



**FIRST UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF BERKS COUNTY**

The Univoice

Finishing the Job

By: Jeff Woodward
Chair of Stewardship

In the last six months we have had a real chance to appreciate the important differences that the Chalice House renovation and the unification of the two church buildings have made in the life of our congregation. The attractive, now available and fully functional spaces offer us a variety of settings for classes, meetings and church business. We now have room for the present important work of the church as well as for our future growth.

As you know, in the December congregational meeting the Board reported to the members a remaining debt of \$62,000 on the Chalice House addition and announced that it would hold a number of town meetings early this year to determine the best ways of completing payment on this debt.

Our town meetings were well attended and productive in that they produced a general agreement that the most effective and efficient way to meet this obligation would be to extend the current capital campaign for an additional two years from 2010 to 2012. In this extension of the current campaign, a majority of the contributing members would be able to extend their contributions into the next two years and new members will be given the opportunity to participate in completing this important project. In each case most members would be able to spread out their payments over this two year period so that their payments would amount to less than a dollar a day.

In its April meeting, the board endorsed this plan and agreed to present it to the membership in the May congregational meeting with both the hope and the expectation that it will receive the needed approval and financial support from the membership. In that meeting the board members will distribute capital campaign pledge cards to the members. Since you have received this report now, we hope that as many members as possible will be able to fill out, sign, and return a pledge card in that meeting. For those not present we will follow with a mailing and phone campaign.

Here's how we plan to reach our goal of \$62,000:

Pledges	Amount	Total
3 gifts of	\$5,000	\$15,000
5 gifts of	\$2,500	\$12,500
8 gifts of	\$1000	\$8,000
10 gifts of	\$750	\$7,500
25 gifts of	\$500	\$12,500
40 gifts of	\$250	\$10,000

Total of 91 gifts of \$ 65,500



Please take some time to consider your support for this endeavor. We need everyone's support at whatever level you are able to afford. With this generous help we will be able to retire this debt and then move ahead to fulfill the mission of our church.

Church Office Hours:

The church office is open Mon. through Fri. from 10-3pm, but please call ahead to ensure access.

Please contact office manager Susan Stewart to arrange for a temporary key if you need access any other time.

Rev. Fees has office hours by appointment. Please call (610) 372-0928 or email sandrafees@verizon.net, to schedule an appointment. Monday is Rev. Fees day off.

Univoice Submission Guidelines

Email submissions by attaching a Word file or including your material in the body of an email message to univoice@uuberks.org. You may also put typewritten submissions in our mailbox in the new Chalice House in the box labelled *Univoice*.

The deadline is the 15th of each month. Please include the date, time and location of events, and the full name and phone number or e-mail of contacts.

My telephone number is (610) 741-6006 if you need to contact me.

~Meghan Cocuzza, Editor

From Sandra's Study

Rev. Sandra Fees A Good Life?



Are you living the good life? In a culture that tends to reward short-term achievement over enduring values, it can be a challenge. In his new book, *Making the Good Life Last*, Unitarian Universalist minister Michael Schuler studies the problems that have created this way of looking at life and the principles that can secure a more sustainable future for us and the planet.

I recently had the chance to meet Schuler and hear him speak at our UU district conference in King of Prussia. Though I had already read his book and preached on it, I wanted to hear more. The topic holds great interest for me and has particular relevance for our faith. According to Schuler, what undermines the ability to achieve a good life are things like environmental deterioration, economic improprieties, declines in health and wellness, unstable personal relationships, and misplaced vocational values. What facilitates the good life, on the other hand, are creativity, meaningful work, immersion in nature, service to others, physical vitality, learning, and stable relationships. These are all characteristics we Unitarian Universalists affirm and prize.

There are four simple precepts Schuler offers for developing these characteristics. We can strive to be:

- “Attentive rather than distracted”
- “Rooted rather than restless”
- “Patient rather than impetuous”
- “Prudent rather than improvident”

Attentive, rooted, patient, and prudent. This is some pretty basic stuff. Nothing fancy, right? Yet, these very simple, basic precepts, when internalized, can transform lives. We can move from short-term thinking to a sustained sense of well-being, both individually and collectively.

We can overcome the barriers to living the good life. And we can find happiness and feel more at home in the world.

Yours in faith and love,
Sandra

Beautification of Local Neighborhood Slated for October 2010


Neighbors who live, work, and worship South of Penn Street have begun a street beautification project known as “The 5th Street Project.” In October, trees will be pruned or removed, and flower planters, vertical banners, and trash cans installed. The effort is designed to help rejuvenate the area and infuse fresh energy and enthusiasm into the neighborhood. The target area will include S. 5th Street, S. 4th Street, and the 200 to 400 blocks of Franklin Street. Our church will be hosting the group’s next planning meeting on Thur. June 10, at 7 p.m. Come to learn more and explore our church’s involvement. Contact Rev. Sandra Fees for more information.

Message from The Social Justice Team

The Social Justice Team would like to gauge your level of interest in partnering with Family Promise of Berks County. Our church would host 3 homeless families for seven nights, about 4 times a year. We may be voting on this program at the May 16 Congregational Meeting. Please take some time to learn more. Carla Mannix and other team members will be available after service in the Gerber Room to answer any questions. We would need to mobilize approx. 50 volunteers for that week that we host!

Is your pencil made from a rainforest tree?

Pencils are a part of everyday life, but every year, millions of pencils are made from a tropical rainforest tree called “jelutong.” Avoid pencils that are made in Indonesia or Taiwan, as they are likely to be made from tropical rainforest wood. Instead, buy pencils made from sustainable incense cedar or recycled materials like denim or newspapers. Check out the pencils in your home, school, or office. Pencils made from incense cedar are reddish brown with distinctive grain or growth lines and a cedar or forest smell. Jelutong pencils are dark white with specks or brown and no aroma. A simple step to help the rainforest—avoid pencils made from tropical wood!



Splinters from the Board

6 major votes on tap for congregational meeting May 16

By Gene Goodwin

We are going to have to make some important decisions at the Berks UU Spring Congregational meeting after church on Sunday, May 16.

We will be asked to vote on: (1) electing three new Board members (see separate article on this page), (2) a new budget for the 2010-11 church year beginning July 1, (3) a Board plan for extending the Chalice House capital pledge campaign, (4) new vision and mission statements, as approved by the Board, (5) whether we should join with 17 other area churches in a "Family Promise" program to help homeless families and (6) which local organizations we should help with a Sunday plate collection next Fall.

The budget for next fiscal year probably will look a lot like the current one. It all depends on how much the congregation pledges to contribute to our church in the 2010-11 fiscal year beginning July 1. With all but seven pledge cards in when the Board met on April 13, a total of \$153,000 had been pledged, which is about \$5,000 less than the total pledged last year.

By the time you read this, our budget committee should know how much money they can count on for next year. Those of us interested in such matters need to show up on May 16 to see how creative our budgeteers were able to be with a virtually zero budget.

We'll also be asked to accept a Board plan to extend the capital campaign for two years in order to raise \$62,000 to pay off loans used for the now-completed Chalice House addition. The minutes of the April Board meeting make no mention of any grants of money from Chalice Lighters, the state Universalists or Santa Claus, so we best be prepared to pay the full \$62,000 ourselves.

New Vision and Mission statements also were approved by the April Board for vote by the congregation. Hammered out by a committee headed by Board member Doug Mealing, the statements have been well exposed to the entire congregation.

Regarding Family Promise, our Social Justice folks plan to ask us not simply to vote yes or no but to indicate how much each of us would be willing to do. Becoming a host church would mean that four times a year we would take in three homeless families for a week, serving them all three meals each day and providing them with places to sleep in our church. We probably would need 50-70 volunteers for each week.

The sixth major vote will at least offer the comfort of familiarity. At our December and May congregational meetings we are asked to vote for the four or five on a list of several local organizations we feel should receive one of our special Sunday plate collections.

Board Election

Incumbents Mealing and Mannix and newcomer Delite Hawk candidates for Board

By Gene Goodwin

Two incumbents— Doug Mealing and Mike Mannix—and newcomer Delite Hawk have agreed to accept nomination to the Board of Directors at the congregational meeting after church Sunday, May 16.

Nominating Committee chair Gene Fizz said the three will be presented as his committee's slate to be elected at the May 16 meeting. After the election, the Board will elect from its members a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. Of the four Board members now filling those posts, only Treasurer Jeanne Hay has chosen to leave the Board. President Joe Plageman still has a year to serve on his three-year term, while Vice President Ron Smith still has two years before his term expires. The secretary for the past two years has been Doug Mealing.

Doug, a native of Reading and a Penn State grad who has been in the computer business for 15 years, produces almost verbatim minutes. He does it by rapid keyboarding on his laptop. Doug has served on our Board for only two years because he volunteered to accept a shorter term to restore the system of annually adding three members to the nine-member board for three-year terms. Doug has two children who are in our RE program: Mason, 9, and Taylor, 4.

Mike Mannix has been a member of our church since 2006. He was elected to the Board three years ago. Now a physics teacher at Twin Valley High School, Mike was a Peace Corps volunteer in 1990-92, where he met and married fellow volunteer, Carla. He and Carla have three children, all in our RE program.

The newcomer on the slate, Delite Hawk, joined our church just a year ago, but she has already chaired a major fund-raiser, the service auction held this past March.

She learned about UUism from her son, Michael "Doc" Hawk, who is a member, along with his wife, Joanne Matz. A native of Reading, Delite earned a BS degree from Penn State and worked as a dietitian at Yale University and at Wernersville State Hospital, where she retired in 2002 as Director of Dietetic Services. Her husband, John A. Hawk, died in 2004.

Besides Plageman and Smith, other continuing Board members are Jeff Woodward, Karen Nierle and Gene Fizz.

Religious Education

Dear Friends,

Do you take the 7th UU principle (Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part) with you when you go shopping?

The other day, I was at the dollar store, and I picked up some artificial vines to include in our class rainforest decorations. The vines were really nice-looking and only cost \$1—maybe I should buy several? But then, I stopped and considered the environmental impact of those made-in-China leaves. Oil is needed to



Annual Youth Service held on March 28.

transport the products from China and to make the plastic leaves. Worldwide, oil drilling is one of the main causes of rainforest destruction. I put them back (although I do sometimes shop at the dollar store, and yes, Wal-Mart; it just seemed wrong to do so for a rainforest preservation class!)

I have to admit, though, I was really torn. I want our children to have creative, exciting experiences at Sunday School. Worship services, holidays, and family events tend to seem more special with really great decorations, so that dollar store decor is really tempting.

So I guess what I'm wondering is how do we live lightly on the Earth while still having fun and shopping within our means? What are some of the buying choices that your family has made to help preserve the earth? How do you consider the 7th principle in your purchasing decisions without driving yourself crazy? Maybe we'll come up with some good ideas as we work through the last few weeks of the Celebrating Rainforests curriculum.

Peace,
Elizabeth



Elizabeth Kaufmann
Director of Religious Education

Upcoming RE Events:

Please note: Overnight trip to the Philadelphia Zoo on May 14 has been cancelled due to the high per-person cost of the event, which many families found prohibitive.

Lehigh Valley Zoo trip Sat., May 29 10:00 am

We'll meet at the Lehigh Valley Zoo (www.lvzoo.org) near Allentown and enjoy a day of animal exploration. Afterward, we'll have a potluck picnic by the sparkling Jordan Creek (dress to get wet!) Regular adult admission is \$9.50, kids 2-11 are \$7.00. If we have at least 15 people in our group, we can get the group rate of \$7.50 for adults and \$5.00 for children 2-11. Either way, children under 2 and members of the Philadelphia Zoo are free! Please RSVP to Elizabeth by May 23.

Rainforest T-shirt Making Day May 16

If your child would like to make a special rainforest T-shirt—be sure to dress him or her in clothes that can get messy and join us on this Sunday! Donations of plain cotton T-shirts in children's size will be gratefully accepted.

Youth Art-Con May 21-23

Our teens will host UU youth from around the area for a weekend of fun, spirituality, and art. Contact Celeste Galanos (drawpaint-play@gmail.com) for more information or to volunteer your time and talent.

Child Dedication May 30

We are having another baby boom at church and two of our beautiful new little ones will be dedicated during the worship service. Contact Elizabeth or Sandra if you have a child that you would like to have dedicated.

Rainforest Decorating Day and Worship Service Rehearsal Sat. June 5 10:30 am

Come help turn our sanctuary green and get ready for the next day's special rainforest worship.

RE Sunday: Rainforest Celebration June 6

Come and join our children as we celebrate all that we have learned about our 7th principle and the rainforest during the spring. We will have special music, stories, a moment of appreciation for our RE teachers, and a bridging ceremony for our graduating seniors all with a green and leafy rainforest flair!

Adult Program Offerings

May Lunch Bunch: Is the Divine Outside or Inside – or Both?

Join the lunch bunch Tuesday, May 18, for a lively conversation about God's relationship with the world. Bring a brown bag lunch and your theological perspective. Contact Rev. Sandra Fees for more information.



Wine tasting event a staggering success

So, what happens when you get over 30 UU's in a room with 24 bottles of wine to taste? Correct! A wonderful time! The gourmet food and varied wines were a wonderful catalyst for many of us to get to know each other better. All the while, \$307 was added to the Church's general account. Thank You Norm, Gene, Michele, Bonnie and Paula for hosting a wonderful party. Congratulations to Richard and Kimberly for submitting the winning Vintages!!

Grocery Bags Needed

The Coffee Corps are in need of grocery bags for recycling. Please bring your grocery bags to the Coffee Corps during the Sunday service. Any donations will be greatly appreciated.

New Arts and Crafts Group: Crafty UU's

Come join friends for camaraderie while working on various art projects of your own or helping someone else. You'll have a chance to learn from each other, and have fun while we're together. We will meet the 2nd and 4th Saturday, 11am - 2pm, at the church each month. Room to be announced. Please bring a bag lunch for the first meeting Sat. June 12. We will discuss lunch and how we want to handle it then. We will begin each meeting with a short check in and a short reading. Come for all or part of the time. We always schedule a little extra time for clean up and so we don't have to run right out especially if you're in the zone so to speak. We all have busy lives remember to take time for yourself. We're sorry but there is no baby sitting available. We hope to see all the Arts and Crafters from our church join us to learn a new craft or remember an old one. No matter your skill or your craft let's have fun working together! For more information please contact Laurie Gerson or Miryha Thibault.



Murray Grove Program News

Heritage Week at Murray Grove Aug. 1-6, 2010, led by Rev Dr Elizabeth Strong, with Rev. Carol Haag, Director of Sacred Worship and Rev. Dr. Carol Taylor, Director of Sacred Nourishment: Workshops on Universalist, Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist Religious Education History and General History.

Regular Rainbow Circle at Murray Grove: Gatherings, Celebrations, Workshops/Trainings and Support for the GLBT Community! Dates will vary, but it's on a Sunday evening, from 5 to 6pm (free will donation), followed by dinner (\$5 per person suggested minimum donation). RSVP at 609-693-5558 or murraygrove@murraygrove.org

Grove Gatherings at Murray Grove: Musical/Artistic Coffee Houses. Every second Wed. of the month: 7-9 entertainment - \$10 per person; and join us before the show for a potluck dinner 6:00-7:00 pm (BYOB).

UU Books

By: Kelly Hartman

The May 8 group will talk about, *I Am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced* by Nujood Ali. At age 10 this girl from Yemen was given into marriage with a 30 year old man. Such is a common practice in much of Africa and parts of the Middle East. However, she found abuse by her mother-in-law, and forced sexuality of her new spouse, more than she could endure, and ran away to the capital city's courthouse. A sympathetic lawyer took her case and she was granted divorce, bringing about a new look at cultural customs and enforcement of already existing laws, hopefully, to bring about progressive change.

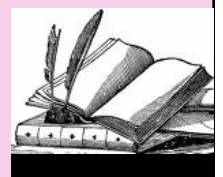
A dominant theme in UU liberal theology is the union of science and spirituality in the human experience. For June 13, we have a book that addresses many of these issues. In her 2nd book, Krista Tippett, host of NPR's *Speaking of Faith* program, has selected 10 of her shows in the program's archive.

Einstein's God: Conversations about Science and the Human Spirit includes 10 transcripts from the hour-long show. Tippett has selected scientific luminaries in various fields, who through their work have found relationships to man's spirituality.

As she points out in her introduction, "Charles Darwin (who incidentally was Unitarian) liberated humanity from belief in a God who preordained ever cancerous cell and shifting tectonic plate, every social and physical injustice." Chapter headings include: "Einstein's Legacy of a Great Mind and a Wise Man," "Biology of Spirit as an Emergent Life Force," "Heart and Soul, the Globalization of Medicine," "Evolution and Creation as an Unfolding Reality," "The Heart's Reason-Limits of Religion and Science," "Mathematics, Purpose, and Truth," "Science that Liberates Us from Getting Revenge, to Forgiveness," "Healing Ourselves –Stress and the Balance Within," "Human Vitality, Finding the Soul in Depression," and "Complimentary Science and Religion-Quarks and Creation."

Coffee's on at 9am, with discussion to follow. All are welcome. This was published directly as a paperback, and Amazon.com usually offers special discounts for NPR books.

For further info. or to suggest a book you have read contact Nadine Smet-Weiss, jw1258@hotmail.com, or Kelly Hartman.



May's Volunteers

Coffee Corps

5/2 Group V
 Rick Salafia & Leigh Kane
 5/9 Group VI
 Randall Newnham
 5/16 Group VII
 Judd & Mindy Bortz
 5/23 Group VIII
 Keith & Carol Orts
 5/30 Group IX
 Fay Oxenreider



Ushers

5/2 Oxenrider/Axsmith
 5/9 Brownstein/Orts
 5/16 Simonson/Plageman
 5/23 Tyson/Showalter
 5/30 DeBroux/Brownstein

Food Pantry

By: Kelly Hartman

Apr. 1 numbers are the most we've had since Sept. 09. We distributed food to 148 recipients, 30 of whom were new to our Pantry. These persons represented families totaling 262-269 children, 267 adults, and 26 seniors.



It was a busy morning, but volunteers rose to the need, and all went well. While our experienced volunteers lubricate a smooth running operation, new volunteers are always welcomed. The Pantry will be open through the summer, of course, and additional hands are needed to stock shelves, bread down cardboard boxes, explain to people what they may have from each food group, help with pre-packing some items for distribution, and clean up afterwards.

At 8:30am we begin unloading the truck from the Berks Food Bank, and restocking shelves. We let people start to come through at about 10am, and this continues until noon when we end our day.

The next Food Pantry Thursdays will be May 6, June 3, and July 1. See if you can find some time during any of these mornings to help with our direct effort to interact with the local community.

For additional information contact Walter Axsmith.

Parking Token Update

Laura Carson will be distributing the parking tokens on the first Sunday of every month after church in the Gerber Room. Tokens are \$1. Laura will be reserving tokens for people who contacted her and then distribute what is leftover. Please have exact change or make checks payable to FUUBC with Tokens in memo line. If you would like to add your name to the list, please see Laura after church.

Special Plate Collection

The March Special Plate Collection for Family Promise of Berks County took in \$679.00 There will be a Special Plate Collection for Planned Parenthood on May 23. Planned Parenthood's goal is to ensure that every individual has the information, services, and freedom to make healthy, responsible decisions about sex, sexuality, and parenthood. If you have any organizations that you would like to see receive a Special Plate, please contact Mike Szajna.

History Revealed

By: Ruth N. Epler

Time to take a look at our early Sunday School. To me it is remarkable that the Sunday school has had such a long and staying history. From the earliest time (1833), until the present it has been almost continuous with equally remarkable leadership in the form of pastors, teachers and Superintendents. Much of the following has been gleaned from the letter written by Capt. F.S. Boas in 1883 for the 50th Church Anniversary. At first the pastors took on the responsibility of Sunday School Superintendent., and then in 1833 Rev. Asher Moore was named. Other pastors and lay men followed. (I'm still searching for the first woman leader). These people seemed to take turns through the years at the post. Capt. Boas began Sunday school as a child, then as a teacher, librarian and finally Superintendent in 1867. He continued in the position for more than 34 years. He notes that between 1857 and 1882 the Sunday school was self-sustaining. Activities that funded the program included entertainment, plays, picnics, and S.S. Collections, as well as contributions from members and other church organizations. Expenditures included; ordinary expenses, an organ (melodeon), to be loaned to the choir until enough money was raised for an organ (1864), a lot in the rear of the church where a Sunday School space could be built, and was, and a contribution to the church treasury. The total income was \$6,900.83, and total expenditures \$6,900.83. Among the early superintendents were the following lay-men Lewis Briner, A.G. Green, Danial Beyerle, and John Wright.

Next episode; from Sunday school to Religious Education.

May 2010



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
					Family Morning Out 9:30-11am	1
				What Moves Us 7-8:30pm		
2 Sunday Service 10:30am Awakening BodySpirit 6:30-8:30	3 Heart to Heart 7:30-9pm	4	5 Meditation Group 6:30-7:30pm Choir Practice 7:30-8:30pm	6 Food Pantry 8am-Noon	7 A Night of Music 7:30-9:30pm Family Morning Out 9:30-11am	8 UU Books 9-10am
9 Sunday Service 10:30am	10	11 Board Meeting 7-9pm	12 Meditation Group 6:30-7:30pm Choir Practice 7:30-8:30pm	13 Act 47 Community Meeting 4-6:30pm	14 Family Morning Out 9:30-11am	15
16 Building Keepers Meetin 12-1pm Spring Congregational Meeting 11:45-12:45pm	17	18 Lunch Bunch Noon	19 Meditation Group 6:30-7:30pm Choir Practice 7:30-8:30pm	20	21 Youth Art Con 6pm-Sun.8:30am Family Morning Out 9:30-11am	22
23/30 Sunday Service 10:30am Sermon Dialogue 11:45am	24/31	25	26 Meditation Group 6:30-7:30pm Choir Practice 7:30-8:30pm	27	28	29

Awakening BodySpirit 4: The Heart of the Matter

Sun., May 2, from 6:30-8:30, join Dance/Movement Therapist Joanna Groebel for an evening of embodied exploration of our heart center. Together, in a safe, grounded space, we will move, sense, sound, breathe, slow down, and dive deeply into the heart of things.

Through gentle physical and artistic exercises, we will develop self and other awareness and resources to build strength of heart and authentic self expression. No movement experience is necessary. Please wear loose comfortable clothing and bring a mat. RSVP to Joanna to reserve a space.



Sunday Service Schedule

10:30am every Sunday

May 2 The Divine as Other

Rev. Sandra Fees, Mena Hautau, Worship Associate, Dan Matz, Music Director, and the First UU Choir

This is the first of a two-part series, focusing on God's relationship to the world. Today, we'll explore the concept of transcendence and the implications of the divine as Other. Is there a place for transcendence in Unitarian Universalism?

May 9 The Divine Within

Rev. Sandra Fees, Mena Hautau, Worship Associate, Dan Matz, Music Director, and Special Music with Rachel Gutzler, Quinn Matz, and Mike Szajna

Unitarian Universalists tend to be comfortable with the concept of the divine within us and the world. Today we'll examine how the qualities of immanence inform our faith and whether transcendence and immanence can co-exist. This is the second of a two-part series.

May 16 Music Service

Dan Matz, Music Director, and the First UU Choir

May 23 Why Margaret Fuller Matters
Rev. Sandra Fees, and Dan Matz, Music Director

Today we celebrate the 200th anniversary of Margaret Fuller, a leading Unitarian Transcendentalist. Fuller was the first editor of the Transcendentalist journal, *The Dial*, author of the ground-breaking, *Woman in the 19th Century*, and a champion of human rights. Come and learn why she still matters to us today. Our plate collection will benefit Planned Parenthood.



Portrait of Margaret Fuller

May 30 The Blessings of Equilibrium
Rev. Sandra Fees, Keith Orts, Worship Associate, and Tracy Blunt, Pianist

Our lives can sometimes feel out of balance. How can we achieve greater balance in our lives and experience the blessings of equilibrium? Our service includes a Child Dedication Ceremony.

You are all invited to join us for silent meditation in the Chalice House from 9:30-10:30am before the Sunday Services.



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Church

First Unitarian Universalist



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