

 **the**
FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of West Chester

Web Edition – No personal phone numbers or addresses

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SUNDAY SERVICES

January, 2006

January 1, 11 a.m.

AS UFWC YOUTH BECOME ADULTS

Michael Werner

A panel of youth who have moved on from UFWC to the college or working world will share their experiences and how their UU experience and values have affected their ability to manage new stages in life. This service, a regular holiday highlight, will be led this year by Michael Werner. **NOTE: This is a single service at 11 a.m., and there are no RE classes.**

January 8

FREE TO BE...

Rev. Larry Smith

While most Unitarian Universalists probably identify politically as liberals or moderates, our movement has been historically as politically diverse as it has been theologically diverse. Sometimes we need to remember that many different beliefs have a place in our kind of church. How do we maintain our shared faith and still maintain the safe place between our different philosophies?

January 15

THE PROMISED LAND

Rev. Larry Smith

Decades ago Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke about his dream of racial and ethnic harmony. It seems that the problems and attitudes that have so beset Americans throughout our history still reside in our souls. How far away are we from the "promised land?"

January 22

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

Fellowship Members

Understanding each other's personal paths adds to our connections. This week three members or friends will share their spiritual journeys — where they started, what brought them to Unitarian Universalism, and where that might take them.

January 29

LIFE DOESN'T BEGIN UNTIL...

Rev. Larry Smith

As we grow older, not only do our bodies change, but our religious questions do as well. Today we will explore aging as a spiritual journey. What special faith and wisdom come with growing older?

FROM YOUR INTERIM MINISTER

At the beginning of every calendar year I am reminded of the past year and look in hope to the new year. It is not true that our days really change with the event of the new mark on the calendar yet it is common to look back at the past at this time and think with anticipation of what is going to happen in the future.

The symbol for the interim ministry process among the denomination's Settlement Department is the ancient Roman deity, Janus, for whom the month January is named. You might remember representations of the god Janus. He is commonly shown as a head with two faces. One of the faces looks toward the past, the other looks to the future. Like Janus, in interim ministry, the congregation looks at the past and it also looks to the future.

And where are we this January? In the past sixteen months the congregation has reflected on its past, instituted new committees, policies and procedures to enable the congregation to fulfill its mission. The congregation has gone to two services to make room for membership growth. Members participated in events on the district level and the Fellowship's leadership is engaging with the Rev. Tom Chulak through the Bridging Team to address its governance and leadership development plans. The Vision Team helped develop a new vision statement. At present, the Ministerial Search Committee is working diligently looking at ministers' record sheets and packets to find the one who will serve the congregation's vision and ministry best. In short, everything is going well.

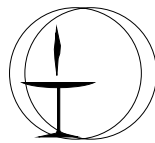
When things are going well we often have the security to ex-

periment with new ways of doing things. During the Sunday services in January the worship service will sometimes feature new chalice lightings and new music to sing the children to the religious education program. Neither should be considered a replacement for the current chalice lighting or "Go Now in Peace." They are intended to be variants to enhance the worship service and express the diversity among us.

As for myself, I am looking forward to 2006. It will be the year that I wed someone I love dearly. If I look dazed at times during my remaining seven months with you, assume that the wedding plans, moving, job transitions—basically an entirely new life—have overwhelmed me. I look forward to it!

As the song in our hymnal reads, "Don't be afraid of some change." This year we will all be experiencing some change, personally and collectively. May we be at peace with this and know that love will guide us through this time. Indeed, it always has.

— See you in church,
Rev. Larry Smith



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DECEMBER 13, 2005

Several items relating to the Fellowship building were discussed.

A motion was passed authorizing the Building Committee to hire "Sandfree" to refinish the sanctuary and office floors. As the name implies, "Sandfree" uses a refinishing process that does not involve sanding. The condition of the sanctuary floor is such that any further sanding is impossible, with the only alternative being to replace the floor. Donations will be solicited from the congregation to help cover the cost.

Another item discussed was the replacement or insulation of the sanctuary windows. An energy audit conducted on the building several years ago revealed that a significant heat loss occurs through the windows. This item will be directed to the Building Committee.

Cheryl Pittenger presented the "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Propose Office Solutions". The committee has been working hard to come up with a plan to improve the office situation. Both short-term fixes and longer-term solutions were discussed. The first phase of improvements is expected to be implemented by April 2006.

— Paul Sapko, Secretary

HOLIDAY SERVICES REMINDER

Please note that we are planning only one service on each of the following holidays:

Sat	Dec 24	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Candlelight service
Sun	Dec 25	11:00 a.m.	Christmas Morning (no 9:00 a.m. service)
Sun	Jan 1	11:00 a.m.	New Years Morning (no 9:00 a.m. service)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Readers of this column will recall that last month I urged everyone to step back a little from their Fellowship responsibilities and enjoy the many opportunities for fun and fellowship over this holiday season.

I hope you've taken that advice; I know I have. Instead of writing e-mails, I've been sending cards, and instead of attending meetings, I've been attending fellowship social events. (Truth be told, there have been some meetings sandwiched in there, but not as many as usual.)

I've had an especially good time at our holiday potlucks, which I found to be the perfect prescription for lifting my spirits and renewing my sense of community with the Fellowship. From quick talks in front of a cozy fire at the Sapkos to some pretty noisy camaraderie around a piano at the Leons, I've enjoyed myself thoroughly. These warm get-togethers have helped bind me to my church "family," and I hope they have done the same for you. They are an essential part of our healthy functioning as a religious community.

At the same time, I think it's important to note that at least some of our Fellowship members are facing family illness or other significant issues over the holiday season. As we celebrate, let's be sensitive to this possibility and not make assumptions about how another person is feeling. That's an equally essential part of our healthy functioning.

I also want to take note of those folks who have worked hard straight through the holiday season. Just hearing Cheryl Pittenger talk about the work her ad hoc committee is doing to refurbish the Fellowship office ex-

hausts me. This gung-ho group of individuals is moving full steam ahead to turn what had been our "ugly duckling" of an office area into a swan. According to Cheryl, they love doing it – and I'm sure we'll love the results!

If anything tops those efforts, it's the work of our Search Committee. There are not enough accolades to describe the packet they have created for our ministerial candidates. Their masterpiece (and it is indeed a masterpiece) was unveiled at the Committee's congregational input session on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 11. It speaks volumes for our Fellowship as a community that approaches everything with creativity, wit, warmth, commitment, caring, intelligence, and attention to detail. Did I use

enough descriptive nouns? Probably not....I'm frankly at a loss for words!

Our standing committees have kept programs and projects running through the holiday season as well. And with the beginning of the New Year, we'll be picking up on still more projects and challenges. But from now through January 1, I urge you to enjoy the season as much as your circumstances allow. And if you are in the area on New Year's, please join your fellowship friends at Mike's and my house for our annual chili gathering. Thus fortified, we can begin our journey together through an eventful 2006.

See you in church – or perhaps at our house on New Year's Day!

— Flo Miller



YOU'RE INVITED BY THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

On Sunday, January 8, the Religious Education Committee is hosting Coffee Hour downstairs after each service. The coffee itself (along with cups, milk, sugar, etc.) will be in the back of the sanctuary as usual, but some delicious food and other beverages will be available downstairs.

We invite you to come down, share some food, talk with friends and visitors, and take a look at all the improvements the Building Committee and the RE Committee made over the past year. It's a whole different space! We also invite you to take a look in the classrooms and see some of the activities in which the children have been engaged.

Those of you who have difficulty with the stairs, we won't neglect you!

If you'd like to bring some finger food to share, please contact Cathy Vogt (email: RE).

NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

Our church fiscal year starts July 1, and our new church year and RE program start in September. Yet in the middle of winter, when cold and ice have us locked down and we give ourselves over to family, festivities and food, the calendar year starts again. Of course, as individuals, regardless of these arbitrary or cosmic markers we are always starting. Every day, every hour, every minute is another opportunity for us to choose new thoughts, new actions, new ways of being.

I think that one of the remarkable things about our Fellowship is that as an entity we are always starting. From a strong foundation of caring, commitment and vision, we continually look for ways to not just be as good, as vibrant, as vital as we are, but also to be more than what we currently are.

With all the details that are involved in running a Religious Education program, it would be easy to get caught up in those details and start to believe that a good RE program can be discerned in the number of classes that are held, the number of children participating and the number of teachers who volunteer.

But for me and for the RE Committee, those details are just the foundation for the Program. Our goal is to create a solid springboard and from there launch our children on their individual paths of mystery, exploring, questioning, believing, belonging, and changing.

It is wonderful that we have five beautiful new babies who have come into Fellowship families this past year. When the babies get a little older and their parents can bear to part with their little ones for the church hour, I picture our Nursery overflowing with these new lives. It is a happy vision.

I've looked ahead and pictured these children "graduating" from the Nursery into our Pre-K class, and from there going through the series of classes we offer: Chalice Children,

Treasure Hunting, Traditions With a Wink, Holidays and Holy Days, In Our Hands, How Can I Know What to Believe?, God Images, Jesus and His Kingdom of Equals, Race to Justice, Neighboring Faiths, The Gospel According to the Simpsons, Our Whole Lives, Heresy Apparent, Coming of Age. I've pictured them participating in Group Worship and Social Action projects.

This is still a wonderful vision. But it suddenly gave me a different perspective on what it is that we do in "RE."

When I became the DRE I already knew most of the children in the Fellowship; children I "in-

herited" with the position. Of course we continue to have many coming into the RE Program who are children of new members, but most of them come from other faith/church experiences, and some are even already UU's. Either way, they have some foundation to start with.

It occurred to me that at any given time our real challenge in religious education lies in the Nursery. Here are children who have not heard a formal religious message of any kind. How will we help their parents teach them what it means to be Unitarian Universalist? What will they learn from us? What facts will they absorb? What practical examples of living will they learn to model from us? What will they take into their hearts? How will we help them choose how to live their lives?

With these questions in mind, I want to offer thanks to all of our teachers, parent volunteers, and RE Committee members, and to ministers, members, Youth Advisors and parents – our Fellowship community past, present and future – who help shape our children's spiritual lives. And I welcome

all of you into a brand new year, and into each new moment as it unfolds before us. May we always continue to become more of who we are, more than what we already are.

— Pam Baxter
Director of Religious Education

RE FAMILY SOCIAL

Friday, January 27, is the next RE Family Social: Indoor camping and Bingo. Details will be forthcoming. Don't miss it!

RE THANKS FOR SAFE HARBOR HELP

Thanks to everyone who brought ingredients and helped the Pre-K through 6th grade classes prepare lasagna, tossed salad and brownies for the Safe Harbor homeless shelter on December 11.

WHAT IS THE JPD?

In the accompanying article on the Vital Congregations Plan, I referred to the “Joseph Priestley District” of the Unitarian Universalist Association. We have many new members, and some of you may be unfamiliar with that name or with the overall structure of the UUA. What follows is a basic “primer” for our newer members. I encourage you to visit both the UUA (www.uua.org) and the Joseph Priestley District (www.jpduua.org) websites for more complete information.

The Unitarian Universalist Association is the umbrella organization over UU congregations in both the United States and Canada. The UUA provides multiple supports for its member congregations. On issues of wide denominational concern, it also serves as a voice for Unitarian Universalism in this country. However, as with all large organizations, it is limited in its ability to foster close relationships among its members. Within the United States, its 20 geographical regions, or “districts,” serve this purpose. They offer their member congregations the opportunity to inter-relate and share both challenges and successes on a much more intimate level.

The JPD is one such district, covering 65 congregations in southern New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and northern Virginia. (In Pennsylvania, it covers the state north to south from the eastern border to as far west as Carlisle.) The JPD has a paid staff headed by district executive Rev. Richard Speck and an elected, volunteer Board of Trustees. There are paid directors in various areas. One area in which our Fellowship has

been involved is Growth and Extension, headed by director Bob Johnson.

The JPD holds a conference every year, with workshops on all areas of congregational life. Throughout the year, there are also workshops on specific subjects. In addition, the staff is always available to help out with questions or concerns.

We pay annual dues to support the work and the services of the JPD and the UUA. Our “fair share” of dues is based on our membership. As a Fellowship, we can be extremely proud of the fact that we have historically always paid our Fair Share.

— Flo Miller



THE CONSULTATION ON YOUTH MINISTRY: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR VISIONING AND GROWTH

Ministry with youth is about listening, empowerment, and spiritual guidance. It is instrumental to the vitality and growth of Unitarian Universalist communities.

The UUA and its congregations are embarking on a two-year process to revitalize youth ministry – and our congregation’s engagement in the process is essential to its success. The Consultation on Ministry to and With Youth is designed to be a grassroots process – beginning with individuals and congregations, and progressing to the larger institutions and organizations that provide services and support to the grassroots. It is a broad and transformative process designed to ensure that ministry with youth is integrated throughout the UUA.

The Consultation asks youth and adults to reflect on their responsibilities to youth and their role in youth ministry, and also to visualize what youth ministry could be and what support or actions are needed to achieve that vision.

The first thing our congregation can do is ensure that our youth between the ages of 12 and 20 who are or have been involved receive and complete a survey. This survey will be available in January and February. If you would like to receive a survey for yourself or to distribute, you can contact Beth Dana, download it at www.uua.org/TRUS/youth, or call Rob Sartain.

Our congregation will also have an opportunity for listening, dialogue, visioning and strategizing at an intergenerational Youth Ministry Congregational Conversation to happen this spring. This conversation is about the overall life and vitality of the congregation, therefore everyone is invited to attend and actively participate. The gathering will be co-facilitated by trained youth and adult facilitators. Keep an eye open for more news soon! Contact Rob Sartain for more information about how to become involved in this exciting opportunity for our congregation.

YOUTH GROUP: SOCIAL ACTION IN JANUARY

The Youth Group has an absolutely awesome January planned around the theme of social action. Everyone is invited to participate. We have a lots of activities planned.

We will start off the New Year with an “Unplugged” concert on Friday evening, January 13. This is a particularly special event. We’ve held numerous band concerts over the past several years — with some rather incredible local talent. This will be different. We will celebrate local folk singers and groups that do not rely upon lots of amplification. Plus, this concert will have a special fund raising focus. We recently learned about a special UN and UU fund dedicated to supporting African children that have been orphaned by AIDS. The proceeds from this concert will be dedicated to sponsoring these children through this fund. \$60 will support a single child’s education for a year. We really want to see our small youth group sponsor at least ten children. We need adult chaperones for this event. Adults get in free, and we’ll give you a bottle of water. Is this a deal or what?

We follow that event with the regular Martin Luther King Day of Service on Monday, January 16. For the past several years we have conducted local social action projects. This year’s event will include similar local activities. Watch your e-mail and the Order of Service for additional announcements. Don’t merely take this day off to shop or sleep in. Here is your chance to make a difference in Chester County. Be there!! Get dirty!

The following weekend is the annual JPD Youth Steering Committee’s Winter Con event —

this year it is a Social Action Con. We’ll be taking a vanload of youth to Silver Springs, Maryland for the weekend to meet other youth, learn how to conduct social action projects, and actually leave the church for the day on Saturday to participate in a full day of service.

Finally, and somewhat exhaustedly, we’ll end the month celebrating Chinese New Year. This year’s celebration will include a train ride into Philadelphia and a full day of dim sum in Chinatown.

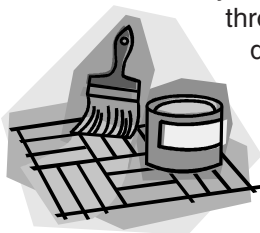
We need your help and assistance to be successful in these activities. Come out to the concert on the 13th, or the workday on the 16th. All are welcome to participate in the concert and the workday event.

Intrigued, and want to learn more? The Youth Group meets nearly every Sunday evening at the Fellowship from about 6:00 p.m. until 7:30. Contact Michael Werner or David Werner (email: youth-group) for more details.

FINALLY THE FLOOR!

How many times have you thought “If only we could do something with the floor in the sanctuary!” The time has come. In early February we are having the sanctuary floor and upstairs office floor refinished.

“What has taken so long?” you ask. The floor is too thin in too many places for a traditional sanding operation. Our industrious building committee has located a company with a process that appears to offer a solution. Members have used this process in their home and been pleased, but they note that their floors were in better shape than the sanctuary. Roughly, the process is a strenuous cleaning followed by a polyurethane coat. In addition to not grinding through a thin worn floor, this process is much less dusty and less odorous, both real advantages.



This process may not produce the totally gorgeous results of a new floor, or, if we had enough floor left, traditional re-sanding, staining and polyurethane. However, the building committee and the board felt that this process had a good chance of producing attractive results, would be easier to keep clean, and put off the drastic step of refinishing for a few more years.

Based on lots of past interest in a special floor fund, we are planning to solicit donations from the congregation to cover some of the costs. Rough estimates are about \$4,800 for the sanctuary and maybe \$1,000 more for the office. You will hear announcements at several January services — you can send a check to the UFWC. Please note “FLOOR FUND” on the check.

Whether you can contribute to this fund or not, we thank you for your wonderful support of the building committee and the continued maintenance, upgrade, and beautification of our facilities.

— Cheryl Pittenger on behalf of the Board

JPD VITAL CONGREGATIONS PLAN

On Sunday evening December 11, my husband Mike and I had the privilege of representing our Fellowship at a meeting called in celebration of the Vital Congregations Plan drafted by a committee of congregations in the Philadelphia-Wilmington area. The meeting was held at the UU Society of Delaware County in Media.

The committee (called the Metro Growth Committee) is an initiative of the Joseph Priestley District of our Unitarian Universalist Association. The committee worked for three years on the Vital Congregations Plan, with the goal of fostering the growth and presence of Unitarian Universalism in the area. As a result of the committee's work, the JPD is funding our growth consultancy with the Rev. Tom Chulak. I anticipate many positive results from that consultancy.

Another portion of the plan calls for the formation of a new large church in northern Chester County. That church now has a name – the WellSprings Congregation – and a minister – the Rev. Ken Belden. The church is organizing and plans to start holding services in rented quarters next year. The Fellowship Board has opened a dialogue with the WellSprings Congregation to ensure that we work together and support one another in our mutual goals for the growth of UUism.

Other portions of the plan are less well known in our congregation but equally important. They call for the formation of subcommittees to address issues on a regional basis. The areas of focus include Social Justice, Publicity and Outreach, Strengthening Existing Congregations, and

the creation of an annual Philadelphia-Wilmington metro workshop service.

At the meeting in Media, I was able to meet the co-chairs of the overall plan and several of the subcommittee co-chairs. Over a potluck, we socialized and got to know one another. No major business was conducted, but there was a general "call" for participation in the work that lies ahead.

As a growing congregation, I feel it is essential that our Fellowship be part of this effort. Therefore, I'm very pleased to report that it looks as if we will be able to answer the "call" with good representation on the subcommittees. Pam Baxter is co-chairing the Social Justice Subcommittee and as such will be representing religious education. I am contact-

ing the co-chair of Publicity and Outreach about helping out in that area. Cheryl Pittenger and/or Rev. Larry will be in touch with the Existing Congregations subcommittee.

If you have any interest in being part of this or have questions about the overall plan, please don't hesitate to contact me. We have much going on internally; we are extremely busy with meeting our own growth goals and membership needs. It's good to keep in mind that we are part of a larger movement, however. It is renewing and energizing to be in contact with other UUs – and that can have a spillover effect in terms of the energy and enthusiasm we bring to our work within the Fellowship.

— Flo Miller

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

First we wish to thank everyone who participated in our "Talk" session on Sunday, December 11. The large turnout that is so characteristic of this dedicated congregation was very heartening to the committee. Many thanks for the trust you've placed in us, for your words of encouragement, and for your sincere interest in the survey and the search process.

Where we are in the process. We've made the first pass at reviewing the Ministerial Records of all those who have expressed interest in UFWC, and have exchanged packets with those we're interested in pursuing further. We're now immersed in the task of reviewing these prospective candidates' packets and will soon begin a telephone interviewing process in order to move to the next step of in-person interviews.

When our pre-candidates do come for a visit (which may happen as early as sometime in January), we'll want our building to look as clean and welcoming as possible. Watch in the next few weeks for information on how you can help.

We appreciate your thoughts, prayers, blessings and positive energies to support us through this strenuous effort.

— The Ministerial Search Committee

THANKS AND RECOGNITION CYNDY BULLAUGHEY, LINDA SANDER, AND SANDY RETZLAFF

From finance to the newsletter, from the RE Program to the ministerial search process, Cyndy Bullaughey and Linda Sander are making an invaluable contribution to our Fellowship.

In recognition of that fact, the Fellowship Board wishes to honor them this month. At the same time, we want to extend special thanks to another Fellowship member whose quiet behind-the-scenes work has brightened many Fellowship activities and celebrations. That person is Sandy Retzlaff.

Cyndy and Linda are longtime members who have frequently worked together, beginning with a co-editorship of *The Fellowtarian* (with Linda's husband, Steve) that spanned some 20 years. Cyndy stepped down from the newsletter several years ago, but Linda and Steve have stayed on as co-editors.

In 1997, Cyndy and Linda also took over the responsibility for Fellowship finances, with Cyndy handling the income side (income treasurer) and Linda the expense side (expense treasurer). In those capacities, they sat on the Board of Trustees until last year. They continue to hold the treasurers' positions but now work under Finance Chair Erach Patel, who is a member of on the Board.

Both of these amazing women have also taught religious education in the past and canvassed during the annual Stewardship Campaign. They've been involved in many of our fund-raising activities and at one time co-chaired the flea market. They also started the lunch group and the simplicity circle.

Linda served as building chair when we moved into our current building and as such coordinated the many renovations that were required for us to gain occupancy. She is a member of the Personnel Committee and in that capacity was part of the team that recently put together our comprehensive Personnel Manual. In addition, Linda hosts the monthly Folk Singing Group with Steve.

Cyndy has maintained and printed our directory of members and friends for many years. She has designed an interest and talents database of our membership as well as our financial database. She worked on our 50th anniversary celebration. And perhaps most important, she's a current member of the Search Committee.

In fact, Cyndy and Linda's involvement in the Fellowship has been so extensive and pervasive that other members naturally turn to them when they want information about a past event or are seeking advice on a Fellowship matter. They have enriched congregational life in innumerable ways, and we thank them for that.

Sandy Retzlaff has been a member of our Fellowship for only a few years, but she's managed to pack a lot into that time. Just a few months after becoming a member in 2003, she organized the dinner and decorations for the annual celebration to kick off the stewardship campaign. She co-chaired the 50th anniversary celebration the following year. She was the main organizer for both our Piano Benefit Concert and the Cabaret. She coordinated our spring flower sale for the last two years.

And those beautiful poinsettias you took home at Christmas? Sandy worked on the poinsettia sale not only this year, but for the two years prior to that.

Sandy's time and talents have added beauty and joy to many of our Fellowship celebrations. You may not have known of her involvement, however, because so much of her work has taken place behind the scenes. The Board wants to publicly acknowledge what she has done and offer our thanks on behalf of the entire Fellowship.

— Flo Miller
for the Board of Trustees

CARING CORNER

Erach and Fatima Patel wish to share the joyous news of the birth of their granddaughter to their daughter and son-in-law, Roxanne and Dan. Her name is Daria Shepelavy, and she was born on December 12. Congratulations to Erach and Fatima!

Our wishes for a speedy recovery go out to Tom Townsend, who recently experienced a broken arm, including a temporary setback involving surgery. Get well soon, Tom!

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Habitat for Humanity – Our first UFWC Habitat for Humanity work opportunity is Saturday, February 25, 2006 from 8:30 to 3:30 in West Chester. You must be at least 15 years old. While you need not be experienced, you must be willing to learn. Skilled workers are always welcome. We are limited to a crew of 8 and frequently fill up so call or email early to reserve a place. If interested, please contact Mary Hepokoski.

Fair Trade Coffee – Don't forget that fair trade coffee, tea, and cocoa make good stocking stuffers or gifts for the neighbors. It's available by the front door. You pay using the "honor system" using the amounts that are posted on the display.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

Many of you ask—and rightly so—just what does OUR charity, UUSC, do? Here are some concrete examples.

Last week in Lynn, Massachusetts, a UU reported seeing a billboard in Spanish about the new coffee at McDonald's, which is a Fair Trade Coffee! This is a huge victory and the result of many years of work by UUSC and other organizations to provide a better life for coffee farmers in Central America. Also last week Secretary of State Rice acknowledged that the U.S. condemns American employees engaging in torture not only in the U.S. but anywhere in the world. This is a major change in White House policy. Additionally, it looks more and more likely that the McCain amendment (prohibiting torture) will be included as part of the defense bill. The UUSC's STOP campaign this past year, and the torture trials in Washington last

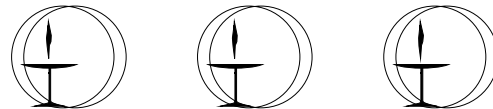
September in particular, have provided a significant boost to this outcome.

Also UUSC is proud to announce that two of its founders, The Rev. Waitstill and Martha Sharp are being honored posthumously as "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem in Israel for their work helping Jews escape Nazi persecution during World War II. They are only the second and third U.S. citizens to receive this international distinction.

So we UUSC members can take the time for a small celebration. Light a candle, tell a friend, and send thanks to all members of our congregation who are members of UUSC. And never, never give up. Remember it's going to take a lifetime to bring simple justice to most of the world's people. But it can be done, and OUR charity will lead the way, and we will be right behind supporting UUSC at every step.

Although all gifts are welcome, many use Guest at Your Table as the time to renew their yearly membership in UUSC, so remember that the dues for membership have been increased this year (for the 1st time in over 20 years.) to \$40 per adult or \$75 per couple. But the good news is that all donations (for the first \$1000), will be matched in house! And if you can afford to give \$75 a person, then that will be matched again externally. So your gift of \$75 has grown to \$300! If you have any questions, just contact Rob Sartain or Tom Townsend. And please don't forget to fill out the tab on the Guest at Your Table box with your name, etc. And, if you'd be so kind, replace all those pennies with a check made out to "UUSC" (but we'll gladly take the pennies).

NOTE: The date we will start collecting boxes will be Sunday, Jan. 8.



EVERY CHILD FOLK FESTIVAL

Help out a good cause while hearing a wonderful night of folk and acoustic music reverberating off our church walls. The Every Child Folk Festival will be January 13 at 6:30 p.m. There will be a mix of solo acts and bands. Contribute five dollars to help educate orphans in Agormanya, Eastern Ghana. Our youth group will donate the proceeds to the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office's new program *Every Child is Our Child*.

More than 14 million children under the age of fifteen in Africa have lost one or both parents to AIDS. Education is a key element for improving the economy and slowing the spread of AIDS. We can give these children the chance at a better life — be a part of this journey. Contact Chilisa Shorten.

HAVE YOU MET PAULA BAXTER?

A previous member of two other UU fellowships, Paula Baxter had plans to continue her spiritual tradition in her hometown of West Chester. On February 2, she made that happen.

She is back in town after growing up in West Chester for her first 20 years. "I left the area in 1985 and returned to Pennsylvania in 1996 near Pottstown," she says. "I actually come from a long line of 'locals,' being the fourth generation to travel High and Market streets."

Paula and her children moved to West Chester in 2002 when she and her new husband, Steve, took on the task of blending a family: three kids from her and two from him. They were married in May 2004.

Paula works as a nanny after several years of being a preschool teacher and stay-at-home mom. "I really try to make the most of the free time that I can," she adds. For instance, she and Steve love traveling the county roads together on their motorcycle. She also enjoys fishing, kayaking, camping as a family, and flower and vegetable gardening. Newer on her list is Tai Chi, and she's also interested in meditation and Buddhism.

DO YOU BRUSH YOUR TEETH EVERY DAY? DID YOU BUY YOUR GROCERY CARDS?

Would you feel yucky if you didn't? That's how I feel if I grocery shop without my UFWC grocery gift card, because ***it has become a habit!***

The Fellowship sells grocery gift cards (for Acme, Giant, Giunta's, Shoprite and Superfresh) in the lobby after every Sunday service. You pay **no extra money** to buy these cards, but the Fellowship gets them from the grocery companies at a 5% discount. So, with a \$100 Acme card, you can buy \$100 worth of groceries and the Fellowship makes \$5 at no cost to you! Use the cards just like cash, paying no more for your groceries than if you had used cash or a credit card.



Please buy grocery cards after the services and ***make it a habit!***

GAME NIGHT

Our next Potluck and Game night is Friday, January 6, in the sanctuary. Join us at 6:30 p.m. for dinner or after 7:00 for games. All are welcome — families, individuals, couples, children.

Bring a dish and beverage to share. (Don't forget the beverage — we never know how many are coming, so we don't know how much to provide. Beside we don't know what you want to drink.) Bring a friend, too.

If you would like to be on our email reminder list, or if you have any questions, contact Mary Yeager at (email: game-night).



HOLIDAY PARTIES -- THANK YOU

The Fun & Fellowship Committee wants to thank the hosts of our Holiday Parties — the Sapkos, the Leons, the Vogts, and the Millers. Their generosity and openness allowed our Fellowship to spread our Holiday cheer. We could not have done it without you. Those who were guests at one or more of the parties this year, please consider hosting a party when this season comes around again; you know how much fun they are. Happy Holidays from the Fun & Fellowship Committee — Nancy Artus, Kate Cuffari, Beth Daniels, Lauren Kelly, Chris Seitzer, Craig Talbot, and Mary Yeager.

YOGA CLASSES

Yoga classes will continue through January on Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Spaces are available. Cost is \$8 per class. It's a good way to start a new year and, maybe, a lifestyle. Contact Mira Tryon.

NEW YEAR'S OPEN HOUSE

Welcome in the New Year with a New Year's Day Open House at our home in Exton. For this traditional event, we supply lots of chili and fixings, plus cold cuts for sandwiches, some salads and munchies, and sodas. We ask you to bring hors d'oeuvres, salads, desserts, and wine and beer if you wish to imbibe.



It's a great opportunity to socialize. Newer members are especially encouraged to join us. All ages are welcome. We'll have children's videos on a television set in our rec room (bring your own as well), football on another set in our den, and lots of room for conversation and socializing in the rest of the house. Hours are 2 to 7 p.m. Sunday, January 1.

Maps to our home at will be available at the Fellowship. RSVPs are helpful, so we know how much chili to make, but last minute drop-ins are welcome. We hope to see you there!

— Flo & Mike Miller

EXPLORING DIVERSITY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

On January 15 we will review the film *Travelers and Magicians*, our second film of the year. This is a tale of two men whose lives intersect as they embark on their personal journeys: a storytelling monk and a man seeking a better life than his village has to offer. Is the grass really greener on the other side? Discussion leader: Maria Rufe.



To read ahead for our February 19 meeting, pick up *Middlesex: A Novel* by Jeffrey Eugenides. It's an interesting read and great audio book as well. Discussion leader: Judy Finkel. Our reading list is available on Fellowship website. We meet the third Sunday of the month from 7:30 -9:00 p.m. in the Fellowship basement. Contact Ruth MacFadyen or Shelly Case (email: diversity-book-group).

LUNCH GROUP MOVES TO LA TOLTECA

Lunch Group is trying another location. Members of lunch group who helped sort poinsettias for the flower sale had lunch at La Tolteca afterwards, and we liked it a lot. We will meet at 11:30 a.m. at La Tolteca, 907 S. High Street, West Chester, on Friday, January 21. If you would like to be added to the e-mail reminder list please e-mail lunch-group.

SIMPLICITY CIRCLE

Our next meeting is January 8, since our usual first Sunday is New Year's Day.

What do we most deeply seek in our varied lives? Our group is expanding and our theme is resonating in our circle with reflection and sharing. Focus continues to center on our strivings for a life of meaning, one that goes beyond the clutter and wasters of precious time and energy. What are we really after? What can we find that provides a sense of profound and lasting satisfaction? Individual experiences and answers will vary, and definitions will not be all the same. Being together helps us find the answers for ourselves.

We will continue to touch base with previous themes that have helped to simplify our lives. We will ask, "How do we decide what is necessary and important?" We continue to be guided in part by Carol Jones' *26 Tips for Living an Inspired Life*, such as "Yank weeds from your mental garden," and "Be Who You Say You Are." Craig Talbot continues to lead with his careful preparations.

FOLK SINGING

This month's get-together will be Saturday, January 7, at 8 p.m. at the home of Linda and Steve Sander. All are welcome, and no talent or experience is necessary. Come to sing and socialize. We have over 175 songs we like to sing — folk and pop — and you can suggest your own favorites. Bring a munchie if you wish. Contact Steve (email: folk-singing).



FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

- Jan 1 Sun New Year's Open House** 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the home of Flo and Mike Miller. See p. 11.
- Jan 4 Wed RE Committee Meeting.** 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the OWL room at the Fellowship. E-mail: RE.
- Jan 5 Thu Finance Committee Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship office. Contact Erach Patel, email: finance.
- Jan 6 Fri Potluck and Game Night.** 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. See p. 10.
- Jan 7 Sat Folk Singing.** 8:00 p.m. at the home of Steve and Linda Sander. See p. 11.
- Jan 8 Sun Coffee Hour Downstairs.** See p. 3.
- Guest At Your Table Box Collection Starts.** See p. 9.
- Simplicity Circle Meeting.** 12:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. See p. 11.
- Safe Harbor Dinner.** Provided by the Fellowship the second Sunday of the month. Contact Catherine Sachs. Email: safe-harbor.
- Social Justice Committee Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the fireplace room. Contact Tom Townsend (email: social-justice).
- Jan 10 Tue Board Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship office. All are welcome.
- Jan 13 Fri Every Child Folk Festival** an unplugged benefit concert sponsored by the youth group. 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. See p. 9.
- Jan 15 Sun Exploring Diversity Book Discussion Group.** 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the fireplace room. See p. 11.
- Jan 16 Mon Martin Luther King Day of Service** led by the youth group. See p. 6.
- Jan 20 Fri Lunch Group.** 11:30 a.m. at La Tolteca in West Chester. See. p. 11.
- Chester County Peace Movement's Film Series.** 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Film: *Last Best Chance*.
- Jan 21 Sat Lunch for the Needy.** Provided by our Fellowship at the Salvation Army. Contact Catherine Sachs. Email: salvation-army.
- Jan 24 Tue Building Committee Meeting.** 7:00 p.m. in the fireplace room. Email: building.
- Jan 27 Fri RE Family Social.** Details to come. See p. 4.

Groups meeting multiple times in a month:

- Choir Practice** First and third Thursdays of the month, 7:15 p.m. in the sanctuary. Email: choir.
- Yoga** Thursdays 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the basement. See p.10.
- Youth Group** Most Sunday evenings, 6:00-7:30 p.m. in the OWL/Youth Group room. See p. 6.