into various on-the-ground aspects of immigration.

Haiti Recovery – Work with the Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP), a UUSC partner to help former Port-au-Prince residents build new lives.

Journey to Tanzania and Burundi – Learn about Tanzania Gender Networking Program, a UUSC environmental-justice partner, and be hosted by a UUA partner church.

For more information and to register, go to www.uusc.org/justworks.

FIRST SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT

***This month's
Suggested Items:
Family-size Juices***

Our monthly food collection is Sunday, July 1. 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.

BOOK AND PUZZLE EXCHANGE

Did you know that there's a free book and jigsaw puzzle exchange downstairs? It's through the first door, and to your right. Always changing, always great, come on down anytime and browse. Give one, take one – a great deal! No one is counting – take what you like.



CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR

All email addresses @ucwc.org unless otherwise noted.

Jun 30	Sat	Fun and Fellowship Committee. Planning meeting. 1 p.m. Offsite. Contact Lauren Kelly, email: fun. See below. Folk Singing. 8 p.m. at the home of Linda & Steve Sander, email: folk-singing
Jul 1	Sun	First Sunday Food Collection. Lobby. See p. 5. Membership Committee. 11:15 a.m. Office. Contact Barbara Long, email: membership
Jul 4	Wed	Independence Day. Office closed.
Jul 6	Fri	Potluck and Game Night. 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30). Sanctuary. Contact Mary Yeager, email: game-night. See below.
Jul 8	Sun	Safe Harbor Dinner. 6 p.m. Provided by the UCWC the second Sunday of the month. To help, contact Sharon Mayer-Conroy, email: safe-harbor
Jul 10	Tue	Committee on Ministry. 6:30 p.m. Office. Contact Susan Johnston, email: COM
Jul 13-15	Fri-Sun	Youth Group Summer CON. Main Line Unitarian Church in Berwyn. See p. 3.
Jul 19	Thu	Ice Cream Social. 7 p.m. Milky Way Farms (Rte. 113 in Lionville). See p. 3.
Jul 28	Sat	District Workshop/Policy Governance. Contact Mary Yeager, email: president.
Jul 29	Sun	Share the Plate Sunday. Benefits Francisvale Home for Small Animals in Radnor. See p. 5.

COFFEE HOUSE

There is no coffee house in July and August. Our sixth season will resume in September with singer-songwriter Emmett Robinson.

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP PLANNING MEETING

Are you interested in getting involved with the Fun and Fellowship committee? Do you have an idea or two that you'd like to run past the committee for the upcoming year? Please join us for our semi-annual planning meeting at Lauren Kelly's house on Saturday, June 30, at 1:00 p.m. For further information, contact Lauren at **email: fun**.

2012 DIRECTORY

During the summer Barbara Robinson, our office administrator, updates all the information in our Congregational Directory.

- If you have a new e-mail address, phone number, or residential address, please send the change to Barbara at **email: office**.
- If you would like to be included in our Directory, or you would like to be removed please e-mail Barbara with your request.
- The Directory also includes "Whom Do You Contact" with our Committee Chairs, Team Leaders, Board and Staff members. If you are stepping down from or stepping up to a position please contact Barbara with your information.

GAME NIGHT

Game Night is Friday, July 6. Bring a dish and a drink to share, and join us in a relaxing, yet fun-filled, wind-down to the week. Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m., and games start around 7:00. Contact Mary Yeager at **email: game-night**.

EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP BOOK LIST FOR 2012-13

*We meet on the second Sunday from 7-8:30 p.m. at UCWC unless otherwise noted below with **

- Sep 9* *Iron Jawed Angels*, film starring Hilary Swank — at Pat Shorten's home; time TBA
- Oct 14 *Day After Night* by Anita Daimant
- Nov 11 *The Glass Castle, a Memoir* by Jeanette Walls
- Dec 9 *Sleeping Arrangements, a Memoir* by Laura Shaine Cunningham
- Jan 13* *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez — at Art Roman's for cooking class; details TBA
- Feb 10 *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunities for Women Worldwide* by Sheryl Wu Dunn and Nickolas D. Kristof
- Mar 10 *The Human Stain* by Philip Roth
- Apr 14* *The Invention of Air* by Steven Johnson — Trip to Joseph Priestly House; details TBA — Note date change
- May 19* *Imperial Woman* by Pearl S. Buck — Tour of Pearl S. Buck House; details TBA

Please contact us at **email: diversity-book-group** or call Shelly Case or Ruth MacFadyen. All are Welcome.