



Grist from the Mill . . .

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Issue 11

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.

June is Gay and Lesbian Coming-Out Month! Join us at UUSMC for the following special events:

Gay Pride Celebration
"StoneWall: A Milestone Toward Equality"
Saturday night, June 27th

UUSMC will be hosting a Gay Pride Celebration in collaboration with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Newark. There will be fun, food, Gay Pride Jeopardy and lots of rainbow prizes! Please come out and celebrate the 40th anniversary of Stonewall (see history on p. 3), and support the LGBT community and our Welcoming Congregation Committee.

Time: 7 pm - 10 pm

Place: UUSMC

Performing: PRISM (special auditioned group that is part of the Rainbow Chorale)

*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****

Not to be Missed! On **Friday night, June 5th**, we will be showing the movie *Milk* in the sanctuary at 7 pm. Refreshments, (milk and cookies!) and other goodies will be for sale. This is an uplifting and powerful movie about Harvey Milk, an activist who fought for gay rights by becoming the first openly gay man to be elected to political office in San Francisco in 1977. Sean Penn won the Oscar for his beautiful portrayal of Harvey Milk. Childcare will be provided. Look for the sign-up sheet in the lobby.

*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****MOVIE*****

Sunday, June 7th, we invite anyone who has seen the movie *Milk* (which of course we hope you will have seen on Friday night with us!) to join us for a discussion. This will be held in the library following the services, around noon.

IMPORTANT: Town Meeting – June 7th after the service to hear from the two candidates for UUA president and to vote so we can allot our four delegate votes by absentee ballots, unless we hear that anyone plans to attend General Assembly besides Rev. Dean.

June is Gay and Lesbian Coming Out Month

This month marks the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots (see below), a reminder that it was not so long ago that we still expected a segment of our population to be closeted. I recall well hearing in my twenties: *Why can't they just keep private behind closed doors? Why do they have to rub it in our faces? You don't see us talking about our sex lives all the time.* Of course, heterosexual people just didn't realize that we were constantly flaunting our sexuality. We could hold hands, kiss, and exhibit in many ways that we had an affinity for another person without giving it a second thought.

Much has changed and we UUs have been at the forefront of fighting for the rights of our GLBT family; and, while it is increasingly acceptable to be *out*, there are still many rights denied to loving gay couples and families simply because they chose to love someone of the same gender. Once again, many don't understand why the rights of civil marriage are important, and they just want gays either to stay quiet, or to be satisfied with unions that give them some of the rights but not all. Yet again it is time to push forward with vigor to encourage a completely unbiased civil system of marriage or union that does not discriminate. We are talking about the state laws, the civil laws, and not what any given religion may do regarding marriage or divorce. No religion has to marry those they don't want to.

I have performed many gay weddings/unions/commitment ceremonies and think that this is the right thing to do, for the more commitment and love we have in relationships the better.

Whether your life is touched by a gay family member or not, this is an issue that matters to us all, for where anyone's rights are infringed, there lies the possibility for our own to be infringed.

This month, take ten minutes and write some letters to your state and federal legislators and let them know that you value our civil liberties, and want them extended to the gay and lesbian couples who wish to marry and make a commitment to family life.

There are no good reasons to deny a civil right to any of our citizens. If any couples feel that gay marriage threatens their heterosexual marriage, then they need to see a counselor about what is weak in their own union. What strengthens marriage is real and sustained commitment, not gender.

Meanwhile, I live in hope that my own gay family members will one day enjoy the rights that the rest of the non-gay community take for granted. I hope I'm around for the 40th anniversary of that!

Peace & love, Nancy

GLBT History: The Stonewall Riots were a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969 at the Stonewall Inn, in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. They are frequently cited as the first instance in American history when gays and lesbians fought back against a government-sponsored system that persecuted homosexuals, and they have become the defining event that marked the start of the modern gay-rights movement in the United States and around the world. American gays and lesbians in the 1950s and 1960s faced a legal system more anti-homosexual than some Iron Curtain countries. Early homophile groups in the U.S. sought to prove that gay people could be assimilated into society, and they favored non-confrontational education for homosexuals and heterosexuals alike. The last years of the 1960s, however, were very contentious, as many social movements were active, including the African American Civil Rights Movement, the Counterculture of the 1960s, and antiwar demonstrations. These influences, along with the liberal environment of Greenwich Village, served as catalysts for the Stonewall riots. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots)

This is a momentous season for the Gibson clan—we're celebrating two college graduations. Our oldest grandson, Jake, joined the Marines after graduating from high school and served in both Afghanistan and Iraq. When he reentered civilian life, he decided to pursue a degree, and in May, tomorrow as I write this, he graduates from Capitol College. Our granddaughter Ariel has been clearly focused on a career in health services since childhood, and she is graduating from the University of Delaware as a nurse.

Once past the shock of realization: "Grandchildren graduating from college? I can't be that old!" I'm filled with pride and realizing once again the pleasure of family. Watching our children grow and celebrating their accomplishments is one of the joys we share as a UUSMC family. We've been enjoying services that celebrate our children's growth, the Youth Service and the Age of Reason Bridging Service in May. And many of us have family members graduating to new levels, new positions, and new endeavors. Congratulations to every one!

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. Again this month I want to think about some of the "invisible" tasks.

Laura Bonner makes sure that the tablecloths from our Sunday social hour and from various events get taken home, washed and returned for the next time. She makes sure that kitchen trash gets out to the barrels, and she stops by now and then just to check that everything is OK. Quiet help, but truly essential. Thank you, Laura.

Some UU History

Our Symbol: the Flaming Chalice Hans Deutsch, an Austrian artist, first brought together the chalice and the flame as a Unitarian symbol during his work with the Unitarian Service Committee during World War II. To Deutsch, the image had connotations of sacrifice and love. Unitarian Universalists today have many different interpretations of the image. To many, the cup represents religious community while the flame represents ideas including the sacrificial flame, the flame of the spirit, and more. The flaming chalice image has changed many times over the past 65 years. There is no single interpretation of today's flaming chalice symbol. Modern chalice designs often incorporate two overlapping circles that, for many people, represent our Unitarian and Universalist heritages. Other images include additional elements, some of which are merely decorative and others that are very meaningful. (UUA.org)

Chalice Lighters are special people! Chalice Lighters is a special program of our district that was set up to help up-and-coming congregations like UUSMC. A donation of \$15 three times a year (or you can send in a lump sum) helps to get some extra help for our new congregations or those trying to grow. We have received two Chalice Lighter grants totaling \$23,000. To become a Chalice Lighter, contact Fran Loeffelholz, Frank MacArtor or Rev. Dean, and look for forms in the in the foyer, or go to: www.jpduua.org/media/Chalice%20Lighter%20brochure%20011209.pdf.

The Share Our Plate charity for May and June is Limen House, which provides drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. Half of the undesignated (non-pledge) money in the collection plates will go to this worthy charity.

Continuing the Magic: The 2009-2010 UUSMC Budge Drive Recap

Jamie Kegerise, Leader, Annual Budget Drive

Thank you to everyone who helped with the budget drive this year, including our Visiting Stewards and especially to all our wonderful members who completed their financial commitments. If you have not turned in your completed Financial Commitment Form, please do so right away.

You know that it takes a lot to run a church. Dedicated members and families and our devoted staff are the people side of this equation. The monetary side may be the less important side, but the generosity of our members enables us to keep a spiritual home and meet the needs of our families and community.

Although we have again fallen short of our goal (for the fourth year in a row, but who's counting), I have to say that the experience has been a positive one for me. It looks like we will collect a total of around \$168,000 as a result of our budget drive. That money is used to pay our wonderful staff, to pay our mortgage and building expenses, and that money funds our many programs and ministries. That means our congregation will be able to continue to grow, and more families and children will experience our loving and welcoming ways.

There are also moments in the campaign that are uplifting and inspiring. Like other Visiting Stewards, I had the pleasure of meeting with and getting to know some of our members better. This year we had 34 members (almost one-third) who calculated their commitments based on the "Fair-Share" giving guidelines published by the UUA. We applaude and appreciate their generosity.

We are thankful for all our members who made good faith commitments, whatever the amount, especially considering the difficult economic situation many folks find themselves in these days.

Please take a moment and say a word of thanks to the following members who graciously served as Visiting Stewards: Jay Gibson, Jane Frelick, Linda Lucero, Lauri Rickard, Wendy Croft, Mary Pat Knauss, Bea Webb, Chitra Vaidyanathan, Judy Pappenhagen, Jean Hanson, Kathy Dale, JB Anderson, David Bonner, Matt Nolan, Frank MacArtor, Brian Hanson, Phil Lowe, Randy Ploener, and Joe Beran.

If you met with a visiting steward, please let other members about your experience (which hopefully was a very positive one). We truly need to expand this effort next year, if we are to meet our future economic challenges. Thanks again for a successful Budget Drive. I welcome comments and ideas for improving our process. You can e-mail me at Jamie@DSOFurniture.com or call me on my cell at (302) 218-5690.

June Fundraising: Chicken Barbecue and Kite Sale

Saturday, June 27, 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

This year, our own chef Randy Ploener will be preparing our barbequed chicken. Randy makes a great barbeque sauce and we all know how great everything he makes tastes. Kids will have the opportunity to purchase a kite, which they can design and decorate themselves. There will be a few larger kites for sale, as well. This is an event the kids really enjoyed last year. All members are asked to sell tickets. Contact your friends, family and neighbors and let them know you are selling tickets for a barbeque, which will save them time preparing dinner on Saturday, June 27th.

Included in the dinner (tentative): half chicken, chips, cookie or brownie.

We need volunteers the day of the sale to bake brownies or cookies, help cook chicken, package dinners, help kids make kites, collect tickets, sell tickets starting at noon, sell and collect money for sodas.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

Peter Barry, Chair

It's that time of year again: the end! There have been a lot of happenings this year and I'd like to take a moment to remember them and the people who helped make them all possible.

I'd like to publicly thank the members who sang in the choir this year: Rev. Dean, Wendy Myers, Sue Bara, Kim Anderson, Joanne Knowles, Roberta Headley, June MacArtor, Rachael VerNooy, Bea Webb, Peg Duffy, Heather Doty, Brian Hanson, Clem Bowen, Cyril Caster, Gordon Roth, Andy Levin, and Tom Hartline. I'd like to extend a super-huge thank you to our accompanist extraordinaire, Pam Allenstein! Without Pam our choir would just not be the same. Please pat her on the back the next time you see her! Pam, like all of our choir members, is a volunteer and deserves much praise and many thank yous.

Just a semi-annual reminder that choir membership is always open—you do not have to attend every rehearsal or performance, and you do not have to know how to read music. We will have a few summer choir rehearsals—those dates are TBD and will be posted on the website www.uusmc.org. Anyone who loves to sing, regardless of age, is welcome! If you'd like to be added to the choir email list, please send me your email address.

Thank you to Jennifer Stomberg for organizing and directing the children's choir—they sounded wonderful in December, March and June! Thank you to Helen Hoffmann for accompanying them as well.

Thank yous are also due for our church-member musicians who performed this year: Lucille Karnik, Helen Hoffmann, Bob and Jay Gibson, Peg Duffy, Wes Bowman, Andy Levin, Peter Barry, Aaron DaCosta, Sam Barry, Mattie Levin, Chloe Mortenson, Larry and Jennifer Stomberg, and Gordon Roth and Tom Hartline of Clarion Brass.

And let's not forget all those who performed for Big Music Sunday and the Fellowship Dinner! What great fun events...let's do it again next year! Pam Allenstein and Helen Hoffmann, Jamie Kegerise with his beer jingles, Matthew Anderson and Diana Saunders at the Fellowship Dinner. Big Music Sunday performers Brian Hanson, Wendy Myers and Pam Allenstein, Chitra and Prakash Vaidynathan's Bollywood dance, Mattie Janis and Chloe Mortenson, Rebecca and Sarah Ploener, and Cyril Caster's story with music.

Thank you and job well done to Kim Anderson, our own "force of nature" in dreaming of and seeing to fruition the Carrie Newcomer concert that took place in October. What an event! We hope to have another fun night of music in the fall—please stay tuned (if you will).

A big thanks goes to our Board of Trustees, for without their support, we would literally be singing the same ol' songs! It is the financial support we receive that allows us to purchase new music for both the children's choir and adult choir and also to supply outside performers with a small honorarium.

Church members who are musicians are wanted to perform for services in the fall—please email me at music@uusmc.org and we will try to find a date that works. I would like to do my fall scheduling by mid-August and I want to get as many musicians involved as possible! Children who are studying music are also welcome to perform, anytime. We generally are looking for a 1 to 2 minute long piece of any style or genre, on any instrument (including voice) to be performed as the offering song. Children who have a piece ready for performance can have their parents email Kristen at music@uusmc.org to set up a date to perform.

If you have any thoughts regarding this year's music, musicians or events, or ideas for future musical events or performers, please email me: music@uusmc.org. I'd love to hear from you, and am open to hearing your new ideas.

Musically yours, Kristen Tosh-Morelli (Music Director)

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Shirlee Andersen, Chair

We are very happy to have welcomed sixteen new members so far this year:

Mark and Jennifer Berry of Elkton, MD (sons Gavin, Reece, and Dillon); Stephen Hentkowski of Wilmington, DE; Colleen and John Herman of Elkton, MD; Jana Bazzoli and Sandra Ouzts of Hockessin, DE (Joshua, 11, Liz, 6); Cecilia (Tina) Guerrette and Donna Salek of Newark, DE; Claudia Scheffler of Bear, DE; Catherine "Kerri" Nagy of Wilmington, DE; Jean Ackerman of Wilmington, DE; David Smith of Newark, DE; Tim and Wendy Myers of Kennett Square, PA (Alex and Grace); and Wendi Croft of Newark, DE (baby Olivia Rapisarda).

Anyone interested joining our UUSMC need only contact Rev. Nancy Dean to set up an appointment. There will also be upcoming opportunities to discuss membership with Vicky Tosh-Morelli of the Membership Committee.

CARING COMMUNITY

Felicia Shaw, Chair

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

☘ Our sympathy to Brian and Jeanne Hanson on the death of Brian's mother, Ruthie Hanson, who died this month in California.

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, Chair

Thanks to all the presenters of this season's Adult RE classes and lectures. I trust that all the people who partook in these sessions had a good time and learned a little something in the process. Search your brain for any future ideas for class/lecture offerings. Please email me (jeannineignatz@hotmail.com) with any ideas or offers of giving a future class. Thanks.

UUSMC BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

Cyndy Falcoff & Amy White, Coordinators

The Sunday After-Services Book Group will not meet during the summer months. We will resume in September (date to be determined) to discuss our summer read, *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society*. This book is an utterly charming debut by the late Mary Ann Shaffer, who, as her health declined, finished the novel with the help of her niece, Annie Barrows. Written as a series of letters that tells the history of a small group of English Channel Islanders during five years of Nazi occupation, the book is funny, smart, and a delightfully fast summer read. Also keep track of any books read during the summer for possible future Book Group selections. Suggestions, questions, concerns, contact Cyndy Falcoff: cjofal@comcast.net.

The Evening Book Group The Evening Book Group will meet on Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 7:30 in the church library to discuss Jane Hamilton's 1994 novel, *A Map of the World*. "From the author of the widely acclaimed *The Book of Ruth* comes a harrowing, heartbreaking drama about a rural American family and a disastrous event that forever changes their lives....A vivid human drama of guilt and betrayal, *A Map of the World* chronicles the intricate geographies of the human heart and all its mysterious, uncharted terrain. The result is a piercing drama about family bonds and a disappearing rural American life" (bookbrowse.com). All are welcome to attend. Please contact Amy White at amywwhite@comcast.net or (302) 652-1952 for more information about the Evening Book Group.

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***** See page 2 for important information regarding upcoming changes to the Grist*****

June 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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