



UUCS NEWSLETTER

Nurture Your Spirit, Help Heal Our World.

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Issue 12 December 2008

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UUCS Board President's Message:

A Time of Celebration for Our Country

This past month we experienced a historic milestone in our country's history which I am still savoring. As Unitarian Universalists, we advocate for the ability of everyone to participate in the democratic process as well as to be on equal ground to experience the fullness of the American dream. We are not there yet, but the hopes and dreams of this equality seem more alive and possible. There seems to be an electrifying energy in the air. Do you feel it, too? Granted, there are big economic challenges to face, as well as old fearful attitudes that cause divisions. However, when we feel the high energy of hope in the air, the road seems less arduous. I hope this translates into a resolve to strengthen our community both at home and around the world with the goal of creating a more peaceful world. This should be a time of celebration for everyone. And, it is a time that we can ask ourselves "What can I do to help?" Can you answer that call? Let's tap into our UU values to guide us to be helpmates as we create a more just, equal and compassionate world. I'd love to hear your ideas!

From the heart, Linda Bodycomb, President

Special Congregational Vote Scheduled for Dec. 14, 2008

A special Congregational Meeting will be held after the service on Sunday, December 14, 2008. We will vote to decide if we would like to "call" Rev. Lori Staubitz to partner with us as our minister. Rev. Staubitz has been UUCS's Acting Minister from the beginning. We are at the stage to decide upon more permanent ministry. For the past few months, a special team has been conducting discussions with our members to determine the ministry needs of our congregation. Earlier this week, the Board received a recommendation from this team to bring the question for a vote as soon as possible.

Choosing a minister is one of the most important votes a congregation can make since the minister is integral to our ministry and to

the life of a congregation. Therefore, we are encouraging every member to attend. Voting will be done by secret ballot, as recommended by the Joseph Priestley District. Child care will be provided.

If you cannot attend, we have a proxy vote provision in our Bylaws. Send your written vote to our Board Secretary, Denise Lourette-Brady via email or in the US Mail no later than the day before the vote, which will be Dec. 13. Denise's email is:

sec@theuucc.org Denise's address can be found in our Congregational Directory.

If you have any questions about the vote, please contact Board President Linda Bodycomb at pres@theuucc.org.

Conversations with the Congregation

On Sunday, November 16, the Board of Trustees held a Congregational Conversations session after the service. The topics we discussed this time were: **Conversation about "calling" our Acting Minister, Rev. Lori Staubitz.** Alice Yutzy, Chair of the Committee on Ministry and leader of the Ministry Transition Team, conducted the last in a series of dialogues with members of the congregation. Alice informed us of the process and

asked for feedback on the question: "Is Rev. Staubitz the minister we wish to partner with us in our future ministry?" It was an informative and affirmative conversation. It was then the charge of the Team to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees based on an analysis of the various conversations with members of the congregation.

The UU Congregation of the Chesapeake
December, 2008
Dee DeLauder,
Editor

Port of Call

Reflections by Rev. Lori Staubit



It is easy to curse the cold and darkness. Many of us begin winter by wishing it away. Perhaps the reality of global warming will help us have a change of heart when it comes to ice and snow. It helps to know that without “down time”, many plants will not bud, flower or flourish. It is the way of trees and bulbs and it is that way for us human creatures too.

Winter has an extreme way of urging to slow down. Night comes early, cold forces us inward to seek out warmth. The songs of nesting birds are gone from the trees along with the leaves.

From all visible signs and senses, we too are asked to slow down. So, I do. Each year, I take time to gaze upward into the dark, star filled December heavens.

This annual ritual was inspired, of course, by the Christian Nativity story. As a child, each Christmas Eve I would step out into the night to see if “THE STAR” would appear. My secret hope was that a real miracle would happen to me too. What I found were millions of stars, not just one. I was never disappointed. The incredible beauty in the world around me was, and still remains, miracle enough for me.

I invite you to step out to star gaze with me this December.

As we search for that one special star, let us be filled with the sure knowledge that each star shines with unfolding mystery and majesty. As we stand still in the darkness, may we discover that something wonderful is waiting to be born and received and no matter where you are standing this season, we are together under the same star filled heavens. May your December be filled with the gifts of this season.

With hope and joy, Rev. Lori Staubit

Farewell and Good Luck to Elizabeth and Mike Weaver

Elizabeth and Mike Weaver are moving to England in early December. What a great opportunity! However, we will be so sad to see them leave. Elizabeth has been an active member of the Worship Committee and has done some amazing and wonderful work these past two years to create inspirational services. Mike has been a part of the Music Team and we have enjoyed his musical gifts. We are very appreciative of their generosity as they shared their gifts with our congregation. After their term in England, they will return to the US, but will be located in the Philadelphia. We will miss them, but wish them well in their exciting adventure abroad. And, we hope to stay in touch!

Baltimore-Washington Growth Committee's proposed Publicity Campaign

Linda Comb attended a meeting at the Cedar Lane UU Church in Bethesda on Nov. 9. The consensus in Bethesda was that the congregations needed to pool their resources to conduct the area-wide publicity campaign. The feeling was that we cannot be effective in making our message known as individual congregations and that we needed to ban together. Drawing from the successful model of the Democratic Presidential Campaign, a suggestion was made that we could learn from their marketing techniques of drawing on many small contributions. A calculation was made that if each member in the area made a contribution of at least \$70, then we would meet our goals to finance the campaign. Understanding the economic climate, we hoped that those who can carry more of the load will help those who cannot at this time. With hard economic times, folks look for community and spiritual connection. Therefore, we thought the time was ripe to connect with po-

tential UUs who will be looking for a community such as ours to help make a difference. Those attending the Congregation Conversations were generally supportive of the project and also asked questions that Linda promised to research. Additionally, our members were supportive of in-house canvassing for the project vs. providing our member information to the UUA group conducting the campaign, which was one of the suggestions made at the Nov. 9th meeting. There was also a concern about coverage in our area since we are an outlying congregation. Linda will work with the UUA committee to find out how our area will be covered. Pledges for the campaign need to be made sometime in the Winter. We hope to come up with creative suggestions to raise money. The meeting at UUC was the first in a series to drum up support for this effort.

The RE 411 by Laura Webb



In the past several weeks, the RE program, Youth Outreach efforts, and the entire congregation have focused significant time and resources on the issue of hunger—in our community, in America, and around the world. Several youth and parents ended this project by joining me and Rev. Staubitz on a tour of the SMILE Food Bank just before Thanksgiving. We learned that the SMILE volunteers were thankful for the donations of food products and the money we delivered—especially since they had exceeded their budget for their Thanksgiving giveaway project by almost exactly the same amount of money this generous congregation and its youth had raised!

We'd like to keep both the success of this project and the ever-present challenges of hunger fresh in our youth's minds. This month's tool box provides ideas for extension activities for families to explore at home on this theme.



Janet Addison, a SMILE volunteer accepts UUCU donation, and gives our donors a tour of the SMILE food pantry in Solomons, MD.

Visit their web site at:

<http://www.smileinc.org/FoodPantry.html>

Back row: Laura Webb and April Tucker

Middle row: Matthew Ryon, Cameron Tucker, Janet Addison, Rachel Neville, Erin Brady, Karin Ryon

Front row: Joshua Tucker, Kate Ryon



Parent RE Tool Box: Feeding our Hunger

Idea #1

What can be more appropriate for some family time around-the-dinner-table conversation than that topic of being hungry?

You might try getting the kids attention with an appetizer of **ketchup sandwiches**—a shameful staple in the diets of hungry children in Amer-

ica. As these not-so-satisfying treats are sampled, encourage your kids to talk about what they have learned about hunger, food banks, or poverty. As you serve the real meal, encourage the kids to free associate about what they are hungry for-- helping to steer their responses from food items to other things. Extend the question by asking about:

- Hunger for justice: what do your children think should be different about our community or the world?
- Hunger for attention: who or what do your children think has been neglected in their community or in the world?
- Hunger for meaning: what do your children think does not make sense in our community or in the world?

Idea #2

Are your children hungry for knowledge and action? Sit down with them at the computer and explore how they can have impact as members of the internet community:

- Visit www.kidscanmakeadifference.org. This site has information about domestic and world hunger, as well as suggestions for kids on how they can help alleviate suffering.
- Make a habit of visiting www.thehungersite.com every day. With just a click of the mouse, your family can make a daily donation to feed hungry people! For every click from your PC or laptop, sponsors provide food to hunger organizations around the world. An interactive map also shows visitors how hunger affects countries all over the world. Tabs on this site also link to similar pages that allow visitors to "click into reality" donations for breast cancer research, child health activities, literacy programs, rainforest protection, and animal rescue.

Focus on Members

In November, UUCC welcomed five new adult members into our congregation as well as two new young people. This column debuts this month with an introduction of some of the new members to the congregation. This month we are introducing our new members, Laura and Russ Starks, along with their children Abbey and Luke, and Paul Thiebaud. Next month, we will focus on our other new members, Jane and Craig Messersmith.

The Starks Family



Laura and Russ Starks find their biggest passion to be their children, Abbey, age 10, and Luke, age, 8. Both parents love to read to their children and it shows in their children's love of books. Abbey loves to read historic books, like *Little House on the Prairie*. Both children are involved in Scouts as well as Dad, who is a Cub Scout Den Leader. Friday night is Luke's favorite night when he attends the Bear Scout meetings. At present, they are working on a go-cart without an engine. Abbey has been busy earning badges as a Girl Scout. She also has a passion for art – she won awards for her work at the Charles County Fair. Laura works as a physical therapist mostly with children. Her passion is developing her creative

side through interior decorating. We have been the lucky recipients of her creative gifts with the flower arrangements she has made for our chalice table. Russ, a mechanical engineer, commutes to Columbia daily, but still finds time to pursue his passion of music which we get to appreciate now that he is a member of our Sunday music ministry. We are very honored and happy to welcome the Stark Family to UUCC!

Paul Thiebaud



Paul Thiebaud was searching for a UU congregation on-line and found our website. He was happy to recognize his neighbor Ellis Knox on the site. Paul also lives at Asbury in Solomons, so it was a natural that Ellis would introduce Paul to us. Paul had been a member of the Universalist National Memorial Church in DC for many years, so he is very familiar with UUism. He has been married for 63 years to Doris and is happy to report that they have 4 children, 9 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. The whole bunch celebrates Thanksgiving together yearly – this year to be at Asbury in the auditorium for one big potluck! Paul was an Electrical Engineer by profession

and worked for the Federal Government for over 30 years. His passions now are digital photography and playing chess. Welcome to UUCC, Paul – we are so happy to have you aboard!

Hurray! Denise

Denise Lourette-Brady our congregational secretary, has just received her 2nd Masters degree, conferred on 10/31/08, for her Educational Specialist - Curriculum Development from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She is completing the process of applying to the doctoral program at the same university.

"I would like to thank everyone who has prayed for and supported me through this process, especially my husband and daughter! I also want to thank Eliza and Linda for their patience as I budgeted my time around my coursework".



Recipe for a Miracle by Rev. Lori Staubitz

Take one idea, mix it with a committed minister, two giving adult religious educators, one generous resident artist, several dedicated parents, five hardworking middle school teens, 23 enthusiastic children, five involved elders and 55 hungry and supportive men, women and children.

Take a moment to give thanks and what will you get:

An "Empty Bowl Fundraising Sunday" complete with 72 portions of homemade soup, served in beautifully crafted hand-made pottery bowls with generous servings of homemade breads and \$525.00 donated to the local Calvert County Food Pantry SMILE on Monday!

Now that is what I call a Miracle in the making! Thanks to everyone who participated.



Empty Bowls by Alice Yutzy

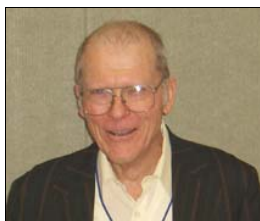
The Empty Bowls Harvest Celebration held on November 23 was a "yummy" success. It was the perfect closure for the "homemade bread and water" communion service conducted by Reverend Lori Staubitz. Participants were able to sample two delicious soups accompanied by assorted breads, crackers and desserts.

The best part of the whole affair was that the delicious soups were made by the Teen Covenant Group, and the beautiful bowls were handmade by the Youth Outreach.

After purchase of the bowls and donations for the soup UCC is proud to report that a whopping \$535, along with several bags of canned and dried goods was donated to SMILE Food Pantry in Lusby. A big thanks goes out to all the young artists, creative cooks and benevolent contributors for making this activity a huge success!

The Knox Report

by Ellis Knox



Kee those pledge payments coming! I'm encouraged by the checks that have been coming in, month by month and week by week, although I haven't made a

systematic comparison between payments and your pledges for the 2008-09 fiscal year. If any of you foresee a problem with fulfilling your pledge, please let me know; the sooner the better. On the other hand, if you see your way to a mid year upward adjustment, you may keep it as a pleasant surprise. JPD Chalice Lighters grant payments are coming monthly and keeping our heads above water.

Looking forward to next year, 8 March is the date set for Giving or Stewardship Sunday. The Asbury Club House is reserved for a congregational dinner on Saturday, 7 March. Volunteers are needed to help make that a pleasant, wonderful, entertaining, informative family affair.

The Board will develop a budget proposal after we have pledge figures for the 2009-10 fiscal year, but we need to identify ahead of time the costs of all the things that we plan for and hope for and dream about for the coming year. Make your suggestions and comments to a Committee Chair or member of the Executive Board.

— Ellis Knox, Treasurer

The Commo Man

by Dee DeLauder

Progress is being made on the website where it comes to the secure side, or the members and friends only pages. There is a login page that requires a user name and password for access. Any member or listed non-member may have access to the secure side. From there you will be able to view or edit your personal information, thereby keeping the database accurate and current.

In order to get set up with a user name and password for the secure side, you may jot them down on scratch paper and give it to me on Sunday, or if you wish, you may send me your user name and password separately via email to webmaster@theuucc.org. (send user-name on one email, then the password in a different email). Make sure to put "New User Account" in the subject line.



Youth Outreach News

by April Tucker

Big kudos to Alice Yutzy and the Teen Youth Covenant Group for their successful fundraiser! Thank you also to all the participants of the Youth Outreach Program that made bowls to help support such a worthy cause for our community!

The Youth Outreach Program will once again sponsor a gingerbread house decorating event on Sunday, December 14 immediately following service – all you need to bring is yourself! All ages are welcome to participate and each will go home with their own decorated house to showcase (and eat!). This time of year can be hectic and stressful, so come and relax while creating something wonderful with family and friends. Happy holidays everyone!

Save this Date:

May 15-17, 2009

**Family Campout and UCC
Retreat Weekend!!!**

Early plans are to have a Visioning Retreat during the day on Saturday, May 16. We will plan to reserve campsites and a pavilion at Point Lookout Park for the weekend. The service on Sunday will be conducted by members of our RE program. Please plan to join us camping and/or for our daytime activities. More details to follow soon. If you would like to work on planning for this event, please contact Linda Bodycomb at pres@theuucc.org.

***** Help Wanted *****

UUCU has openings to help with tasks in several exciting aspects of congregational life. Some tasks are one time activities, others require occasional to regularly scheduled attention. Most tasks are broken down so they do not require a big commitment. **Training and backup documentation are available. We would appreciate any help you can provide!**

Membership Tasks - See Linda Bodycomb if interested or for more information.

1. Corresponding Welcomer – on-going
 - a. Sends Welcome Notes to visitors and well as notes to newcomers and members who have not been attending services or events.
 - b. Keeps the master Visitor Contact List and contacts leadership with visitor data updates.
2. Orientation Assistant – 2 to 3 times per year

Assists with Orientation Class: Menu for luncheon, document handouts and Orientation Packets, sending invitations.
3. Membership Inventory Assistant – as needed
 - a. Orders gifts for new members for New Member Ceremony, 2-3 times per year.
 - b. Maintains New Member Packets to be given to New Members.
 - c. Maintains supplies for Welcome Table: pamphlets for display rack, blank name tags and markers.
4. Newsletter Reporter – once/month

Interviews new and existing members for the Focus on Members column. Includes a photo of the member or family as well as an article introducing the member(s).

Stewardship Tasks – See Ellis Knox to apply or for more information.

1. **Stewardship Dinner Coordinator(s)**, 7 March 2009

Asbury Club House, evening event

Description: This position (1-2 coordinators) is a one time project that requires finding others to help with the tasks of the event. It is a fun and celebratory event. The plan is to have a potluck, entertainment with our own talent, and a short Stewardship presentation by leadership. The position responsibilities are to:

- a. Create a flyer for the event and send to members and friends
- b. Create and monitor an attendee registration sheet
- c. Write articles for the newsletter and begin publicity in January
- d. Create a plan for set up for the dinner and get help from others to participate. Themes/ decorations are encouraged.
- e. Plan entertainment and coordinate program with Stewardship Leadership.
- f. Arrange for child care (a list is available)
- g. Arrange for set-up and clean-up

2. **Stewardship Leadership Team**

Several Members are needed for this team. Tasks must be completed to coincide with the Stewardship Weekend, March 7 and 9, 2009. Tasks can be divided up and include:

- a. Collecting budget information from leadership
- b. Checking congregational documentation for budget commitments and long range planning goals
- c. Drafting a target budget
- d. Developing a 2008-2009 Stewardship Brochure and Stewardship Packet which is sent to members.

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Family Campout and UUCC Retreat Planning – May 15-17, 2009

Volunteers are needed to:

1. Arrange for sites at Point Lookout State Park
 2. Assist with program planning and fun activities
 3. Coordinate registration
-

**Interested in a Daytime Book Discussion
or Covenant Group?**

If you are interested in a daytime book discussion group or a daytime covenant group, please contact Linda Bodycomb. If there is enough interest, we will start one this Winter.

Inspirational Words of the Month

“Be Kind: For everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.”

By Philo of Alexandria

Here is some empty space for that article you never had time to write.

If you would like to share your vision and talents with the UUCC,
here’s your chance. Send your article to me at:

newsletter@theuucc.org

“there’s always room”