



Connections September 2016

The Unitarian Universalists of Central Delaware
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uucd.org



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Emergencies: Rev. Chute (302) 369-6499

We are a welcoming congregation!
Chartered 2009

Calendar

- Monday, 5 September: DIMH dinner. Julie Price, head chef
 - Wednesday, 7 September 7pm: Mindfulness meditation at CBS
 - Thursday, 8 September 7pm: book discussion (Just Mercy) at CBS
 - Sunday, 11 September: Social Justice Sunday benefiting Meals on Wheels
 - Sunday, 11 September, 11.30am: Social Justice Committee meeting at CBS
 - Monday, 12 September, 11am-noon: Moral Monday at Legislative Mall
 - Saturday, 17 September: Coastal Cleanup
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- (Greg has a copy and will be scheduling a reshewing as part of an ongoing program)
- Wednesday, 23 September, 7.35pm: Board meeting at CBS
 - Saturday, 24 September, 9-12am: Adopt-A-Highway

What's new with the Board?

All 7 members met 8/20 for a retreat. Sheryl edited some of Greg's notes on the retreat that will give you some flavor of how they hope to function next year.

Despite our official structure that calls for a whole list of committees, we actually have only 4: worship, social justice, stewardship and leadership development and 2 teams: communication & children's religious education. The rest are informal/floating points of contact/interest. The board made a list of the general areas we need to be sure to cover (and then allocated responsibility/oversight).

The areas are (in no particular order):

Finances – Lorna
Worship – Honey

Membership Enrichment/Integration – Wendy
CRE (children’s religious education)- Kerry
Communication/Administration – Jayce
Social Justice – Sara
Publicity – Sheryl

The idea is rather than to think in terms of committees, we will think in terms of being sure we get the necessary jobs done. In some cases there is a committee in place; in others, not.

For example: Lorna is responsible for oversight of our finances. There is no finance committee and no fundraising committee. She knows that, and knows she will be the focus of ensuring we keep up on finances. She has Erv & Honey as resources, but she has to figure out how to be sure we do some fundraising. In that case she might ask the LDC who might be good people to recruit for specific events/tasks (such as a service auction or taking things to Wilson’s auction). She can rely on the stewardship committee to do the annual canvass. Wendy might be sure we have at least monthly membership events, keep our caring volunteer list current, organize hospitality, etc.

In the past, board members were supposedly in contact with committees, but often we didn't have a committee and contact ended with that. When there was no committee, the board member merely reported that. However, at the recent Board retreat, we collaborated to come up with an administrative structure that would help get all necessary functions within the congregation done. The board members were recruited with the idea that they actually are responsible for ensuring that we function. What we came up with was an oversight/support structure. We're trying to take a much bigger cooperative and more collaborative perspective.

In many ways when things have gone well it’s been because we work through personal lines of communication and individual volunteering rather than committee structures. One situation we need to respond to within this context is recognizing that with Debra May out indefinitely, we have no structure to provide hospitality. So how do we tap into that personal connection? We will be exploring ways to get people to volunteer for more short-term responsibilities.

This is a new idea which is still evolving. It is an acknowledgment of how we are operating. It’s more of a governance model, where trustees are in charge of certain areas. Hopefully, each board member will look at their area of responsibility and assesses where they are and what they need. For example, Wendy might initiate a sign up sheet for greeters as a way for folks to get connected with other folks. We don't need a committee for that necessarily, but someone to oversee it/ensure it gets done.

Birthdays

Michael Tucker (2), Alexis Hamilton (11)

Please send any upcoming birthdays to Laura Parks (laura.e.parks@gmail.com)!

Sunday Services

Sunday, September 4: “Ingathering Sunday & Water Communion” Rev Chute

This Sunday we welcome everyone back from their summer adventures for Ingathering Sunday. This Sunday is our Water Communion, an annual ritual where everyone is invited to bring to the service a small amount of “sacred water” from a place that is special to them, and share it as a blessing on our community. The water is combined as a symbol of our shared faith coming from many different sources. All are welcome to attend.

Sunday, September 11: “Working for Peace” Guest Speaker: Jeffrey Lott

In recent years, Unitarian Universalism has rediscovered its social mission and taken bold steps to add its voice to the important human rights debates of our time. Issues like LGBTQ rights, climate change, Black Lives Matter, and justice reform are symptomatic of underlying intersectional problems. Without a strong spiritual foundation, we cannot be effective in making change. Jeff Lott, a leader in the social justice renaissance at First Unitarian Church, will offer a strategy for getting—and staying—engaged in the public sphere.

Jeffrey Lott—who describes himself as writer, editor, wanderer, worshiper—manages the First Unitarian Social Justice Connector—a blog on church social action. He’s a leader of Delaware’s Movement for a Culture of Peace and a principal organizer of the inaugural Peace Week Delaware, which begins on Sept. 18. Jeff retired in 2014 after more than 20 years as director of publications and editor of the alumni magazine at Swarthmore College. He has lived in Delaware since 1974.

Sunday, September 18: “But How Do I Know What’s Right?” Rev Chute

Rev Richard Gilbert developed a “moral compass” several years ago to help navigate the stormy seas of enigmatic decision-making. His eight points of reference and my additional one may well serve us in finding our way.

Sunday, 25 September: “Everything I always wanted to know about life*”

Jayce Lesniewski

A collection of life lessons gleaned from the works of Woody Allen. Several films will be focused on, including Sleeper, Love and Death, Annie Hall, and Hannah and Her Sisters.

*but was afraid to ask

Announcements

- The Delmarva Cluster Retreat is six weeks away, , 8, 9! It is time to register. You can find specific information on programming at: <http://uudelmarva.org/cluster-retreat>, and registration at: registration.uudelmarva.org. For more info contact Greg.
- Volunteers are needed to help provide food service after Sunday services. There will be a sign up sheet next week, or email Cindy (lucinda.27@hotmail.com) if you're interested.
- The book discussion on Just Mercy will be Thursday, 8 September at CBS . See you then. For more info contact Greg.
- This year's Coastal Cleanup is scheduled for 9-12 on Saturday, 17 September. To sign up, or for more information, visit <http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/coastalcleanup/pages/default.aspx>
- Contact Mark Jarrell (smarkjarrell@yahoo.com) if you're interested in helping with the DIMH dinners.
- Beginning in September and throughout the fall, we will be collecting items for Code Purple, an organization which distributes needed materials to homeless people throughout the year and especially in the cold winter months. They are asking for the following items: Blankets, cots, sleeping bags, towels, wash cloths, hand wipes, sanitizer, feminine products, toothbrushes, tooth paste, disinfectant spray, hats, scarves, gloves, boots, long underwear, coats, hand and feet warmers, bottled water, pre-cooked or frozen meals, instant hot drinks, garbage bags.
Thanks for your support for this important project!
- We are beginning to expand our social media outreach. You can help by liking/ following the UUCD Facebook page. Look forward to seeing new and interesting posts to brighten your day! We are sure they'll be so compelling that you'll want to share them with all your friends.

Dates Yet To Be Determined

The following two notices describe excellent opportunities to explore and activate our UU principles. I plan to schedule one evening per month October - April for the UUA Congregational Study Issue, and one evening per month also Oct - April on the Sharps Story. For more info contact Greg.

Notice 1: The Corruption of Our Democracy

Delegates at the 2016 General Assembly in Columbus, OH, selected "The Corruption of Our Democracy" to be the 2016-2020 Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) of Congregations.

The Congregational Study/Action Issue is an invitation for congregations and districts to take a topic of concern and engage it, reflect on it, learn about it, respond to it, comment on it take action—each in their own way. A CSAI is NOT a statement—it is a question.

Issue: As corporations use “corporate personhood” and “money as speech” for their interests rather than the people’s needs, can a constitutional amendment be passed to protect us? Could this further Unitarian Universalist work for social and environmental justice and help protect the health and safety of the people and the planet?

Grounding in Unitarian Universalism: Our Seven Principles give us spiritual grounding to put our faith into action. Our General Assembly considered CSAI proposals in 2010 and 2014 on “Revitalizing Democracy” and passed AIWs in 2011 and 2013 on amending the constitution. It is time for a full study of a possible 28th amendment.

Topics for Congregational Study

- Unitarian Universalists have identified escalating inequality, racial justice, voting rights, immigration, reproductive justice, marriage equality and more as major moral concerns. Now climate change looms large. Could passing an amendment establishing that only human beings, not corporations, unions and other artificial entities, have constitutional rights, and money is not free speech, benefit these important issues?
- What does “corporate personhood” mean and why is it important to address that in addition to “money as speech” in a proposed constitutional amendment?
- How have Supreme Court decisions over the past two hundred years created this “legal fiction”?
- How does treating corporations and other artificial entities as persons violate our Unitarian Universalist principles?
- Is a moral political revolution needed to address voting rights, gerrymandering, voting methods, and the possibility of public financing of campaigns?

Possible Congregational/District Actions

- Hold forums in your congregation on the various proposals to overturn Citizens United v. FEC and other Supreme Court decisions giving moneyed interests sway in this country.

- Show the 30-minute film “Legalize Democracy” and discuss how this supports our Seven Principles and affects all ages.
- Encourage your congregation to pass a resolution for Move to Amend and endorse it.
- Encourage your City Council and County Commission to pass a resolution for Move to Amend, and work to place a ballot initiative or non-binding referendum on your city or county ballot, so all voters can speak out on this important issue. Invite youth to participate in this effort.
- Educate your congregation about the Interfaith Caucus of Move to Amend. Use the issue of climate change to reach out to other faiths.
- Join your UU State Action Network, or start one if your state does not yet have one, and encourage them to include climate change as a core issue and the amendment movement to help address it.

Notice 2: The Sharps’ War

This fall, the story of Martha and Waitstill Sharp and their secret rescue missions in Nazi-occupied Europe will be told in [Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War](#), a documentary by Ken Burns and Artemis Joukowsky, the Sharps' grandson. The documentary airs on PBS stations on September 20. A [companion book](#) from Beacon Press will be available on September 6.

This inspiring story begins in 1939 when a young Unitarian minister and his wife accept the call from the president of the American Unitarian Association to travel on a dangerous mission from Massachusetts to Prague to help save Jews and dissidents from the growing Nazi threat. Leaving their two young children at home, they risk their lives to provide refugee assistance and to smuggle those in danger out of Europe. Don't miss this compelling depiction of the Sharps' heroic efforts in the face of constant danger.

Unitarian Universalists across the country today are fighting Islamophobia and religious intolerance, modern-day reflections of the evils opposed by Waitstill and Martha Sharp. I call upon all communities of faith and conscience to join in defying religious intolerance and bigotry.

To help you in your mission we have created a [congregational action guide](#) with tools, materials, and stories at the [Defying the Nazis UU Action Project](#), co-sponsored by the UUA, UU Service Committee (UUSC) and the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School. Visit the [project site](#) to download the congregational action guide, the UUSC's refugee advocacy toolkit, the Fahs Collaborative's interfaith discussion guide, and add your action to the map.

So, I ask you: Will you answer the call? Will you carry on the Sharps' living legacy by promoting interfaith justice in the face of anti-Muslim bias and the refugee crisis? Please answer the call.

In faith,

Rev. Peter Morales
President of the UUA

P.S. [Watch](#) the trailer for *Defying the Nazis*. Don't forget to take action at uua.org/sharpstory and follow the discussion on social media with #WeDefy and #SharpsWarPBS.