



From Our Moderator Dave Gatton

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to invite you to attend our **Annual Congregational Meeting immediately after church on Sunday, May 17.** We will begin promptly at 12:15 p.m. and adjourn at 1:15 p.m. so that everyone can enjoy spring. The Board will provide lunch.

We have had an excellent year—for those who are new, our Church fiscal year begins May 1. The Congregation enjoys a new sense of caring and support for each other, our attendance and participation is increasing, our music program through the leadership of Darryl Winston has blossomed, and we have opened our building to more community events and causes, including the U. S. Climate Action Network's use of the third floor of our Education Wing.

During the meeting we will elect officers and Board of Trustees for the coming year, approve next year's budget, and hear reports from our various committees.

To build off our current momentum, we would like to focus this year on invigorating our Membership and Welcome activities and launching a new Social Outreach Committee to bring even more energy and focus to this ministry. I ask that you think how you can help support the church in these two areas.

In advance, I would like to thank our ministers the Reverend Lillie Henley for her tremendous leadership this past year, Darryl Winston for his music direction, and Michael Relland for his intern ministry, especially with young adults. To the Board, a BIG THANK YOU. You know who you are and what you have done. And most importantly, every single member of UNMC who graces us with your presence and devotion to this community of faith.

If you have anything to add to the agenda, or to simply raise a question, please email the church office at office@universalist.org.

We look forward to seeing you on May 17.

Services for May

Services begin at 11:00 A.M.

Sunday, May 3 — Rev. Henley will preach "Lie Down in Green Pastures" Our lives are sacred; each one of us has the assurance that we are loved and are worth loving. Psalm 23

Sunday, May 10 — For our Mother's Day service, Rev. Relland will be preaching "Mother of God, Mother of Us All." What could possibly be the most difficult thing to do in our lives? Mary, mother of Jesus, did something very hard to do. My mother is taking care of her own mother as they both deal with Alzheimer's Disease. As a father and single parent, I even face challenges that seem, sometimes, insurmountable. On Mothers Day we lift up the struggle and the beauty of Motherhood. Rev. Henley will officiate our "Chocolate Candy" communion.

Sunday, May 17 — "No Greater Love" is Rev. Henley's sermon this morning. We will explore the *philia* and *agape* in the New Testament and explore the "love of others." John 15:12-14

Sunday, May 24 — Memorial Day Weekend, "The Day My Brother Died" Some deaths affect us more deeply than others. On this Memorial Day Weekend, we will remember and weep for those we loved who have gone before.

Sunday, May 31 — Today is the day Rev. Henley, Rev. Elizabeth Lerner from Silver Spring UU Church, and both church staffs and volunteers have been preparing for months! There will be over 200 guests at UNMC this Sunday. The ministers will be preaching at an intergenerational service. Their homilies will be on the history of UNMC and our shared history. We will have lunch after the service, so please bring a pot luck dish. The Chancel Choir's concert begins at 2:00. It will be a wonderfully exciting day to be at UNMC. Please plan on attending this service and the next Sunday worship at Silver Spring UU Church.

from the Heart ...

At UNMC, we welcome everyone, wherever they are on their spiritual journey. We never ask anyone to claim any particular religious identity. And I try to preach so that everyone can be touched by a spirit of community and love.

My hope is that everyone who needs a spiritual home that allows them the religious freedom to pursue that spiritual journey to its fullest extent will feel comfortable at UNMC.

As most of you know, I took some professional leave in March and traveled to Tulsa, Oklahoma, for a stay at an *ashram* outside Tulsa, and then to attend the UU Christian Fellowship (UUCF) Revival.

It was my first UUCF Revival, and it was wonderful. I wondered why I haven't been going all these years that I've been in the ministry. I thought for awhile and decided that it wasn't until I came to UNMC that I felt comfortable enough to publicly claim my Christianity. For many years, I did not want the ostracism that claim evoked, not only among UUs but particularly among the UU ministry. It wasn't that I hesitated to "stand up" for what I believe; it was that I didn't want to argue with others about something that was truly a quiet, personal statement of faith for me.

If I were asked by a fundamentalist, literalist Christian about my Christianity, I **would gladly** "stand up," saying that I most certainly considered myself a Christian, whether they agreed or not. And if the discussion turned into an argument, I would excuse myself from such an un-Christian exchange.

When my sister Blanche asked me how I could be a Christian and not believe in Hell, I said, "It is **precisely because I am a Universalist Christian** that I don't believe in Hell." And furthermore—I believe that if I die and find out there is a Hell, then Hell would be the total absence of God's love, not any lake of fire, but the cold, dead absence of love.

It was heartwarming to be among so many Christian UUs at the Revival in Oklahoma, and to meet the other UU clergy who claim Christianity. And I was gratified to find that there are more UU Christians than I had previously thought!

Nevertheless, I do confess to claiming a Buddhist approach to meditation and a pantheistic



Youth Religious Education Ends for This Year

On April 19th we concluded our religious education course, The UU Principles and Jesus, with another look at the 7th Principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." This principle is supported by acceptance of "Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature." And we compared and contrasted this with passages from Genesis 1:11-12 and 24-31 which include the following: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'"



Chancel Flowers

Jeff Jacobs, Coordinator

May 3 – Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of her parents, by Mary Simmons.

May 10 – Chancel flowers are given in admiration and respect for her mother Lillie Marguerite Peveto Henley, by Reverend Lillie Henley

May 17 – Chancel flowers are given in honor of the birthday of Vanessa Lowe, by Catherine Robbins

May 24 – Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of her brother, Karl F. Thompson, by Amy Thompson Tipton

May 31 – Chancel flowers are given by Ron Eanes in memory of his friends Walter Hicks, Jr. and Juan Hernandez

approach to Creation. I also practice Christian contemplative prayer. No, I'm not trying to increase my spiritual insurance to cover, if any, a myriad of life after death existences. It is the opposite. I am trying to realize the fullest, spiritual existence possible in this life.

That is all I can ask of myself, a spiritual journey full of questions and the courage to seek the answers. What I hope for you is the same, nothing more, and nothing less. If I can help you in any way, please let me know.

See you in Church, Rev. Lillie

Interfaith Discussion Group to Meet Monthly at UNMC

By Eric Stetson

The Council of Wisdom of Greater Washington is an interfaith meeting group for inspiration, discussion, social fellowship and networking for broad-minded people in the Washington D.C. area. This group held its first meeting at Universalist National Memorial Church on Saturday, April 25, and will continue to meet monthly in the church parlor. The main purpose of the Council of Wisdom is to create a forum where people can talk about culture, current events and issues, and ways to make a difference, in the context of a spiritually progressive, inspirational atmosphere. The group will be limited to a size of 20 people or less, so that the meetings will remain informal and enable maximum participation by those who attend. Meetings have three parts:

1. Inspiration. Anyone may recite a passage from a scriptural text or any uplifting work of literature, a poem, a quotation by a great person, or something they themselves have written. People may also say prayers and affirmations, sing, or play musical instruments.

2. Discussion. Anyone may share anything they wish to discuss, such as talking about books, films, art, music, important issues and news, and organizations and causes they support. A moderator keeps order and allows everyone to participate in the discussions.

3. Social. The group eats a meal together and enjoys casual conversation. People may leave whenever they wish.

The Council of Wisdom of Greater Washington invites members and friends of UNMC to attend our meetings. If you think you may be interested, please contact Eric Stetson at info@councilofwisdom.org and he will make sure you receive information about the meeting time each month. We also invite you to check out the Council of Wisdom organization that our local group is associated with, which has an online discussion forum and aims to build an international, interfaith network of people sharing ideas for how to make the world a better place. Visit www.councilofwisdom.org. Two UNMC members, Eric Stetson and Elisarena Kimolo, serve on the board of directors of this new organization.

Leland Place Volunteers

On April 18th a group of volunteers from UNMC came together to make a sumptuous meal for the men of Leland Place. The group prepared a Ham Casserole, a Vegetarian Casserole, and a spring salad. The meal was topped off with a chocolate pudding pie.

The meal was enjoyed by about 15 men (two of whom stopped by the Church on Sunday!)

The lead planner and organizer was Catherine Bocksor who was assisted by Angela Khaminwa. Fellow chefs were Bill Baker, Marti Martinson, and first time Leland volunteer - Sankar Sitaraman.

UNMC cooks for Leland every month on the third Saturday. Please join us **May 16** for an opportunity to prepare and share a meal with others.

JOINING UNMC

Our path to membership is a series of three events on a regularly scheduled, cyclical basis throughout the church year. Each is scheduled for 90 minutes, which should allow some time for fellowship. We invite and encourage all who are interested to attend, ideally—but not necessarily—in order.

On Sunday, May 3, at 12:30 p.m., there will be a session on **Get to Know UNMC** at the church. This event provides newcomers, guests, and interested others useful information about Unitarian Universalist history and the history of UNMC. We open with a welcoming in-gathering, after which participants watch an interesting video outlining UU history. Then a member shares some of UNMC's unique history. Next, participants discuss "What Unitarian Universalism Means—or Could Mean—to Me." We close with a short ritual and prayer.

News from the Pews!

Annie Mosher, Sue and Robert's daughter, will graduate May 17 from the College of William and Mary with a B.A. -- a double major in Russian Studies and Medieval/Renaissance Studies. She is engaged to marry 2nd Lt. Eric Muirhead of Searcy, AR, in December in the college chapel.

Sue Mosher will graduate May 24 from Pacifica Graduate Institute with an M.A. in Engaged Humanities with Emphasis in Depth Psychology (a mouthful, I know!). Annie and her husband, Robert, are traveling with Sue to California for graduation.

Michael Relland, our intern minister, will graduate from Wesley Theological Seminary on May 11. Ceremonies will be held at the National Cathedral.

He joined his first UU church in the small college town of Denton, TX, where he attended the University of North Texas as a music and philosophy major. He was immediately recruited as the lead (and only) teacher of that church's Religious Education program--a Board position! His next college took him out of Texas to nearby Annapolis, where he enjoyed a semester of Great Books classes at St. John's College.

Michael returned to Texas to marry. While substitute teaching, he met a professor from Loyola University in New Orleans, who offered him a scholarship to attend as a Music Education Graduate Fellow. After three years in the Crescent City, he returned to Texas to teach in the Dallas Public Housing schools. He and his wife had two children when they moved to DC soon after, following his wife Susan's career in health policy. They joined the UU Church of Silver Spring, where they were very active until their divorce a few years ago.

After teaching for a few more years, Michael began taking classes at Wesley Seminary and was accepted to the UUA as a Candidate for Ministry. This is his fifth and final year of seminary, having logged the required ninety graduate credit hours required!

While he has enjoyed his time as a minister-in-training, he has recently returned to performing as a musician, one of his earliest interests. As part of his continuing training, Michael is looking for internships in the next few years in hospitals, schools and churches in our area.

Our Condolences to Jeff Kellum

Judith Ann Kellum Sweigart, Jeff's sister died unexpectedly on Tuesday afternoon April 21 in Pennsylvania. The services were held on April 24.

Jennifer Sandberg and **Sue Mosher** attended a lecture and workshop by theologian J. Philip Newell, former warden of the abbey of Iona in Scotland and author of *Christ of the Celts* and many other books on Celtic spirituality. From ideas about oneness and interconnectedness generated by ecology and the new physics, Newell derives an attitude toward salvation that we might recognize as rather Universalist: He says that once we understand how all our lives are interwoven, the concept of individual salvation becomes meaningless, for no individual can be healed until we are all healed and the earth is healed as well.

Jorn Dakin and **Sue Mosher** attended Ilya Sinaisky's doctoral recital April 23, which featured Prokofiev's Sonata for Violoncello and Piano (Op. 119) and Sonata for Violin and Piano (Op. 80). Ilya is working toward a Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a concentration in collaborative piano.

Check out the beautiful roses in the side yard

Last spring Mike Dillon ordered the bushes from Minnesota, prepared the ground, and planted them. They are Harrison's yellow roses, also known in some places, as the Yellow Rose of Texas. A true American old rose, it was discovered on a farm on Manhattan in 1837 (before the island was taken over completely by the city of New York). So popular was this sunny flower that pioneer women routinely took cuttings to carry with them across the wilderness to their new homes in the west. In fact, it would almost be possible to follow the progress of the pioneer trail by observing the plantings of Harrison's Yellow across the country!

This rose only blooms once a season (for several weeks) and is a good demonstration of the beautiful show that a one time bloomer gives compared to a repeat blooming rose.

UU Christian Fellowship Revival 2012

To be held at **Universalist National Memorial Church, Washington, D.C., March 22-25, 2012**

For more information on UUCF, see the website at <http://www.uuchristian.org>.

Musical Notes

I had the pleasure of knowing a great man. His name was R. Deane Shure. Dr. Shure (1885-1980) was a noted composer, organist and music educator in the Washington area for years. Shure obtained his B.M. degree from Oberlin College, and later held academic posts at the Central University of Iowa (1907-09), Clarendon Texas College (1909-19), Pennsylvania State Teachers College (1919-21) and at the American University (1921-25) in Washington, DC.

Formerly a resident of Takoma Park, MD, Dr. Shure's compositions include three symphonies, seventy-five choral anthems, and several works for organ and for piano. His musical output was prolific and he was a long time member of ASCAP. I had the pleasure to talk to Dr. Shure when he was the music director emeritus of Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church where I sang for many years. He was a local celebrity in the sense of having a local Mozart or Gershwin.

One day while talking to the great man; he took me on a stroll down memory lane. We sat and talked for hours. He told me how he had started the MVP Church music programs and choir. He showed me proof of how at one time he had six choirs **and** a music school which was headquartered in the Mount Vernon Place (MVP) church. Dr. Shure started his church music program in 1921!

I asked him what was his greatest achievement and he said sharing his God-given talent. I also asked him about the lowest point of his life. He said that it was this first Sunday at MVP way back in 1921. He said that his first Sunday was both the greatest and the lowest point of his musical life.

One sunny morning in 1921 the music program was launched...after playing the organ, directing the choir, writing some of the music for the service, premiering the choir and being given loud accolades of appreciation from the congregation; what seemed to be a perfect day was suddenly shattered. Dr. Shure finished the postlude and joined the congregation in the Fellowship Hall for lunch. When he returned to clean up the choir loft and to practice; there was an envelope prominently displayed on the organ and addressed to him.

What could be in this envelope? A letter of congratulations? A gift of monetary appreciation? A love note? It was none of the aforementioned. It was an anonymous poison pen letter that simply said, "You are not wanted here...You will pack up and get out of town if you know what's good for you! Be on your guard."

With my eyes wide opened and my mouth agape; I asked him what happened next. He said he prayed for the person that wrote the note and that he was even more determined to stay. He said that the note came from someone that probably was afraid of change. Does this seem familiar? Remember those seven deadly words that have been responsible for the closing of many a church? "We have always done it **this** way."

Dr. Shure was "... more determined than ever." Although he never found out who wrote the note; he did manage to continue his work at Mount Vernon Place and to remain the director music for 49 years! Although most of his music is a forgotten memory; his prolific output of music can be still found in the R. Deane Shure Collection at the Library of Congress. His choral anthem, "One of God's Best Mornings" can still be heard today as it was recorded by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

As I approach my one year anniversary at UNMC I am reminded of a great man of whom I am humbled in awe of his great achievements and how from him learned to deal with criticism (anonymous and otherwise), change, and growth.

Blessings, Darryl

A Choral Feast...From Mozart to Gospel

Come and enjoy The UNMC Choir, soloists and guests in a distinguished choral program featuring many genres in the splendid acoustics of the Universalist National Memorial Church. Many are old favorites that have been missing from the choral performance repertoire for many years.

There will be several surprises as well as the Washington premiere of "Drums in My Heart" from the Broadway musical "Through The Years" This was a lost 1932 Broadway production written by Vincent Youmans.

Lunch will be hosted by *Jambo Africa Child Hope* at 12:30 followed by the concert at 2 P.M. Why not join us at our 11 A.M. Worship Service and make it a perfect day?

Sharing Our Plate in May

The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL) is the only Washington, DC metro area service organization solely dedicated to supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. Founded in 1984, SMYAL is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.

Their mission is to promote and support self-confident, healthy, productive lives for LGBTQ youth ages 13-21 as they journey from adolescence into adulthood. To fulfill that mission, they concentrate their commitment and energy on five focus areas: (1) Life Skills & Leadership Development, (2) Counseling & Support, (3) Health & Wellness Education, (4) Safe Social Activities, and (5) Community Outreach and Education.



Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Board Members attending the UUCF Revival in Tulsa, March: left to right: Rev. Ron Robinson, Executive Director; Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, President; Rev. Kelly Murphy Mason, Vice President, former intern at UNMC and now a community minister in New York City; Rev. Felicia Urbanski, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada; Peg Bartel, Treasurer, from Alexandria, VA; Dean Drake, At-Large; Gil Guerrero, At-Large. Rev. Henley, attending the Revival was the photographer.



Perkins Hall, All Dressed Up for a Wedding Reception!