

UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF WEST CHESTER
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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 August, 2013

August 4

STOIC WISDOM

Robin Garrett

In modern times, the word stoic has come to mean unemotional and indifferent to pain. This is because stoic ethics taught freedom from problems caused by unbridled passion through developing clear judgment and inner calm. Robin Garrett, long-time member of UCWC will offer us a deeper look at who the Stoics were, what they had to say, and the value that stoicism may have for us today.

August 11

SECULAR TRINITY

Gerry Giess

The Trinity is a doctrine in Christianity that tries to identify the nature of God. Today, we will explore how that doctrine and a different definition of a Trinity might work for a Unitarian Universalist.

August 18

GUNS IN AMERICA: A CULTURE OF FEAR OR HOPE?

Tom Buglio

Join us as we explore the nature of the debate about violence in America in the wake of Sandy Hook and Trayvon Martin. How do we as UU's assess the right to bear arms for protection with the fact that 83 Americans die of guns every day?

August 25

SUMMER GLEANINGS

Rev. Deborah Mero

Rev. Deborah will share a bit of what she learned in Wisconsin with Parker Palmer and what of it she may be bringing to us this winter along with whatever else manages to inspire her this summer that may, in turn, inspire us. This will be the last time we see her in the pulpit until November 24.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thanks to all that have offered kind and supportive words to me. It is an honor to serve as president of the Board of Trustees. We met together as a new board once in early July. Here is a quick overview.

1. We have already started our process to pair volunteers with leadership positions. Pam Sapko has graciously agreed to complete the Nominating Committee and will be working with Jon McCormick and Diane Cohle. Hugh Sutherland has accepted the position of Vice-President of the Board of Trustees. We have begun the process to fill the vacancy on the Committee on Ministry.

2. We have begun exploring the Interim Ministry Process. For those that would like more information, the UUA website has a [Transitional Ministry Handbook](#) (Word format).

3. The board and executive team are planning a Policy Governance Tutorial on Tuesday, July 23, at 6:30 p.m. at UCWC. Feel free to join us.

This is a discussion about how to use this form of congregational governance, not whether to use it. Several years ago, the congregation voted in an annual meeting to adopt Policy Governance. We want to be more effective working together, so learning about the process is important. All members of the congregation are welcome.

We would like to be sure that we have enough printed material available at the tutorial, so if you are planning to attend, please contact me at email: president.

4. We have started discussing the Ministerial Search Process.

We know, as a board, that it is just the start of our time and work together. We need to explore how we work together as well as begin to address our goals and plans for the year. Feel free to contact us at [email: board](mailto:board).

—Shelly Case

REMARKS—RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

Did you see this in the news last month? A family in the Encinitas school district (San Diego, CA area) asked that yoga be removed from the physical education program. Actually, they sued the district, arguing that making yoga part of P.E. violated the First Amendment separation of church and state.

Really? In the West, yoga is practiced mainly for its health benefits: promoting strength, flexibility and balance, as well as reducing stress. In teaching yoga at school, no one is trying to convert children to Hinduism, any more than owners of Indian restaurants are trying to convert their patrons.

I can only assume that the actions of this family come out of fear. And that the fear comes out of ignorance. If they knew what yoga is—if the parents had, for instance, ever taken a yoga class themselves—would they have the same attitude?

Playing rugby doesn't make you British, nor does playing baseball make you American. Being vegetarian doesn't make one a Buddhist or Hindu, any more than smoking tobacco makes one a Native American. Why pick on yoga?

The good news is that the family lost its suit. On July 1, the judge in the case ruled that—the way that it's taught in the schools—yoga is secular. In Encinitas, to make sure that there was absolutely no confusion, they even went so far as to rename the lotus position the "criss-cross applesauce" pose. In addition, children may opt out of the program.

The family's belief and fear may seem ridiculous to Unitarian Universalists. It also points to the value of our Neighboring Faiths curriculum for 7th/8th graders. When we give our young people the opportunity to learn about other faiths, to observe others' rituals and to talk about what they've witnessed and learned, we help make them good cultural citizens. We help prevent misunderstandings based on ignorance, and actions based on fear and distrust.

It's appropriate to wait until children are in middle school to focus on other faiths this way—after they've been grounded in Unitarian Universalism. But we have always used stories from other faiths to enhance the teaching and expression of important qualities such as compassion and forgiveness.

And, thanks to some creative independent UU curriculum writers, we now can offer programs like "[Picturebook World Religions](#)." With the focus each week on a carefully chosen storybook, this curriculum offers a window onto different faiths in a way that children can easily understand; what it's like to be a Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist. And through this, we find that there are universal ideas and concepts that connect us all.

—[Pam Baxter, Director of Religious Education](#)

A GIFT THAT COMES BACK TO YOU

You may be waiting and hoping to be asked to volunteer to teach a children's religious education (RE) class. We might not think to ask you. If you have been thinking that you would like to teach in RE or help out in a class, please contact Pam Baxter at email: DRE.

We provide the curriculum to teach from. Also we create teaching teams and schedules, so that each teacher is "on" just 6-8 Sundays a year; plenty of time for you to enjoy the upstairs services the rest of the time.

Teaching is a great way to give to UCWC, and you also get a lot back: learning more about Unitarian Universalism, making deeper connections with the others on your teaching team, and being inspired by the children—their surprising wisdom, their deep questions, and fresh insights.

One thing to be aware of—we never like to say "no" to volunteers, but in any given year, we may not have enough spots to accommodate everyone who wants to teach.

CALL FOR SHARE-THE-PLATE NOMINATIONS

Please help make [Share-the-Plate](#) a success again this year. It is time to collect nominations for Share the Plate recipients for the coming year.

By reaching out to the community, we are showing Chester County who we are, and for what we stand. In addition to providing some financial resources, Share the Plate raises awareness of these non-profit organizations among the congregation.

If you would like to nominate an organization please email a request for a Share the Plate Nomination Form to Email: share-the-plate. The deadline for nominations is Saturday, August 17.

Please plan to invite someone from the agency you wish to endorse to come to the service to speak for a minute or two when we do the collection. We found that donations increased significantly when someone came to the service to speak about the recipient organization.

The Social Justice Committee will choose a new list of Share the Plate recipients in August. According to our guidelines recipients should be local Chester County groups that help people in the area. Preference is given to small, local organizations that do not have large amounts of funds from government or other sources to sustain them.

Thank you for participating in Share the Plate. For more information, contact Beth Daniels, email: share-the-plate.

LET IT BE A DANCE

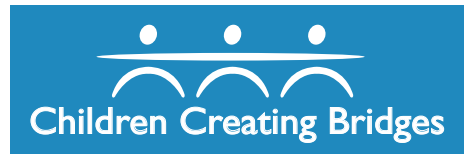
Saturday, September 14
5 PM - 10 PM
Details in the September
Fellowtarian

SHARE-THE-PLATE GENEROSITY

The Social Justice Committee's [Share-the-Plate program](#) raises money to give to local non-profit organizations who are trying to improve life for Chester County residents. We are pleased to announce that the share-the-plate recipient for August 18 (third Sunday of the month) is Children Creating Bridges.

The mission of [Children Creating Bridges](#) is to encourage children to be active participants in cultural and educational exchanges with the goal of bringing hope and celebration of diversity to their own communities and throughout the world. It is their belief that true peace cannot be achieved without mutual understanding, justice and interfaith dialogue.

They have sponsored various events to encourage more dialogue between diverse peoples in our area. They have sponsored educational and musical events for children, book donations to needy youth and free yoga classes for youth at several different locations around the area.



EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP FRESA Y CHOCOLATE

Strawberry and Chocolate is a Cuban-Spanish-Mexican co-produced film, directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Juan Carlos Tabío. It takes place in Havana, Cuba, and is based on the 1990 short story *The Wolf, The Forest and the New Man* by Senel Paz.

Diego, a cultivated, homosexual and skeptical young man, falls in love with a young heterosexual communist full of prejudices. First come rejection and suspicion, but also fascination. *Fresa y Chocolate* is the story of a great friendship, a great love between two men, which overcomes incomprehension and intolerance. We'll view this movie—outside, weather permitting—at Pat Shorten's home on Saturday, August 17, starting at 7 p.m.



For more information about the [Exploring Diversity Book Group](#), contact Pam Sapko, email: diversity-book-group.

FIRST SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION PROJECT THIS MONTH'S SUGGESTED ITEM: CEREAL

Our [monthly food collection](#) is Sunday, August 4. Look for collection baskets in the lobby. We participate in the "Circle of Giving" program that assures the [West Chester Food Cupboard](#) of specific items on any given month according to a schedule provided by the food cupboard. For this month's needs, see the above headline; of course, other items are appreciated as well. Please be sure that the date on food items has not expired.



We encourage members to bring in items the first Sunday of each month, but if you forget, we will accept non-perishables at any time. You can also put a check in the collection plate, payable to "UCWC" with "WC Food Cupboard" in the memo line on any Sunday.

Thank you for participating in this project and helping neighbors in our community. Contact Kimberly Ellerthorpe at email: food-cupboard.

CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR

All email addresses @ucwc.org unless otherwise noted.

- Jul 23** **Tue** **Policy Governance Tutorial.** 6:30 p.m. Office. See "From the President," p. 2.
- Aug 3** **Sat** **Building Work Party.** 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Aug 4** **Sun** [First Sunday Food Collection.](#) Lobby. See p. 3.
- Aug 5** **Mon** [Embracing Diversity Team.](#) 7 p.m. Office. Email: embracing-diversity.
- Aug 10** **Sat** [Gleaning at the Yeager's.](#) 6-7:30 p.m.
- Aug 11** **Sun** [Safe Harbor Dinner.](#) 6 p.m. To help, contact Sharon Mayer-Conroy, email: safe-harbor
- Aug 13** **Tue** **Council Meeting.** 7-9 p.m. Office. Contact Cindy Heck, e-mail: program
- Aug 17** **Sat** [Exploring Diversity Book Group.](#) 7 p.m. Offsite. See p. 3.
Deadline for Share-the-Plate Nominations. See p. 3
- Aug 18** **Sun** [Share the Plate Sunday.](#) Benefits Children Building Bridges. See p. 3.
- Aug 20** **Tue** **Board Meeting.** 7 p.m. Office. All are welcome. Contact Shelly Case, e-mail: president.
- Aug 23** **Fri** [Lunch Group.](#) 11:30 a.m. Panera Bread. See below.
- Aug 24** **Sat** [Gleaning at the Yeager's.](#) 6-7:30 p.m.
[Bonfire and Weenie Roast.](#) 7:30 p.m. At the Yeager's. Contact Mary Yeager, email: gleaning
- Aug 25** **Sun** [Social Justice Committee.](#) 11:15 a.m. Office. Contact Linda Sander, email: social-justice

NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

First, [spread the word about the July 24 day of action](#). Then, on July 24, call your Congressman and Senator and tell them now is the time to raise the full time minimum wage.

It is morally unacceptable that millions of full-time workers in this country cannot feed their families and meet other basic needs. The minimum wage should be a living wage. The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. The federal minimum for tipped workers is \$2.13 per hour, and it hasn't been raised since 1991.

This action is supported by [UUSC](#), the [UUA](#), and [UUPLAN](#).

LUNCH GROUP

[Lunch Group](#) will meet Friday, August 23, at 11:30 a.m. at Panera Bread, 1103 West Chester Pike, near Shop Rite. Newcomers are welcome.

To be added to the email 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 email, or you change your mind at the last minute, come anyway. Everyone is welcome.

The Fellowtarian is the monthly newsletter of the
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SOUL TO SOUL

Now is the time to plan your Fall/Winter schedule with some contemplative, spiritual time for your Self. Last year we offered a 14-week course entitled [Soul to Soul](#). Because of the success of the gatherings and the rewards felt by those who attended, we are again offering that course on Saturday mornings twice a month. In addition we will offer a course from the book [Heart to Heart](#) on the second and fourth Tuesday nights starting September 24. These guides were written by a UU minister and are comprised of 14 topics, from "Listening to Fears" to "Commitment", with readings, discussion questions, sharing and rituals.

The books can be purchased through [UUA Bookstore](#) for \$14. If you would like to make a commitment to enhance your Spiritual journey, this is the opportunity you have been looking for. . Classes are best limited to ten people (men and women), and we would like a minimum of six people, so please email us at [email: soul-to-soul](#) to sign up or ask any questions. It will be well worth your time.

— Harriet Singer and Mira Tryon