



# *Grist from the Mill . . .*

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Issue 7

*Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek*

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We are a Welcoming Congregation serving the Hockessin/Pike Creek/Kennett Square region, meeting every Sunday morning. Childcare is available; religious education is held September to June. All are welcome at our services and invited to stay for refreshments and conversation following the service. Should weather conditions be in question on Sunday mornings, call the UUSMC telephone 369-2712, check our website [www.uusmc.org](http://www.uusmc.org), or listen to WDEL 1150AM, [www.wdel.com](http://www.wdel.com).

## **UUSMC Annual Service Auction and Founders' Celebration: "20 Years of Magic"**

### *Special this year...*

As a congregation we've certainly got a lot of "magic," but there would not be a UUSMC if it were not for our special visionary "wizards"—our UUSMC founders. Coupled with the magic that **YOU** have added to this initial vision, we have become a very special, vibrant, growing family of caring people...and now....

**After 20 years, its time to CELEBRATE ALL OF US...**who we are and how far we have come as a church family! Join us for this very special merry event!



### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2009**

- **Cocktails / Potluck Dinner/ Celebration 6:00-7:00 PM**
- **Bring your most "magic" potluck dish!**
- **Childcare provided**
- **Service Auctions 7:00-9:00 PM**

### **AUCTION ITEMS FOR EVERYONE'S BUDGET!**

- Members donate items or unique services that are auctioned off.
- 50/50 \$1.00 Raffle tickets—winner gets half the \$\$\$ pot
- Chinese auction—buy chances to win fabulous prize packages for as little as \$1.00!
- Silent auction—write down your bid for that unique item!

### *Pump up the "Magic"...*

**Bring friends and neighbors**—no requirement for them to purchase anything—we'll share the magic anyway!

**AUCTION SERVICES & ITEMS ARE STILL NEEDED DEADLINE: Feb 6.** Some examples: Baby or pet sitting, wine tasting, day of gardening, garage clean out, beach-house weekend, car detailing, op art portrait, Indian dinner, computer consult, fancy tea party, meditation lessons, berry pies, hand-knitted afghan, etc!

**Call Ginger Stein (302) 369-4325 or e-mail [gkstein@verizon.net](mailto:gkstein@verizon.net).**

**UUSMC February 2009 Sunday Services**  
**10:30 AM**

**February 1**

*Strengthening Our Families*

**Drewry Fennel, Esq.**

The Welcoming Congregation Committee Sunday; Linda Lucero, lay leader. This Sunday we will take a look at families, what defines a family and family relationships. Our guest speaker is Drewry Fennel, the Executive Director of the ACLU of Delaware. PRISM, an auditioned group from within the Rainbow Chorale of Delaware, will provide the music.

Reverend Dean will be preaching at the UU Fellowship of Newark this Sunday.

**February 8**

*Why South Africa*

**Rev. Greg Chute**

The Rev. Greg Chute of the UU Fellowship of Newark will be our guest minister today. He will speak about the many years he has spent going to South Africa to do social justice work. Rev. Dean will host. Please join us after the service for our monthly Second-Sunday potluck lunch.

**February 15**

*There is No Life Without Roads*

**Rev. Nancy Dean**

Life is cut off when people cannot easily move from one place to another. Spiritually and intellectually we must always be building roads between one another; that's the work of our nation and our religions.

**February 22**

*Founders' Day Chartering Sunday: "So Much More..."*

**Rev. Terry Sweetser**

We often say, "Things aren't what they seem," and conclude the sentence with "they are so much less." The teachings of both our Unitarian and Universalist forebears are exactly the opposite. In fact, to live the lives we wish we could, our faith challenges us to find fullness in the wonders of life. To celebrate your wonderful congregation: a service that urges us to imagine that things aren't just what they seem, they are so much more!

Our special guest speaker is the Rev. Terry Sweetser Vice President of the UUA. Rev. Sweetser is a fifth-generation Unitarian, publisher of several books, and has consulted with hundreds of UU congregations. We are fortunate that he will be here to speak to us and help us celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

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***Sunday Flowers:*** Flowers make a lovely addition to our services. You may donate a flower arrangement to honor a special person, an occasion, or just because. The donating member may bring the arrangement home after the service. Simply sign up in the lobby or contact Debby Damiani, our office administrator. Write your check for \$30, \$40, or \$50 to UUSMC and write flowers and the date of the chosen service on the memo line. Place your payment in the box outside of the office or in the collection plate. Flower orders will be placed on Monday so payment must be received by the Monday prior to the Sunday requested.

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***Kindling the Flame IV***, "Our Compelling Message," will be held on Feb. 21, from 9 AM to 3:30 PM at the UU Church of Delaware County, 145 West Rose Tree Road, Media, PA. The keynote speaker will be Wayne Clark, UUA Director of Congregational Stewardship Services; his topic is "Fundraising in Challenging Times" and he will facilitate the morning sessions. Lunch will be followed by the Rev. Ken Beldon, minister at Wellsprings, a new UU congregation in Chester County; he will address the topic of "Spreading Our Compelling Message." The afternoon will include workshops on Publicity, Websites, Branding, and Social Action. Registration - \$12.00 (Includes Lunch). Send Registration to: JPD Office, 100 West 10th Street, Suite 1008, Wilmington, DE 19801.

Hello All!

First, I would like to say, what a great First Friday Family Fun Night we had in January!! We had two Wii systems set up (thanks, Ploener family, for lending us the second Wii) and the food was all amazing. I don't think I'm going to want to make another quesadilla any time soon after making a dozen or more that night...jeepers.

Second, I would like to announce that the Religious Exploration children successfully collected \$531.00 to donate to the Heifer Project. The children decided their goal was to earn enough to gift a heifer (\$500) and they were able to make their goal plus a little extra. Congratulations to our RE families for having such a successful fall service project....way to go!!!

Third, February's First Friday Family Fun Night will be hosted by the Ploener family and will be a BINGO night. Each child attending should bring a small (less than \$5.00) prize to put into a collection to give out as bingo prizes throughout the night. This is sure to be a blast, so I'm looking forward to seeing all our RE families there!

Last, but not least, thank you to Rev. Nancy for donating that AWESOME television. Having that giant TV to play Wii games on was a huge success!

*Cheers, Stefanie Anderson*

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**A Note From Your Office Administrator**

Debra Damiani

Did you know that Staples Rewards points/certificates can be used by anyone? This means if you have any unused but valid Staples Rewards certificates, they can be given to and used by UUSMC to assist us with the cost of office and building supplies. We use Staples exclusively not only for all of our office supplies, such as copy paper, toner, folders, pens, tape, etc., but for building supplies as well, like toilet tissue, paper towels, trash bags and the like.

Speaking of office supplies, if you have any general office supplies in good condition that you no longer have a need for, we might have a use for them here in the office. Please email me with a description of what you have and I'll let you know if we can use it.

Remember to check the online church activities calendar frequently to keep informed of the goings-on here at UUSMC. If you have something you'd like to add to the calendar (social event, meeting, etc.), send the information to me via email, [administrator@uusmc.org](mailto:administrator@uusmc.org).

*20 Years of Magic*

The Charter members who founded this congregation back in February of 1989 have done far more than they might have truly imagined when they became the first signers of our Membership Book. I doubt any of us can really imagine what will happen five, ten, or more years into the future. Ginger Stein and Pam Brancati created this title, "20 Years of Magic," for our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, and indeed often the things that transpire can in retrospect seem like magic. Which, if you consider as magic those surprising things we wish for that actually come true, the Mill Creek congregation has indeed experienced many years of magic.

Time flies when you are having fun, says the old saw, and I believe most people experience this as true. There has been without doubt lots of fun, and all the wide gamut of relational living happening here in our religious home. We have had wonderful experiences together, made new friends, developed close relationships, seen births, children grow up, weddings, divorces, illness, dying, and death; we have known both the beauty and the sadness of deeper connections through our community of faith. People have come and gone; some have come here and found a special place to experience honest and open spirituality, others have not found the magic they needed. But for those of us who have, this is a gem of a congregation set within the diadem of our UU faith.

Many years ago, I read a book about the origins and building of Canterbury Cathedral. It took over a hundred years to construct, which means that the people who started the work on that great edifice never lived to see it completed; their work was an act of faith. The story gave me pause, for we were in the early years and not yet sure of our success, and even now we have no notion of what this congregation might become in the course of its first hundred years; so we too act on faith.

Without a doubt UUSMC will be different than it is now, but whatever it is like then, the members of 2109 will be thanking us in their Founders' Day celebrations for what we do now. I would like to think, as I write this message, that one day it would be read to those distant friends in faith, recognizing us then as we today recognize those who started it all: the Rev. Robert Doss and Frank MacArtor, and that band of fifty-one new members, all believers in the possibility of a home for Unitarian Universalism here in this part of Delaware.

What a joyful event, that we have achieved so much in these twenty years; so just imagine what might happen in the next twenty with this strong foundation now in place. That will be magic, indeed, but the same kind of magic that brought us to this time. Most of you know that my central theological belief is that all of life is spiritual; and perhaps it is equally true to say that all of life has its own special magic, too.

So, for the twenty years of magic we have had so far, let us offer up thanks and praise to those who made it happen, and our hope for and trust in those who will carry it forward.

*Peace & love, Nancy*

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*The JPD Spring Conference* is in Wilmington this year. The district will be looking for support from area congregations. This has grown to quite a wonderful event, and it is hoped UUSMC members will try to make all or part of the conference. The dates are April 24-26; go online to [www.jpduua.org](http://www.jpduua.org) for more information.

## Some UU History

February is Black History Month. Learn here a bit about the role of an important African American in our Unitarian history, and the development of the IARF:

In 1900, the AUA under the leadership of president Dr. Samuel A. Eliot became a founding member of an interfaith organization that was named the International Council of Unitarian and Other Religious Thinkers and Workers (now known as the International Association of Religious Freedom or IARF). Its goal was nothing less than "the federation of nations, the brotherhood of mankind, and the peace of the world."<sup>[2]</sup> The International Council nurtured relations with other Unitarian organizations, such as those in Great Britain and Transylvania as well as with the Hindu reformed group, the Brahma Samaj, in India.

In 1913 the AUA tried unsuccessfully to support the establishment of a mission church in Montego Bay, Jamaica, under the ministry of the Reverend Egbert Ethelred Brown, an African-American Unitarian.<sup>[3]</sup> In the era after World War I, President Eliot declared, "We are creating a new internationalism."<sup>[4]</sup> Indeed, in 1918 the AUA helped to call world attention to the dire plight of the Transylvanians under Romanian rule. In the early 1920s American and British Unitarians provided funds for the purchase of the Mission House in Budapest (now the second Unitarian Church) to be used as housing for ethnic Hungarians fleeing Romania. In 1921 the AUA supported the efforts of Charlotte Garrigue Masaryk, the wife of the president of Czechoslovakia, and the Reverend Norbert Capek and his wife to establish a Unitarian church in Prague. The AUA provided funds for the purchase of the building.

(Excerpted from: [www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/congregationalpolity/47015.shtml](http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/congregationalpolity/47015.shtml))

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## Music Appreciation Circle Forming

Tom Vincent

Love your music? Like to introduce others to it in a relaxed setting? Bored with what radio stations play and wonder what else is out there? Would you like to learn about music outside your current "comfort zone?"

Sign up by e-mailing to [TomVincent@inbox.com](mailto:TomVincent@inbox.com) to get invites to the Music Appreciation Circle. Show up monthly with a few of your favorite tracks on CD, iPod or USB drive to play for others and let them know what the songs mean to you. Maybe a new (or new to you) artist you're excited about, a genre you're enthralled by, a song that inspired you, helped you through difficult times, made you laugh, made you cry, made you think, brings back memories...or just a song that you think is great for no other reason!

Let's chat about music and learn about groups, singers, bands, orchestras, websites, magazines, cultures beyond what we each currently know.

As appropriate for UUs, there are no limits as to genre, time-period or nation: Jazz, classical, world, pop, hip-hop, rap, country, bluegrass, polka, club, dance, techno, glam, ethereal, industrial, big band, blues, heavy metal, reggae, folk...whatever!

**Phase-Two Expansion**

The board voted at its December 15 meeting to proceed with securing the phase-two sewer and grounds permit as was voted in the annual meeting. Funds for the permit preparation work were set aside from the endowment fund in May. This action will secure our ability to begin phase two sometime in the next three years, but it will also allow us to lock in the required sewer capacity for an additional fee at the end of that time should the capital campaign not yet be begun.

We found this a difficult decision to make, given the current economic climate, but three factors influenced us toward the positive vote. First, we know that the area sewer capacity for expansion is strictly limited, and once exceeded, further expansion will have to wait for the county to undertake additional sewer develop in this area. Second, we learned of the provision for holding the capacity beyond the three-year limit by purchasing a county permit later, if needed. Finally, we're aware that the decision to expand a church facility almost always requires a leap of faith. We see this decision as a testament to our faith in our community and our continued expansion.

**Thank you, thank you.**

I want to express my thanks to the remarkable people who are ready and willing to help out, over and over again. My apologies to those I've missed—please let me know.

- Randy Ploener and the Social Events committee have done it again with our great annual chili cook off. Randy appeared on the 11th in his chili cook off regalia of sombrero and serape to announce the details, and a gorgeous poster appeared in the foyer for this Jan. 24 event. I hope you didn't miss it.
- Stefanie Anderson and the RE group are doing great things, and you can see some of them on the RE bulletin board in the hall. The kids raised \$531 to buy a heifer in December—what a fine way for kids to feel good about Christmas! And there's now (Jan. 14) a neat new picture layout of "If I Had A Hammer."
- Charlie Brooks and Fran Loeffelholz are the new co-chairs of the Property Management committee, and both the property and management techniques are getting spruced up.
- Sarah Rose and Karen Sani are doing a great job with hospitality, and an unending supply of goodies is making the after-service social time really tasty.
- Have you noticed that the choir is sounding wonderful lately? Kris Tosh-Morelli is providing great choir direction, and is inspiring increased participation by the kids, both individually and in the children's choir.
- A special thanks to our wonderful minister, Rev. Nancy Dean, whose leadership and devotion (not to mention her continuous supply of interesting sermons) have been an inspiration. I know her decision to retire at the end of the 2009-10 church year is the right one, but it won't be easy to part with her.

*Jay Gibson*

## Annual Budget Drive—Important Dates to Remember

Jamie Kegerise, Annual Budget Drive Leader

Which of the following programs are worth supporting?

- Sunday Worship Services
- Children's Religious Exploration Classes and Programs
- UUA Moral and Ethical Leadership in our Society
- Social Events and Activities for our Members and the Community
- Pastoral and Lay Ministry Outreach to our Membership
- Being a Welcoming Congregation for Gay and Lesbian People
- Being a Green Church and a Voice for Environmental Activism

As part of our stewardship effort, we are putting together a simple listing of the many ministries and programs that our congregation supports—the items above are but a small portion. We are in the midst of gathering this list, but the growing length and depth of our many worthwhile efforts are both impressive and inspiring. This list will be published soon, and you will see that there are many important areas that this congregation joyfully supports. From our Sunday services with such wonderful music, to all we do for our children and our community's children through RE and related programs and to all we share with our community through outreach and service, UUSMC is involved in significant and meaningful ways. Our Annual Budget Drive provides the main financial backing for our ministries and programs. Here are some important dates to keep in mind:

**--Sunday, February 15:** Stewardship Orientation Workshop led by Joan Priest of the JPD. After the Sunday service, please consider coming out to learn how to conduct stewardship conversations. (A make-up workshop will be held Tuesday, February 24, 7:00 to 8:30 PM.)

**--Saturday, March 21:** Fellowship Dinner at the church in the evening. More to come!

**--Sunday, March 22 through April 19:** Stewardship Conversations—the formal and most important part of our Annual Budget Drive

We also need help on the Annual Budget Drive Task Force in the following areas:

- Help in developing marketing and related literature.
- Someone to organize the program and entertainment for our Fellowship Dinner.
- Help with setting up the Fellowship Dinner.

Please contact Jamie Kegerise or Joe Beran, Assistant Annual Budget Drive Leader if would like to help.

Additionally, *please consider becoming a visiting steward*. We need members to become visiting stewards if we are to have a successful budget drive. You need only to care about your church to qualify. Most people find the stewardship experience very rewarding and worthwhile. It is a critical service needed by our church, yet it is easier and less time demanding than most members think.

Stewardship conversations are experiences of fellowship and sharing. Visiting stewards do not use any kind of pressuring activity. A half-hour conversation should only include a few minutes of talking about money. Visiting stewards are not expected to do any negotiating with potential donors. In fact, most donors will have already decided upon their financial commitment before the visiting steward talks to them.

We will be conducting training workshops on February 15 and 24 for those who wish to learn more (you can attend the workshop and then decide not to become a visiting steward). Stewards will be asked to contact and visit with no more than four other members. The time commitment is about three to seven hours over a two-month period.

Please sign up and come out for the upcoming workshops. Your help is very important to our church.

## **SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

**Don Andersen, Chair**

**Share Our Plate:** Half of the undesignated (non-pledge) money in our collection plate is donated to a local charity. During November and December we raised \$496 for the Tick Tock Early Learning Center. In January and February we are supporting the Adult Literacy Program, which provides free literacy tutoring to adults in Chester County. Thank you for your contributions.

**Souper Bowl Sunday:** Breads and homemade soups will be for sale in the library after services on February 1 for our popular Souper Bowl Sunday event. Proceeds benefit the Delaware Food Bank.

**Heifer International:** Congratulations to our Religious Education program for meeting and surpassing their goal of raising \$500 for the symbolic purchase of a heifer through Heifer International (HI). HI provides families throughout the world with food- and income-producing animals and training in their care. In addition to the \$531 raised by our children, \$1680 was raised after services during December, which equates to the giving of a total of two heifers, one draft animal, three goats, one sheep, two pigs, two groups of tree seedlings, one trio of rabbits, three hives of honey bees, five starter flocks of chicks and one group of fish fingerlings to families in need.

**Delaware Food Bank:** Thanks to Jane Frelick's generous sale of produce from her family, \$299 was raised for the Food Bank of Delaware during December.

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Shirlee Andersen, Chair**

Anyone interested in joining our UUSMC need only contact Rev. Nancy Dean to set up an appointment. There will be a chance to speak with Rev. Dean and/or Shirlee Andersen of the Membership Committee on Saturday, February 7, from 10 AM-12 PM and Sunday, May 3 from 12:30-2:30 PM. Please sign up in the foyer if you are interested in attending either of these membership informational meetings.

We have two new members as of January 2009. We welcome Catherine "Kerri" Nagy and Jean (Jeannie) Ackermann, both of Wilmington. Jeannie has had many years experience in the health related fields and would like to do something to help the congregation in that regard.

We are sad to lose Allan Cairncross and Pat Murdoch, who moved two years ago to Lewes, DE, where they plan to become involved in our sister congregation. We hope they will continue to visit whenever possible. Allan and Pat were very instrumental in the establishment of UUSMC, and in the funding and building project that got us our lovely church.

We also say a sad goodbye to Holly Conte, who has gotten her dream job in West Virginia, working in environmental concerns. Come see us when you can.

Best wishes to you all!

## **MUSIC COMMITTEE**

**Peter Barry, Chair**

**Musicians and Music Lovers Sought:** Do you sing, and/or play an instrument and want to share your talent and love of music with the congregation? If so please contact UUSMC's Music Director Kristen Tosh-Morelli by email at [music@uusmc.org](mailto:music@uusmc.org). All levels and abilities welcome!

## ***CARING COMMUNITY***

***Felicia Shaw, Chair***

Our thoughts and prayers are with the following members of our community:

### *Sorrows...*

- ❁ Phyllis Peacock spent the week of Christmas in the hospital, but is doing fine.
- ❁ Megan Knauss had surgery this past week to remove part of her thyroid gland.
- ❁ Wes Bowman's wife, Dawn, suffers from debilitating migraines, but is still active in her charity work.

### *Joys...*

- ❁ Kristin and Vicky Tosh-Morelli celebrated their son Joey's first birthday.
- ❁ Tara and Charlie Czerwinski had a son who will also be called Charlie.

If you have health problems or concerns or know of someone who does, we'd like to help. Please let Felicia Shaw know. You can reach her at (302) 994-2768, or send an email to felicshaw@comcast.net.

## ***ADULT RE***

***Jeannine Ignatz***

### ***Mom's Morning Out; starting Wednesday, February 4, 9:30 – 11:00 AM, weekly***

Attention Mama Bears and Cubs! Don't hibernate this winter. Instead, come and play with other moms and toddlers during "Mom's Morning Out" at the church every Wednesday morning from 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM, beginning February 4th. Kindly contact Tara Czerwinski via email (taraczerwinski@yahoo.com) or phone (302-239-3579) if you are interested in attending or if you have any questions. Hope to see you there!

### ***Brian and Jeanne Hanson Bike Tour; after Second-Sunday Potluck on February 8***

Eastern Oregon is not flat! The State of Oregon features every ecosystem you can imagine and it rarely rains in the summer. Brian and Jeanne Hanson traveled nearly 4,000 miles from the west coast of Oregon through nine states to Kentucky by tandem bicycle. What is life like without the use of a motor vehicle? How do you avoid bear attacks in Yellowstone National Park? They'll answer these pressing questions and many others in their discussion and slide show of their adventures of summer and fall 2008.

### ***Introduction to Meditation and Reiki, with Sue Bara; Tuesday, February 17, 7:00 – 9:00 PM, sanctuary***

Interested in reducing your stress? Join Sue Bara for a relaxing evening to learn some basic meditation techniques. Class will be held at UUSMC on February 17, from 7-9 PM, and will include basic breath work and discovering the art of "Sacred Play." In addition, Sue will introduce Reiki, a Japanese healing art, which participants will have the opportunity to experience. Sue is a Reiki Master/Teacher who has been meditating for 17 years. Please contact Sue at smbara@gmail.com if you are interested in attending the class.

## ***UUSMC BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS***

***Cyndy Falcoff & Amy White, Coordinators***

**The Sunday After-Services Book Group** will meet on March 8 to discuss the book *The Heretic's Daughter* by Kathleen Kent, a moving and unforgettable work of historical fiction. In 1752, Sarah Carrier Chapman, confined to her home and weak with infirmity, writes a letter to her granddaughter, revealing the secret she has guarded closely for six decades. It is a haunting account of the horrors that enveloped a New England town called Salem, and compelled Sarah, then just a young girl, to make a decision that would change her life forever. Out of love for her children, Martha Carrier, persecuted and jailed as a witch, asks her daughter Sarah to commit an act of heresy—a lie that will most surely condemn Martha even as it will save her daughter. Kathleen Kent, the author of this rich and wonderfully descriptive book, is a direct descendant of Martha Carrier. The book is available through the New Castle County Library System. Questions or for more information contact Cyndy Falcoff, cjofal@comcast.net.

The Grist is published eleven times a year by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek and is distributed free of charge to members and friends of the congregation. If you would like to contribute to publication and postage costs, please send your tax-deductible donation to UUSMC, 579 Polly Drummond Hill Road, Newark, DE 19711. Editor, Heather Doty. Send editorial materials via email to [grist@uusmc.org](mailto:grist@uusmc.org).

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**March 2009**

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Contact the Joseph Priestley District Website for information on UU activities in the region:  
<http://www.jpduua.org/pages/archive-jpd-packet.php>

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