



Windmill

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

*To affirm and
promote the
inherent worth
and dignity of
every person*

May 1, 2011

... MVUC is a loving and inclusive community. Our mission is to encourage one another on our spiritual journeys and to work together to build the common good.

Taking Note . . .

by The Reverend Kate R. Walker



Here comes that word “spiritual” again. It popped up several times in the recent “Spiritual Conversations” held this winter, and again in the Committee on Ministry’s conversations held April 3 and 10. Many folks are hungry for spirituality. Others don’t know what it means, don’t particularly care any more, and have given up trying to figure it out.

I maintain that spirituality is an experience, not an intellectual construct. The experience is often noted as akin to transcending our bodies or ourselves, or perhaps feeling profoundly connected to nature and the universe. So talking about spirituality may be intriguing and valuable, but is not likely to lead to a spiritual experience.

I also insist that while we may randomly and unexpectedly have spiritual experiences, however rare and precious, they are not reliable. Thus, the surprise. My best and life-changing spiritual experience was one for which I looked, prepared, and worked. I knew I earned it, making it all the more valuable and powerful!

In our service and consumer-oriented culture we have unconscious expectations of being the passive recipients of life’s bounty. We seek spirituality expecting it to happen to us when we go to a worship service or walk in the woods or go sailing. This may happen, or may not. It’s

important that we be open and welcome it, but also prepare for it. That’s the clincher: spiritual experiences are best served up when we prepare, as in work at them.

How do we do that? Engage in a regular spiritual practice. You know the examples: meditation, prayer, contemplation, walking silently in the woods, on the beach, or sitting quietly in a chair. Yoga and singing also are time-honored methods of preparing our bodies. The season of Lent is all about practice and preparing for the biggest Christian celebration of the year, for their greatest spiritual experience.

For those who have given up on figuring out what spirituality is, I suggest one way I find useful. It’s a way that takes a lot of work and preparation, but many of you have a lot of experience at it. I can find spiritual connections in the process of making community. Examples are a conflict resolved in peace and good dialogue, or the end of a long project that many people worked hard on (think of how you felt at the end of the Holiday Shop!), or when we sing a beloved hymn together, voices strong and proud. It’s how we feel that builds the spiritual experience.

In Peace, Kate Walker

Rev. Kate R. Walker

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Program Highlights Mark Your Calendar!

Lunch with a Book

Sunday, May 15, 12:45 pm

Ruby Tuesdays

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Farm Field Trip

Sunday, May 15, 2:00 pm

See page 6

Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 15, 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Chapel/Commons

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Good Companions

Tuesday, May 17

Lunch 12:00 pm, Speakers 1:00 pm

Hollin Hall Dining Room

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Lifespan Spiritual Growth By Megan Henry, Director

Why Do We Have Multigenerational* Services?

At MVUC, we have a wonderful tradition of including all ages in the first portion of our worship each Sunday. After a Story for All Ages, the children and youth leave to attend their Religious Education classes. A few times each year we all worship together and we call these services “multigenerational” to call attention to the fact that these are “all-church” worship Sundays. This is a wonderful time when the many generations of our church community experience a sense of the sacred together. The following is a reprinted article from a UU website devoted to helping UU communities find effective ways of worshipping together.

We need multigenerational worship for the following reasons:

1. One of the most important aspects church shoppers are looking for are vital, creative, responsible and caring approaches to including children in the life of the church and helping to teach values and important lessons in memorable ways.
2. Families whose parents are busy (like most families in the UU demographic) are looking for ways to spend meaningful time with their children that will spur them to further sharing and conversation.
3. Multigenerational worship often provides one of the only avenues for interaction and integration between older and younger members of a community.
4. Multigenerational worship works phenomenally well at introducing / integrating new members into a congregation as well as providing ways for older, harder to get to know members to become more accessible and more part of the growing, changing social life of a community. It can also provide ways for a congregation to get to know board members in a more engaging, more social way.
5. It is one effective way to help younger members experience the liturgy of your congregation so that they know what UU liturgy is when they talk to their friends.
6. It gives the younger members an experience of seeing what adults do when they worship (something they are very curious about) and offers an example of

reverence and respect for worship which they can later emulate.

7. Helps provide opportunities for ministers and other program staff to interact with the younger members in a worshipful way.

8. Effective multigenerational worship is often one of the most common characteristics shared by our fastest growing churches.

9. Multigenerational Worship provides an opportunity for young and old alike to enjoy, together, one of the fundamental elements of all religions – storytelling.

10. Our mandate as religious educators calls us to create environments where our children have trusting relationships to the people around them - people of all ages.

11. Our movement strives to help younger members understand our UU values and articulate them – Learning, especially for the young, is more effective in experiential settings and through stories.

12. Being able to worship in the main worship room in the church – for the whole service - is often an important clue to our younger members as they figure out what our religion is about.

13. We need to be providing opportunities for the younger members to become familiar and understand our liturgy, values and norms within worship so that when they see other religious styles they will recognize the differences.

14. Multigenerational Worship can be fun, memorable and meaningful.

Reprinted from the website: <http://uuintergenerational.org>

**The original text used the word “intergenerational.” We use multigenerational here in its place to emphasize that we are discussing worship for all ages and all generations (multi) as opposed to worship for two generations (inter).*

Monthly Worship Theme

VISION

"Our children must never lose their zeal for building a better world." Mary McLeod Bethune

I love this quote for its reminder. We adults should always aspire to ensure the best education possible for our children. But I have to wonder how we adults build our own resistance to the undermining of our own zeal for a better world. If our own vision for a better world is beaten up by life's ravages, how do we pass on our aspirations to our children? Do we just let the schools inspire the kids when we give up?

Yet I also recognize that this quote is idealistic. The pragmatist may question the wisdom of encouraging our children to dream with zeal. Are we setting them up for a crushing disappointment?

What I have learned is that this world needs the visionaries to propel us forward, as well as the pragmatists who make the vision come true while the visionary continues to thrust forward. More on May 1.

Cheers, Kate Walker

Monthly Worship Services

Sunday, May 1, "I Can See Clearly Now" ***the Rev. Kate R. Walker***

The theme of the month for May is Vision. What does it take to see beyond the weeds and bushes into the broader horizon? How do we plan for the future while being present in the moment? What about all those obstacles? This morning we're welcoming our newest members to MVUC.

Sunday, May 8, "Can You Hear Me Now?" ***the Rev. Kate R. Walker*** ***and Kären Rasmussen***

On this Mother's Day we recognize that there is an art to listening. Moms know the art well. The rest of us have to learn the art through trial and many errors. We're having our annual Flower Communion ceremony. Please bring a flower to share with others.

Sunday, May 15, "Beyond Light Bulbs: Covenant and Collective Action" ***Matt Meyer***

An exciting service of rhythm and music with Matt Meyer, who has led hundreds of such services for UU congregations across the country. A resident of Boston, he is a graduate of the Berklee College of Music and has studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America. He will offer a Drum Workshop in the afternoon.

Sunday, May 22, "Earth Elements" ***(All-Music Sunday)***

Annual All-Music Sunday featuring a brass ensemble of players from "The President's Own" U. S. Marine Corps Band and Baltimore mountain dulcimer player Christie Metzler along with our regular church choir, family choir, and church musicians. Come and lift your spirits at this multi-generational service for the entire family!

Starting with this Sunday, there will be one service at 10:00 am. This marks the beginning of our annual change to one service until September 11, when we return to two services.

Sunday, May 29, "The Man in the Water" ***Intern Minister Kären Rasmussen***

As we pause to remember those who have served our country this Memorial Day weekend, we take time to think about heroism—the ordinary heroism of those in uniform and the extraordinary heroism of civilians in times of crisis. Come and learn about "The Man in the Water," the anonymous hero of the 1982 Air Florida crash into the Potomac. As we hear the story, let us honor all the heroes in our own lives. (The title of this sermon is from a *Time* magazine article by Roger Rosenblatt).

Question Box Sunday Leftovers

From August 8, 2010

Q. How do you keep from despairing given all the tragedy, war and hate in the world? What sustains you and gives you hope?

A. Okay, there was a sub note on this question about me being loved at MVUC. I offer this because that's part of my answer ... words like that keep me going! I consciously choose to acknowledge the pain and suffering in this world, but to not

contribute to it with my own pain and suffering. I think when we respond with compassion and action to eradicate tragedy, we also help alleviate hate and fear which lead to war. In other words, I choose to not become part of the problem. I sustain this by taking care of myself with regular exercise, good diet and sleep! This isn't a blah, blah, blah about self-care; I know I can't stay out of the reach of despair if I'm tired and cranky.

Q. The cover of Time magazine this week shows a beautiful Afghan girl with her nose cut off. The caption underneath - "What Happens When We Leave?" Your thoughts on this: It's taken 9 years for us to understand that we can't change anything there. Shouldn't we just get out now before losing any more American lives?

A. I'm grateful that you think me worthy of such a challenging question that is full of international and national implications that are, frankly, beyond my scope of general knowledge. I probably would have answered this differently before the last four months of revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa.

I offer one of my guiding life principles: Never underestimate the power of cause and effect. The presence of the U.S. in Afghanistan has had powerful effects, and will for generations. There have been many changes due to our presence. However, we'll never fully grasp what the impacts of those changes have been or will be. Do we pull out leaving the Afghan people in order to save American lives? That's a really challenging question that places value on human lives based on circumstance of birth. I do not have a lot of information (particularly around Pakistan's involvement), nor does most of the general public. So, I have to trust our elected leaders, as best I can. Having given my long answer, my short answer is: I do believe we need to slowly pull out our troops, leaving behind the best skills and tools we have to offer.

Q. Are men hard-wired to go to war?

A. I believe the recent studies are saying yes, but so are women.

Follow up: Multigenerational Conversation

I invite you, those younger than I, and older than I (I'm pretty much at the midway point), to join me for an informal conversation about our church's present and future needs through the lens of generational needs and desires.

What: Multigenerational Conversation with a Potluck Barbecue

When: Saturday, June 4, noon-3:00 pm

Where: MVUC, Commons and Patio

In the meantime, I also invite you to take some time to read up. I'm currently reading *Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation* by the Rev. Carol Howard Merritt, and *Big Questions: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*, by Sharon Daloz Parks. There's lots more out there. Dig in.

Unitarian Universalist History

May 5, 1819: In Baltimore MD, William Ellery Channing preached the sermon "Unitarian Christianity," known as the Baltimore Sermon. It was one of the most influential sermons ever preached in America, changing the landscape for religious liberals, and helping lead to the establishment of the American Unitarian Association in 1825.

May 26, 1825: The American Unitarian Association was officially formed at the Ministerial Conference in Berry Street, held at Federal Street Church in Boston. The conference adopted a constitution "to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity."

May 26, 1825: The British and Foreign Unitarian Association formed in London.

May 15, 1961: The American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged to form the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston, MA.

On and Off the Hill

GOOD COMPANIONS

Hollin Hall Dining Room

Elaine Bronez assisted by Eleanor & Al Erickson

12:00 to 1:00-BYO LUNCH, 1:00 to 2:00 - SPEAKER

**Tuesday May 17, 2011, Mike Walker:
“Grand Opera at the Crossroads”**

\$300 TICKETS? Plus Parking? Public support for the Arts has been declining as people feel economic pressures throughout the country. Join Mike Walker for an informative discussion on developments in the local opera scene. Hear about the merger of the Washington National Opera with the Kennedy Center - developments in Baltimore -- the departure of Placido Domingo after 10 years. Walker, president of the Washington Opera's Supernumerary Guild, will share the inside story. Mike has appeared in more than 45 operas at the Kennedy Center with the Washington National and Kirov Operas in productions ranging from *Turandot* and *Madame Butterfly* to *Die Fledermaus* and *Tosca*.

Mike has been a member of MVUC for 25 years and served as a member of the Board of Trustees for a total of 7 years. He is the Director of the National Enforcement Training Institute at the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Wednesday Fellowship

The Wednesday Fellowship is taking a break until October 2011. A team is re-evaluating the format of the fellowship, and the human resources available to keep it going. Most importantly, we need a lead person for it and more volunteers to help. If you like the fellowship and would like to see it come back, please get involved. Contact Georgia Pourchot, gpourchot@yahoo.com, 703-721-0595.

Lunch with a Book

May's Lunch with a Book will be held May 15 at 12:45 pm at Ruby Tuesday in Hybla Valley. May's selection will be *One Thousand Women*, The Journals of May Dodd by Jim Fergus.

The book is based on a request by a Cheyenne Chief in 1854 for 1,000 white women to be exchanged for horses in order to help assimilate the Indians into white society. While the request was denied, the

author creates a fictional account to answer the question: What if this actually happened?

All are invited. For more information contact Louise Werner-Rhoades at louron13@cox.net or 703-619-1369.

MVUC Delegates Await June General Assembly

General Assembly (GA) 2011—June 22-26 in Charlotte, NC—will mark the 50th anniversary of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. The MVUC Board has appointed Bill and Meg Clontz, Sandy Peterson, Eric and Georgia Pourchot, Dick Schaffer and Karen Tyson as delegates. The tentative agenda is on the UUA website. Issues include allowing remote voting at GA and approving a Statement of Conscience on Ethical Eating. The MVUC Board does not instruct the delegates how to vote, but delegates welcome input from MVUC members. Contact Karen Tyson, karen@thetysons.org or any of the other delegates.

—Karen Tyson

Farm Field Trip

On May 15, beginning at 2:00 pm, the Green Sanctuary Ethical Eating group is organizing a field trip to a vegetable and animal farm in Maryland. We will tour the farm, see how animals are raised, how vegetables are grown, ask the farmers questions about organic and sustainable farming, and enjoy a communal meal. Please bring a dish to share, and the farmers will provide beverages. Contact Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson if you want to participate, bill@alsjohn.com.

Thank you from George Churchill

Dear MVUC Friends, Thank you all for your cards, calls, visits, gifts and wishes for my recovery from the health problem that I incurred in December. I am happy to report that progress, albeit slow, continues, and I look forward to seeing you soon at church. Your support and caring during my illness have been buoys to my soul and I am grateful for your friendship. I wanted to thank each of you individually, but that would take several years and I might miss someone. This note seemed the best way to let you all know how much I appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely, George Churchill



Social Justice Programs at the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
Love is the teaching of this church, and service is its prayer.

Easy Green

I remember people talking to me about “the Depression mentality” when everyone saved and reused whatever they could and saved because life might not always be as generous to them sometime. I think now, that if we could all live more that way, we might not “use up” our planet’s resources so fast, and might give ourselves a little time to turn things around.

A friend recently gave me an article about “remember when.” We returned our milk, Coke and beer bottles to the store to be used again. We walked to the store, grouped errands, walked up stairs. We washed baby’s diapers. Kids wore hand-me-down clothes. We had one TV. We mailed fragile items packaged with newspaper to cushion them. We drank from water fountains. We only changed the blade in our razor. We didn’t need a computer to find the nearest pizza shop.

That life sounds just fine to me if we can slow down climate change doing these or other things that help us keep our earth a place we want to live!

Just a thought ~ Wendy Burns

Capital Pride Parade

Mark your calendars and come to the Capital Pride Parade, on June 11, 2011, at 6:00 pm. This is the annual celebration of the LGBT community in the nation’s capital. The Capital Pride offers a diverse programming line-up each year to celebrate the heritage and lives of the LGBT community and its allies. Over fifteen UU churches in the Northern Capital Region are attending, including JPD and UUSJ representation. We will carpool. If interested, contact Georgia Pourchot, gpourchot@yahoo.com, 703-721-0595.

Partner Church News

Thank you to everyone who attended the Partner Church service and dinner. We raised \$1,600 at the dinner, and thanks to your participation we reached a new record. I also appreciate everyone who contributed to the Partner Church special collection, which supports the work of partnership in Transylvania and India. If you missed the special collection, and want to make a contribution, you can send a check to the church office or leave it in the Partner Church mailbox and make sure to put "Partner Church" in the memo line.

We will have 11 travelers from MVUC on our pilgrimage to Transylvania in July. We will spend four days in Szentháromság, our partner church village, and will also visit a number of sites of historic and Unitarian significance. I hope the travelers will share their stories and experiences with you upon their return.

If you are a scholarship sponsor, and would like to send a small gift and/or letter to your student, please let me know.

Please save these dates for the summer Partner Church brunches: June 5, July 10 and August 14.

Lisa Gillispie

May Youth Birthdays

- 1 Halle Slone
- 3 Anjum Choudhury
- 4 Kira Pierce
- 4 Reese Haggerty
- 10 Alexander Johnson
- 10 Kenneth Johnson
- 11 Parker Collins
- 21 Harus Hokaj
- 22 Marselina Griggs
- 23 Sarah Jesup
- 27 Alex Venzke
- 30 Benn Mellinger
- 30 Dylan Mellinger
- 30 Malana Hokaj

Musical Notes from Mark Zimmerman, Director of Music



Hello Friends,

Much to share with you for this wonderful month! We have 32 new gray hymnals due to gracious gifts by members. I'd like to thank Alan Bunner, Sonja Bloom, and Annie Montanari for their splendid work on this project. We have 65 new teal hymnals on the racks now, along with large print and Braille versions. These were donated by the very kind Susan B. Anthony Fund. A song of joy for all folks on this Hill!

Choir at Paul Spring Retirement Center: The MVUC Choir will be singing on Tuesday, May 10 at 7:00 pm in the Dining Room at Paul Spring. Spread the word!

Matt Meyer leads Morning Worship and an afternoon Drum Workshop on Sunday, May 15. Matt has led hundreds of services for UU congregations across the country. He lives in Boston, where he plays with several world music groups. His subject for worship on May 15 is "Beyond Light Bulbs: Covenant and Collective Action." Join us for a service of rhythm, music, covenantal community and collective action.

"Drumming and Spirituality" Workshop Sunday, May 15 at 2:00 pm. (Plenty of time before congregational dinner that evening). Matt's workshop is a chance for people of all skill levels to participate in hands-on rhythm making. We will experience the spirituality of community music-making through different activities, stories, games and discussions as well as look at how rhythm and music intersect with Unitarian Universalist values. Bring your instrument or use one of ours. Suggested donation is \$10 for adults. Another great opportunity to invite guests to MVUC!

Family Choir: Tuesdays In May at 6:30 pm
I'm offering a new singing group. Family Choir is a chance for fun—parents and children, grandchildren and grandparents, siblings, parent/child, office

mates – you get the idea. You decide your definition of family! Absolutely easy music, light rehearsals, and a chance to sing late May and early June. Tuesdays in May, at 6:30 pm in the Chapel.

"MVUC PRESENTS!" Coffeehouse on Sunday, June 5 at 6:00 pm. Two years ago I met a young, talented college student who founded and conducts the Student Symphonic Orchestra of Fairfax.

<http://www.studentsymphonicorchestra.com/>
Matthew Martz's group has grown to nearly 50 students and has a jam-packed performance schedule. I'm so happy to announce they will be playing here at MVUC for a Coffeehouse on Sunday, June 5 at 6:00 pm. We don't often host symphonic groups here, so I urge you to attend and bring young listeners with you! Suggested donation for adults is \$8. Students and children are free. Light refreshments will be on sale. This is a joint project of MVUC Music and Social Justice groups.

I'm so pleased to announce that Yee Von Ng will once again serve as our Summer Music Associate for July and August. I know you can look forward to wonderful music in Sunday worship this summer! She is a treasured member of our MVUC staff and family.

Finally, I'll be away following All-Music Sunday to attend a four-week training class in Dallas, Texas. Will sure be thinking of each of you while I'm away!

—Mark

Note from Minister Kate Walker: Music Director Mark Zimmerman, who was laid off his position as a flight attendant by TWA after 2001, will attend a four-week training this June. He has told me and the Board that when he has completed the training, he will have an opportunity to consider several options for possible reinstatement with American Airlines, who bought the TWA contracts. A decision about his future with MVUC will be made at that time.

Church Life

From Your Intern, Kären Rasmussen It Takes a Village

You might have heard in my sermon recently that on 16 June 2006, I released my heart to the call to ministry. I can still show you the spot on 495 outside of Bethesda where it happened. I always smile and put my hand over my heart when I drive through it. Now five years later, here I am....accepted into preliminary fellowship as a Unitarian Universalist minister.

No person is an island and I'm no exception. I am a composite of the person I was when I was born as well as being a person who has been formed by all fifty-four years of life experiences. Some experiences have been wonderful and exciting along with the bumps and bruises we all suffer.

How lucky am I that Mount Vernon was ready for an intern just when I needed it most! These past nine months have flown by and I am so enriched by your warmth, commitment and humor. I have stretched myself and tried new things and I have enjoyed every moment of my time here. It has seemed like the most natural thing in the world to be a part of your loving community.

A special thank you to Kate. Her generous gift of time and mentoring was invaluable. You have a wonderful minister! I thank Meagan and Mark and all the staff for helping me to feel so welcome and included. I'm grateful to my intern committee of Kris Rosenthal, Sandy Peterson, Nancy Barkume and Wendy Burns for their help preparing for the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. And thank you to Joan Darrah who took all the time and energy to research and write the request for the grant to help bring me here. My heart is full of gratitude to you all!

I carry all my experiences here at MVUC with me as I travel the path in ministry. It takes a village to raise a minister and you will always be a part of me. In faith, Kären

MVUC Annual Meeting

Please join us on Sunday, May 15, 2011 for the MVUC annual meeting. The event will start at 5:00 pm, with a potluck supper and member recognition from 5:30-6:30 pm. The business meeting will be held from 6:30-8:00 pm. While everyone is invited to attend, only members may vote. Proxies will be permitted but absentee ballots will not. All members should have received detailed information about the agenda by now. If you have not, please contact the church office or go to the MVUC Website.

Congratulations, Kären!

On April 1, our Ministerial Intern Kären Rasmussen was awarded preliminary fellowship at the highest level, by the UUA. This is a huge accomplishment, with years of effort, study, and development in many areas going into the process. We are really pleased for you, Kären!

Our remaining time with her is short! After contributing to our community with Worship, Children's RE, Adult RE, Membership Development and in other ways, we have to say good-bye at the end of May.

On May 29, after she leads a final worship service with us, we will have cake and goodbyes after our one 10:00 am service. If you will be away, please take the time to let Kären know a time you enjoyed her company or efforts before then.

Thank you, Kären, for being such a vital part of MVUC this year! We will miss you!

From The Program Council

Bill Clontz, Communications Council Chair

The Program Council (PC) welcomes the newest organization into the Program Council – the Membership Development Council, a new, more holistic and effective way to address membership, including matching volunteers with tasks, helping new members get connected to the congregation, and membership retention. It's a great group – and they welcome volunteers.

(Continued on page 10)

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The PC is the coordinator for formerly scattered activities. Committee budgets are forwarded through the PC, charter updates are approved by the PC, and the PC is working to improve leader preparation and recruitment, so it's easier and more fun to serve on the Hill.

Some activities take a surprising amount of lead time. For example, we are already planning for the Ingathering Picnic in September and the next Holiday Shop in November.

If you have questions or ideas, the PC is a good start. Check out the PC on the web (www.mvuc.org), use our church directory contact data, or just check out our pictures on the wall in the Commons and find us in the crowd. We're eager to hear your suggestions or help you connect with a volunteer opportunity.

They Came from Far and Wide!

The always fun and informative MVUC Leadership Seminar graduated another six great leaders in April (see photo), and this time we were delighted to have two visitors come all the way from the **Winchester UU** Church in Winchester, MA join us. They had heard about our course and came down to check it out; we had a great time meeting and trading ideas with **Deb Seymour** and **Chris Degnen**. As usual with the seminar, a great time was had by all, learning from each other. The seminar began on Friday night with a team



dinner, and concluded on Saturday with a rousing graduation ceremony. In between those two events, we shared and learned about leaders in service, effective meetings, dealing with each other, how MVUC is organized and financed, and a host of other subjects. Most importantly, we had a great couple of days of fellowship, team building, and learning. Seventy-five of us have

taken this course; if you are interested in attending the next iteration, just contact **Tamara de la Camp, Bill Clontz, Lincoln Cobb, Ron Brandt, Joan Darrah** or **Georgeta Pourchot**.

MVUC Endowment Fund Is Seeking Legacy Bequests To Reach \$1,000,000 Goal

The MVUC Endowment Fund, established in 1987, helps secure, strengthen, and extend the long-term survival and mission of MVUC and Unitarian Universalism and ensures that what we love about MVUC will be here for generations to come. Through the generosity of many of our Members and Friends over the years, as well as investment income, the MVUC Endowment now has more than \$750,000 in liquid assets. Once we reach our \$1,000,000 goal, the Board of Trustees can use Endowment Fund investment income (interest, dividends, etc.) to promote the *UU Seven Principles* and the church's vision, mission.

Would You Like To Contribute to the Endowment Fund by Leaving a Legacy or Making a Direct Contribution?

There are a number of ways that Members and Friends can contribute to securing the financial future of MVUC through the Endowment Fund:

- Bequests in your will or trust
- Direct gifts, e.g., gifts in memory of a person or a special occasion
- Appreciated stock or other securities
- Life insurance policies
- Beneficiary designation for your retirement plan benefits

To contribute, talk to a member of the committee—**Rob Dickinson, Lauck Walton, Bill Burns, Oma Cox, Nancy Fox, or Bill Means**—or your financial planner.

From Our Board of Trustees

Joan Darrah, Chair



It is hard to believe that the Annual Meeting is almost here—Sunday, May 15, 2011. All members should have received detailed information about the agenda by now. If you have not, please contact the church office or go to our Website.

Among the highlights will be a vote on the slate of highly qualified church members to fill positions on the Board, the Program Council and the Nominating Committee. We will also have a short presentation about our building renovation project and ask for a **non-binding** straw vote (by show of hands) to see if members prefer to conserve all of our remaining capital improvement funds (about \$450,000) until we can launch the major project envisioned during the capital campaign or to proceed with smaller-scale projects.

Finally, we will vote on a proposal to amend the By-laws to add an annual contribution of record as a requirement of church membership. This requirement does not have a minimum amount and could be waived by the Minister or the Board Chair for anyone in a hardship situation. The entire Board and the Program Council strongly support this proposal. The Rev. A. Powell Davies correctly observed that most votes of membership have something to do with money.

Thus it only seems logical that those who are deciding how to spend MVUC's money should be making a financial contribution to MVUC. Having a contribution of record will also facilitate the process of maintaining an accurate membership list.

Speaking of finances, our spring Stewardship Campaign is in its final phase. Thank you to those of you who have already made your fiscal year 2012 commitment and an extra thank you to those of who were able to match or exceed your

revisit campaign amount. So far, the results are not as positive as we had hoped, but the leadership remains optimistic that those who have not yet responded will do so shortly.

Other items of note: most of you have probably seen the official advisory issued in early April by Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli that stated. "It is my opinion that carrying a weapon for personal protection constitutes a good and sufficient reason under the statute to carry a weapon into a place of worship while a meeting for religious purposes is being held there. It is further my opinion that places of worship can restrict or ban firearms from their premises." In response to this opinion, at the April 12, 2011 Board meeting the Board unanimously supported the creation of a policy for MVUC that states "Firearms are not permitted on MVUC property at any time."

Finally, in April, I had an opportunity to attend the MVUC leadership seminar again. I had forgotten what a great course this is. In fact, it has such a good reputation that two people from the Winchester Unitarian Society in Massachusetts attended to learn how to set up a similar course. It is a wonderful way to gain a better understanding of how things work at MVUC and to spend some quality time with other MVUC members. I extend a huge thank you to Ron Brandt, Bill Clontz, Tamara de la Camp, Lincoln Cobb, and Georgia Pourchot for making this seminar so worthwhile, thought provoking, and fun.

With love, respect and appreciation, Joan

Sermons for Your Re-Hearing

Each Sunday's service is recorded and available within a few days on the MVUC web site (www.mvuc.org - worship/sermons) The services are also available on CD; if you would like a copy, please speak with **Raleigh Romine**.

A Month of Sundays

Two services at 9:15 am and 11:15 am unless otherwise noted



Sunday, May 1
"I Can See Clearly Now"
the Rev. Kate R. Walker

Sunday, May 8
"Can You Hear Me Now?"
the Rev. Kate R. Walker and
Kären Rasmussen

Sunday, May 15
"Beyond Light Bulbs: Covenant and Collective Action"
Matt Meyer

Sunday, May 22
"Earth Elements"
(All-Music Sunday)
Starting this Sunday, there will be one service at 10:00 am.

Sunday, May 29
"The Man in the Water"
Intern Minister Kären Rasmussen
One service at 10:00 am.

See Page 4 for Sermon Descriptions

**Mount Vernon
Unitarian Church**
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Caring Associates

Contact information for the Caring Associate for the week and Caring Associate Coordinator (CAC) can be found each week in the Order of Service and in the Member Services area of the church website. As always, MVUC staff is willing to assist you during normal business hours. Please direct any questions or concerns to Betsy Stephens betsys@cox.net.

Our best wishes go to the Coakley family due to Cathy's illness, to Rusty Claus due to her serious illness and to Chuck Reams who will have back surgery in mid-April.

Reminder to All MVUC Email Users

To receive emailed newsletters, weekly bulletins, and special notices, please notify Esther Dickinson if your email address changes, esthergertrude@verizon.net.

Thank you!