



# UCC NEWSLETTER

*Nurture Your Spirit, Help Heal Our World.*

Issue 5 - June, 2008

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## "Port of Call"

by Rev. Lori Staubitz

Have you ever set out on an adventure by looking at a map or following written instructions? How different the actual path can be from the guidelines we see on paper. The difference becomes increasingly clear as we find ourselves climbing up hill for miles or running low on water in the heat of the day. Real life is always more complex and multi-dimensional than we imagine. There are times along the way when we might question the wisdom of continuing on such a challenging course. In my life, I have learned that all meaningful endeavors are challenging but they are also filled with opportunity for growth, unexpected beauty and awesome moments of discovery and joy.

So it is with a this New Start Ministry. We have come far in a very short time. This month we take pause and look backward on this year. We have had struggle and celebration. We have had and will continue to have some excellent resources to chart our course: support and guidance from within our congregation and assistance from our larger Association. Our willingness to integrate the wholeness of our experiences and share what we have learned can have a significant impact upon our future.

In the next few months, I will be taking study leave and a portion of my vacation time. Resources and books are piled high,

ready and waiting for me. I will be doing writing for upcoming sermons, pastoral care, youth ministry and leadership. I will also be engaged in daily spiritual practice-prayer, meditation and yoga. I am available to our members for pastoral care in case of emergencies (significant losses and illness) but will continue regular services in ministry in September.

My ministry here is truly full, rich, meaningful and varied. Together we have had painful experiences as well as moments of extreme joy and beauty. We are traveling far, with great obstacles, toward a bright and beautiful future. How blessed I am to have such wonderful companions on the way. Thank you for your generosity of spirit and willingness to go the distance. Blessings to all. \*

- Rev. Lori Staubitz

## Insights: A Year End Theological Reflection

The process of theological reflection is an important aspect of religious growth and learning for individuals as well as for ministers and religious institutions. As we pause to look back upon this year, you are invited to reflect upon the following questions and share your written responses with our Minister Rev. Lori Staubitz or Committee on Ministry Chair Alice Yutzy. Your input is an important part of our congregational assessment and planning process.

### Some questions you might ask .....

- In what ways have I enlarged my spiritual life and connected more deeply with others through this ministry?
- What experiences have been the most joyful and meaningful for me? Why?
- What has been my greatest challenge? Why?
- What important learning do I have to share from my involvement in UCC congregational life that I believe will enhance our collective experience as we move forward in our ministry together?
- What questions are at the heart of my personal religious journey that I would like to explore with others? \*

## Summer Event Schedule

This is just the beginning of events that we will offer this summer. **If anyone wants to set up an event, check the web site Calendar to avoid double booking and then contact the Newsletter Editor, Dee Delauder.** For updates, please keep an eye on our Newsletter and Calendar for additional happenings. Emails will be sent out announcing events. Events so far are:

- **June 20, Friday at 5:30 pm - Music with the Minister for the Whole Family**

Join Rev. Lori Staubitz at the River Concert Series at St. Mary's College for a night of wonderful music, food, and connecting. Meet Rev. Lori under the big tree to the right of the stage at 6 pm with your chairs, picnic dinner or food from the on-site vendors. For more information about the concert, go to: [www.riverconcertseries.com](http://www.riverconcertseries.com)

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## Message of Appreciation: A Reflection of our First Year Together

As we end our first year of existence as a congregation, we can be grateful for all the amazing progress we have made together. We began in July with an idea of what we wanted and much enthusiasm to begin the hard work of creating this congregation. I'm sure none of us truly understood the breadth of the journey we were about to embark upon. However, our dream was always there guiding us. Within less than a year we satisfied all the requirements to allow us to be chartered by the Unitarian Universalist Association – truly a remarkable feat! And, I'm sure we all appreciate the many hours and hard work it has taken to get this far. Without the help of everyone, we would not have been able to create the foundation and basics needed for conducting services, having an RE program, and small group ministry. When I look at all the individual parts of the congregation, I am amazed at what is happening from day to day and Sunday to Sunday. We are a mighty ensemble!!!

We still have work to do to fulfill the dreams we brought to the Tucker's basement that first meeting. And we will get there because we have proven we can do amazing work. We will see more new faces in our second year as our efforts to become more visible in the community to take root. But first, we can all take a break, get rested, and then set our sights on our second year. We've worked hard and deserve to take some time to celebrate our success! \*

With my deepest appreciation to you all for making UUCC such a great congregation,  
Linda Bodycomb, President

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## Congregation Conversation News

On Sunday, May 18, we gathered for Congregation Conversations following the service. Along with discussing the details of the Proposed Budget for 2008-2009 and the Nominations process to elect new officers, two new initiatives were agreed upon by the members and are reported on below:

### Experiment with New Governance Structure Will Be Conducted Next Year

Due to the small number of members, UUCC will experiment with a new Board structure to facilitate communication and increased representation. The "Board" will be made up of two governing bodies: an Executive Committee and a Council of Committee Chairs. The Executive Committee would include the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, while the Council would consist of the committee chairs from the major committees: Worship, RE, Membership and Growth, and Communications and Publicity. If other major committees form next year, they will be included. The Executive Committee will meet monthly and work on policies and procedures that affect the congregation as a whole but will not vote on these until presented to the Council at joint meetings every other month. Voting will occur at the

joint meetings on matters affecting the whole of the congregation as well as affecting specific committee areas of responsibility.

Many congregations experiment with new procedures prior to changing their Bylaws. At the end of next year, we will assess if the process was effective and if so, we will change the Bylaws.

This change requires that we vote for our Committee Chairs since they will now represent the congregation as voting members of the "Board" at our Council meetings. \*

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## Sunday Hospitality Simplified

Each Sunday, we have been treated to a wonderful feast by our willing volunteers and we have been so very grateful for all that hard work and tasty goodies. However, at our meeting, the suggestion was made (with overwhelming agreement), that it was time to simplify what we bring for snacks. We decided that juice, coffee and tea, and some cookies for the children would do nicely. We agreed that we would rather

see **Hospitality**—page 3

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## Committee on Ministry (CoM)

Nearing the end of our "start-up" year the Committee on Ministry celebrates the miraculous accomplishments of our small but mighty congregation. Working with Reverend Lori Staubitz, our professional minister, church leaders, and the congregation has been an both honor and a pleasure. Looking toward the future, next year will see the addition of several new talented and motivated members to the COM team.

It is my wish for the congregation, church leaders and minister to have a restful fulfilling summer. \*

-Alice M. Yutzy

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## Fair Trade Update

A volunteer has come forward to take over the responsibly of the Fair Trade products that are sold during the social hour after our Sunday services. The job entails taking inventory of supplies, ordering (usually on line), pricing the products after they arrive, and keeping track of the finances. There is a small profit that is returned to the congregation. Products are kept at church in the blue storage cabinet. Nicole Lourette has offered to take on this responsibility.

We would like to thank Nicole for her desire to keep the Fair Trade table going. \*

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## Save This Date: July 13, 2008

On July 13, 2008, UUCU will have service at 11:30 am at the Pavilion at Greenwell Park in St. Mary's County. The service will be an Intergenerational Sharing Service on an environmental theme. Following the service, we will have a family pot-luck picnic lunch. After we eat, we can play games as well as go kayaking or canoeing for those who are interested. There are kayaks and canoes for rent there. For those that have their own boats, there is a place to launch them. We have the Pavilion until 6 pm, so we have plenty of time for fun!

More information will be available closer to the date. \*

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## Hospitality—from page 2

save the money to pledge more and save our energy for other projects for the congregation. We did talk about doing a lunch together from time to time that could be presented by the Covenant Groups, committees and children as a fund-raiser.

Marilyn Ruark agreed to be the Hospitality Chair and coordinate the Sunday snack sign-up and the fund-raiser lunches. Thanks go to Marilyn! \*

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## Summer Event Schedule from page 1

- **July 13, Sunday at 11:30 am - Service and Family Pot-Luck Picnic**

This Intergenerational Service will be a sharing service about an environmental theme, followed by a pot-luck picnic. Greenwell also has kayak and canoe rentals as well as a launching ramp for those who want to do some boating. Please RSVP to Linda Bodycomb no later than July 9 if you plan to attend.

- **August 31, Sunday at 11 am – Water Sharing Service and Pot-Luck Picnic**

This will be our one year anniversary of services. In honor of the anniversary, we will conduct the intergenerational service as we did last year - under the ancient linden tree at the Bodycomb home in Lusby. After the service, we will have a pot-luck lunch followed by swimming in the pool and kayaking for those who wish to try their luck.

**Remember to save a sample of water from a favorite trip or summer place to share during the service.**

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## UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland 2008 General Assembly Wrap-Up

The 2008 General Assembly Session concluded with several important successes for the UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland's (UULM-MD) priority issues. The actions taken by UUs were appreciated by legislators and other advocacy groups. Members of many Maryland congregations participated in rallies, hearings, advocacy training, and other legislative activities. Thank you to all who were instrumental in creating change during this session.

Two major health care goals were accomplished. First, critical funding for the Special Session's Medicaid expansion that is set to begin on July 1 was left intact. Second, the Kids First Act (HB1391) was passed. This legislation helps start Maryland on the road to universal health care coverage for our children. There are 90,000 Maryland children who are already eligible for public health insurance, and HB 1391 will help ensure that they are able to access this coverage.

With respect to global warming, the Global Warming Solutions - Reductions in Greenhouse Gases bill (SB 309) passed the Senate by a vote of 88-46 with amendments, but became bogged down in the House Economic Matters Committee on the last day of the session. Advocates expect it will be passed next year.

A number of bills this session dealt with civil rights for same-sex couples. The Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act (SB 290 & HB 351) did not come to a vote in committee, but it did garner major support--including 7 lead sponsors and 42 co-sponsors. Legislators and advocates plan to introduce this legislation again next year. In contrast to the major support for civil marriage equality this year, there was little support for legislation to create a constitutional amendment that limits marriage to heterosexual couples. HB 1345 and SB 169 died in committee. Two bills that did pass will increase the civil rights for same-sex couples. They are a bill protecting hospital visitation and medical decision-making rights for domestic partners (SB 566) and a bill exempting domestic partners from recordation and transfer taxes (SB 597).

We often ask legislators to support our positions. Now, it is time to thank them. Please take the time to thank your legislators who sponsored and supported legislation related to UULM-MD's priority issues. Go to [www.uulmmd.org](http://www.uulmmd.org) to find your legislators, their contact information, and how they voted on key bills. \*

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## UUCM Membership & Growth Report

The UUCM had an excellent initial year of membership. We began the year with 28 members and grew by 29 percent to 36 adult members between September 2007 and June 2008. Of utmost importance, we are pleased to have 22 children and young people in UUCM's Religious Education Program.

In April 2008, we celebrated our first Member Recognition Sunday Service with our newest members officially welcomed during the service and provided with a New Member welcome packet followed by a special social after the service in their honor. The Membership and Growth Committee works closely with the communications chair to increase awareness of UUCM in the community. We always welcome inquiries about our congregation and about the UU movement in general.

If you are considering membership in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Chesapeake, please contact Marcia Seifert at 410-326-2221 or a member of the Board of Trustees. UUCM activities are planned throughout the summer. The first is an Intergenerational Sharing Service at 11:30 a.m. on July 13 at Greenwell Park in St. Mary's County. The service emphasizes the environment and will be followed by a potluck picnic. See UUCM's website for further details. We look forward to seeing you there and at other summer activities.

Enjoy a fun, safe summer with family and friends, Marcia Seifert, Chair Membership and Growth Committee. \*

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## Annual Meeting Results

The Annual Meeting on Sunday June 1 was called to order after the service by President, Linda Bodycomb, with a fifteen member quorum, verified by Board of Trustees Member-at-Large, Rob Tucker. The first order of business was to recognize the accomplishments of all of those who have contributed their time and efforts to make our first year together such a success. We can all be proud of the hard work and time that has gone into such a successful inaugural year.

The draft Annual Report was presented as a recording of our first year's accomplishments and our plans for the upcoming year. It is also a record of how we are fulfilling the requirements of our Strategic Plan. Less than one year ago, UUCC was just an idea. The Annual Report is a testament to the breadth of the accomplishments by an ensemble of dedicated members. This Report is an important historical record for UUCC. It will also be sent to the Chalice Lighters Program for the Grant Administrator to evaluate our progress for the present grant. A second Intent to Apply was submitted on May 31, 2008, to assist UUCC in efforts to compensate our minister according to Fair Compensation Guidelines. The Annual Report will be input for the full application for the second grant due on August 1. This draft will be finalized at the end of June at the close of the fiscal year on June 30, 2008. Authors of the report can make any changes by that date and should submit them to Jim Bodycomb.

Ellis Knox presented the proposed 2008-2009 Budget. After some informational discussion, the budget was passed unanimously. The Budget sent to everyone via email on May 30 reflects the final figures.

Fred Ruark, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the results of the search for candidates for the Executive Committee and the Council of Committee Chairs. The slates for both categories passed by acclamation and the officers for the 2008-2009 year are below. Thanks to all who have agreed to serve. \*

**President** – Linda Bodycomb – 1 year term

**Treasurer** – Ellis Knox – 2 year term

**Vice President** – Fred Ruark – 3 year term

**Secretary** - Denise Louorette-Brady – 3 year term

**Worship Committee Chair** – Yvonne Micheli

**Religious Education** – Eliza Garth

**Membership and Growth** – Marcia Seifert

**Communications and Publicity** – Dee Delauder

Open discussions followed concerning around such topics as fund raising ideas and UUCC summer events.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm.

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### Vouchers Anyone?

The fiscal year is about to end on June 30. If you have vouchers to present, you must do so no later than the week before June 30. Send them to Ellis Knox at his home address in the directory. And, if you do not plan to process vouchers and plan to consider your expenditures for a church expense a donation, please let Ellis know this too. We need to know how much it costs to run our programs. Ellis might also be able to help you with documentation to process a tax deduction. \*

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**Keep your eyes peeled for the new UUCC Web Site at  
<http://theUUCC.org>**