



Windmill

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

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church June 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



There you all were, standing up to be counted, literally. On Sunday night, May 15, members of MVUC stood up so each person could suggest a direction to the Board of Trustees. The BOT was wise enough to offer only three options, otherwise we'd still be in the chapel conducting our annual meeting.

The topic was the capital campaign which was intentionally stalled five years ago. The BOT needed to know the general direction they should be moving to get it back up and running. Option one: Continue investigating the possibility of starting renovations in the main building using the funds already collected, and then kicking off a new capital campaign. Option two: Focus on starting a new capital campaign in the next two to three years using the funds collected as seed money, which means doing all the construction at once in about 4-5 years. Option three: Lack enough information to decide.

Unfortunately, in order to get information, money needs to be spent, which is what led the BOT to ask the question about which direction they should be moving. Those present said, having stood up to be counted, look at the shorter term projects first, then we'll look at a new capital campaign. No voting took place, because there wasn't a formal motion. Just a general sense of where to put time and energy. Limited funds will be spent to answer some questions (at the BOT's discretion), but any significant expenses and decisions will be brought to the members for a formal vote.

Watching this process I was struck by the beauty of our principles being put into action. Our first principle,

inherent worth and dignity of each and every person, means everyone was treated with respect. Our second principle, justice, equity and compassion in human relations, meant both equality and compassion were in play when voting took place and when people made mistakes. Of course there is the obvious one that I started with, the fifth principle, right of conscience and the use of the democratic process. We each have the right to speak our mind, however, we do so within the constraints of the democratic process.

Some of you may have wondered why there wasn't more discussion and lobbying for a particular position. The board members engaged in lengthy discussions over two meetings about the process of this straw poll. They carefully weighed the UU principles that we try to live in our daily lives and came face to face with the reality that it is not easy to live our principles. Thus their discussion was at times energized and passionate.

The BOT chose to limit discussion because there is so little detailed information at this point. More importantly, it's premature and not helpful to start creating camps on which direction we should be moving. The goal for everyone is the mission and vision of Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church. Whatever process, and whatever decisions we make ultimately come from that over riding umbrella. The mission and vision, along with our UU principles are what maintain our healthy and vibrant religious community. I saw them all in action during our annual meeting!

In good faith, Kate Walker

Rev. Kate R. Walker

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~ ~ ~

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Program Highlights Mark Your Calendar!

Lunch with a Book

Sunday, June 12, 11:30 am

Ruby Tuesdays

See page 5

Summer Solstice: Drum, Dance, Sing, Celebrate!

Tuesday, June 21, 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Chapel

See page 3



Lifespan Spiritual Growth By Meagan Henry, Director

We're in the middle of a very exciting time of the year with our multi-generational RE service and High School Senior Recognition Ceremony on June 5th followed by our Coming Of Age worship and bridging service on June 12. June is also a fun month for the younger children in that they will have the opportunity to participate in a new Sunday morning program we've developed called Movement and Spirituality. Grades K-7 will experience different types of meditation, yogadance, kirtan chanting, & walking the labyrinth. What a great way to wrap up our Children & Youth Religious Education year! The summer fun program begins July 3 and promises to include many varieties of activities and stories.

I will be away during the month of July and some of August. I'm one of the lucky group who are going on the Partner Church trip to Romania. I've been once before and I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to go again. I plan to take many pictures and write about my experiences so that I can share them with anyone who's interested after I return. If I can figure out the technology, I will post pictures and anecdotes about our trip on facebook in real time.

~Meagan Henry, Director of Lifespan Spiritual Growth

June Children & Youth RE Schedule

Pre-Kindergarten

June 5 Attend the Multigenerational Service.

June 12 "Movement & Spirituality" RE class. Pre-Kers with a parent may attend.

June 19 & 26 "Movement & Spirituality" RE class. Pre-Kers with a parent may attend.

K-8th Grade

June 5 Attend the Multigenerational Service.

June 12 "Movement & Spirituality" RE class. Older youth attend the COA Service.

June 19 & 26 May attend "Movement & Spirituality" RE class.

YRUU

June 5 Attend the Multi-generational RE Service / Senior High Bridging Ceremony.

June 12 End of the Year YRUU Party! (Last class.)

Summer Solstice: Drum, Dance, Sing, Celebrate!

Tuesday, June 21, 7:30 - 9:00 pm in the Chapel

No experience is required: just bring your enthusiasm for music, movement and fellowship (or just a healthy curiosity!) Through music and movement we celebrate our connection to each other and to Mother Earth. Bring a drum if you like and comfortable clothing to allow for movement. Church drums will be available as well. Childcare provided for a small donation, please R.S.V.P. by June 14 if childcare is needed.

Monthly Worship Theme

The Theme of the Month runs from September to May and rotates every three years.
For 2011-2012 the themes are:

September: Hospitality
October: Creation/Creativity
November: Democracy
December: God
January: Freedom
February: Evil
March: Atonement/Redemption
April: Mercy
May: Peace

Cheers, Kate Walker

Monthly Worship Services

Sunday, June 5, "When Your Heart Is In A Holy Place," Meagan Henry and the Religious Education Council

Lifespan Religious education and spiritual growth doesn't only happen at church. Our spiritual growth is ongoing in all aspects of our life. We'll explore this theme through story, music, and movement in this Multi-generational worship.

Sunday, June 12, "I Matter," MVUC Coming of Age Group

Everything I do matters, even the smallest things. The good things I do matter, because if I treat others the way I want to be treated, I can make the world a better place. The bad things I do matter, because if I take responsibility for them and work to make things right, I can make the world a better place.

Sunday, June 19, "The Courage of Abraham" The Rev. Kate R. Walker

Four monologues reflect on a pivotal moment in the Hebrew scriptures when

Abraham was directed by God to sacrifice his son. Some parts are not appropriate for young ages, however religious education is available.

Question Box Sunday Leftovers

From August 8, 2010

Q. What one experience most renewed your soul during your break? And, what was the most important or transforming thing you learned?

A. These are easy to answer despite it being nine months since returning from my summer break. The most renewing experience was hiking in the foothills of the Colorado Rockies outside Boulder ... every morning for a week at 6:30! Most important/transforming thing I learned was the level of compassion and commitment to youth and young adults from the collection at General Assembly for the Katie Tyson fund, which brought in over \$23,000.

Q. All gods are invented. Do you agree?

A. Mine isn't.

June Youth Birthdays

2	Eleanor Hoeflich Rodgers
2	Zachary Sadler
4	Kiki McDonnell
4	Pablo Ibarz
6	Gavin Conway
7	Hazel Pierce
9	Scott Henrehan
13	William Larrabee
20	Caty Glidden
22	Michael Pourchot
25	Ian McNamara
27	Maya Focht
28	Nick White

On and Off the Hill

Brunch with a Book

Brunch With A Book will be meeting on Sunday June 12 at 11:30 am at Ruby Tuesdays in Hybla Valley The title of the book is The Lemon Tree by Sandy Tolan The book began as a National Public Radios Fresh Air Report and is subtitled an Arab, a Jew and the heart of the Middle east. For more information please contact Louise Werner-Rhoades at 703-619-1369 or louron13@cox.net.

Happy Anniversary!

Fifty years ago in April, Bev and Jim Southerland, and Golden and Ralph Slawson joined MVUC. Both couples had an active involvement in our church, for which we are deeply grateful. Bev served as church secretary for two ministers and organized volunteer receptionists; she also participated in the Holiday Shop.

Jim served as BOT chair and served as the parliamentarian for church annual meetings.

Golden was an early leader of the women's group. Ralph also served as BOT chair; he is an avid gardener and donates his homemade jellies to Holiday Shop. Both Golden and Ralph served on the Furnishing Committee, charged with picking out the furnishings for our new building. MVUC would not be the way it is today without you, THANK YOU!

Unitarian Universalist History

June 1, 1579 Francis David was brought to trial at Gyulafehervar, Transylvania. He had debated and published theology challenging if it was right to worship Christ. He was sentenced to prison until his death on Nov. 15, 1579.

June 3, 1870 Norbert Capek was born in Bohemia (Czechoslovakia). Raised Catholic he became a Baptist minister and then converted to Unitarianism and became a leader in the movement. During WWII he was murdered at Dachau for speaking out against the Nazi's. He is widely known for creating the Flower Communion, used in UU churches, and its message of beauty even in the worst of times.

June 5, 1902 A. Powell Davies was born in Birkenhead, England. He became a methodist minister and emigrated to the U.S. serving a church in Maine. He converted to Unitarianism in 1932 and eventually was called to All Souls Church (Unitarian) in Washington D.C. Rev. Davies had a significant influence on the growth of other Unitarian churches in the area including Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, established in 1955.

June 27, 1984 At General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, members passed a historic resolution affirming UU clergy in officiating at gay and lesbian services of union. UU churches and congregations were asked to support these unions.



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

Reflections on Diversity

The first meaning that usually pops into our minds when we hear the word “diversity” is “racial diversity.” UUs typically lament the lack of diversity in our churches, meaning the absence of a solid percentage of African American members in our denomination. The work done by the Spirituality in Diversity small group ministry in almost two years indicates that it may be time for MVUC to ask itself (again) what diversity means, whether it is important, or whether we should be doing something about it. This is the first in a series of articles that will summarize the reflections of our group on the topic.

Our group found that diversity had a much broader meaning than the traditional racial aspect. People with disabilities – visible and not so visible, people with different religious and political views, people with vastly different income levels or sexual orientation, or anybody who is ‘not like me’ are all diverse. The core values of UU principles exude diversity. We value the worth and dignity of every person, whether they’ve done jail time or are divorced; raised Christian, or atheist; speaking with a foreign accent or not. If we internalize and live our lives in keeping with the first principle, it follows that we will be welcoming of a diverse population to our hill. In fact, first time visitors to MVUC are a consistently diverse group of people. They come from all walks of life, cultural backgrounds, foreign countries, religious upbringings and spiritual practices. Some of them find a home in MVUC, others, usually the most racially and culturally diverse do not. This is typical of most UU churches in the country.

Social Justice Movie Series

Social Justice Movie Series, first Fridays, 7 pm, chapel: June 3rd, A Sea Change - Imagine a World Without Fish: Top scientists warn that a world without fish is not a far-fetched notion, in fact it is happening right now. The levels of acidification of ocean water is high and spreading. Watch this movie to understand what is happening, and how you can take action.

July 1st, Inlaws and Outlaws (2010): At the top of the film, you meet real people one on one. You don’t know who’s gay or straight or who’s with whom. As their stories unfold and stereotypes fall by the wayside, you won’t care because you’ll be rooting for everybody. With candor, good humor, great music and real heart, gets past all the rhetoric to embrace what we have in common: We love.

Capital Pride Parade

Capital Pride Parade and Festival, June 11-12: We join fifteen UU churches across the Greater Washington area, to walk in support of our extended LGBTQ community and embrace our diversity. Parade starts at 4 pm at Dupont Circle on Saturday June 11. The Festival is Sunday in the early afternoon, June 12 on the National Mall, and UUs have a unified booth. Contact Georgia Pourchot for details, 703-721-0595, gpourchot@yahoo.com.

Church Life

Minister's Summer schedule

Kate is attending General Assembly in Charlotte, NC June 21-25 and will be on study leave and vacation from June 25 - August 13. In case of emergency please contact church administrator Carol Graves or board chair Becky Brandt, who both can reach Kate.

Gathering of the Water

Everyone is invited to collect small samples of water during your travels this summer for our annual ingathering of the waters ceremony on Sunday, September 11.

Church Members Honored for Exemplary Service

Twelve members of the congregation were honored at the pot-luck dinner preceding the Annual Meeting on May 15. Just for fun, the awards, which were presented by Program Council members, were named especially for the honored individuals.

Lisa Gillispie – The Global Service Award

(presented by Tamara de la Camp)

Lisa Gillispie leads the Partner Church program at MVUC; maintains our longtime relationship with the Unitarian church in Szentháromság, Romania, and has established a second partner church relationship with a Unitarian church in Mawlat, India. She has visited both countries multiple times; hosted visiting clergy and others from our partner churches. She has led and orchestrated services educating MVUCers about UUs around the world; organized partner church dinners and brunches to fund partner church activities; and coordinated scholarship gifts by MVUC members and friends to students in both partner church congregations. She has organized several trips to Romania for groups of MVUCers, including an upcoming trip this summer. She was recognized last year by the UUA Partner Church Council.

Lisa has also been involved with the MVUC Religious Education program for years, most recently as a YRUU advisor. She serves on the Worship Arts and Music Committee. And she is currently the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, which is no small feat as she

actively participates in the meetings but also takes exemplary minutes.

Jim Potter - The Help! Save Us Again! Award

(presented by Bill Clontz)

Jim Potter has answered the call from this congregation more times and in more ways than most of us could count. Not long ago we faced a major challenge on this Hill with the sudden departure of our minister under truly difficult circumstances. What could have been a destructive and divisive moment for us became a time of coming together in a way we had not done before, in large measure as a result of Jim's steady hand as our Board Vice-Chair. Next, Jim served on the team that selected an interim minister to carry us through a transition period, and he then served as our Board Chair.

Over the last several years, Jim has chaired our Stewardship Committee through several successful campaigns that built our sense of community, reminded us this is *our* church and *we* need to take care of it, and helped put us on a sounder financial footing. And this little summary would be incomplete without mentioning Jim's role as Blood Drive Coordinator. So for all he has done and we know will do in the future, we recognize and thank our friend Jim Potter.

Birgit Robbert - The Mainsail Award

(presented by Ron Brandt)

It's really amazing to count up the many things Birgit Robbert has done and continues to do for MVUC. Before coming here, she and her husband Al were charter members of Accotink UU Church, where she organized the Religious Education program and later served as Board chair.

Here at MVUC, she recently completed a three-year term on our Board. With Al she has taught numerous offerings of the popular course for young people, "Our Whole Lives." As a member of the Property Committee, she planned for construction of a batch of new grass-covered parking spaces last year and recently helped Leah Choudhury arrange for repair of the roof of Hollin Hall. In the last few months she's been organizing volunteer Thursday morning work sessions to maintain the property. She is active in the Membership Council, for which she hosts Saturday morning "get acquainted" sessions for newcomers.

This last winter she chaired the search committee that hired our new Administrator, Carol Graves, and now she spends at least 10 hours each week as our volunteer church bookkeeper. While getting all this done, she is consistently charming and cheerful. You may know that Birgit is a boater, so we're calling her award the "Mainsail" award.

Jane Nelson - The Ministers, Money and Music Award
(presented by Kate Walker)

The only people who understand how much work goes into a ministerial search are the minister and members of the search committee who find the minister. As chair of the Ministerial Search Committee in 2007-08, Jane Nelson found out just how much work is involved. Reading dozens of minister profiles, doing phone interviews, devoting entire weekends to interviewing and listening to sermons are the highlights. The many, many hours of committee meetings lay the foundation for a smoothly running process and great outcome. To help prepare to represent Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, Jane served on the Board, taught Religious Education, and became so committed to the Partner Church program that she even went to India to visit our Partner church in the Khasi Hills. Currently she is Chair of the Committee on Ministry and Vice-Chair of the Stewardship Committee. To ensure that her spiritual needs are being met, she sings in the choir. This doctor knows how to diagnosis a church issue and what to prescribe.

Mike and Isabelle Arnold – The New Members and Then Some Award

(presented by Georgia Pourchot)

Mike Arnold is with a large design firm and works as a landscape architect. Isabelle also works as an architect, designing laboratories and clinics. With their four-year-old daughter Renee, Mike and Isabelle were encouraged by Isabelle's mother to look into the Unitarian faith. They liked the people here - the open mindedness and the diversity

In support of the Green Sanctuary committee, they started the Healthy Food for Healthy Families organic garden in 2010, only a few months after they joined. The organic produce is donated to low income families on Route 1. All three participated in the Green Fair in March 2011, recruiting and organizing volunteers to tend to this year's garden, and educating attendees

about composting. Mike has designed and built two new compost bins that are currently in use for leftovers from church functions. Mike has also been digitizing the old, faded blueprints of MVUC's buildings. Isabelle participated in Wendy Burn's recent Sunday night Ecology class, and the whole family helped assemble new picnic tables at the Workananny a few weeks ago.

Laurie Hayden, Esther Dickinson, Kandis Ulrich, and Betsy Yarrison – The Unseen Heroines

(presented by Ron Brandt)

In past years we often gave an "Unsung Heroes" award. This year we recognize a group of volunteers who faithfully do work that would ordinarily be done by staff. Laurie Hayden works in the church office every Tuesday helping maintain records and order supplies. Esther Dickinson and Kandis Ulrich prepare the Weekly Bulletin and the Friday email newsletter.

(presented by Kate Walker)

Every week Betsy Yarrison dedicates her skill as an editor and translator of musical terminology, as well as her years of liturgical experience and her significant patience, to ensuring that our order of service looks professional.

Lincoln Cobb & Kim Cullen Cobb – The Members into Leaders Award

Since their arrival at MVUC five years ago, Lincoln and Kim Cobb have helped provide visitors and potential new members with a positive experience on the hill. In addition to serving as chair of the Membership Development Committee for four years, Lincoln is an usher at Sunday services and just has a way of making people feel welcome and wanted as they come through our doors. Lincoln is also a member of the team that conducts Leadership Seminars.

Kim has been busy helping visitors to the hill feel welcome as well. She also acts as an usher, and served on the Program Council as Worship coordinator. Once Kim gets visitors involved with MVUC, she makes sure they have a place to stay involved. As chair of the Adult Activities committee, she facilitates adult activities that aren't small group ministries or adult spiritual growth.

Kim and Lincoln have a gift of not only welcoming visitors, but of turning those visitors into members and leaders within our community.

From Our Board of Trustees

Joan Darrah, Chair



We had an excellent Annual Dinner and Meeting on Sunday, May 15, 2011. Rev. Richard Speck, the Joseph Priestly District Executive Director, also attended the meeting. He complimented MVUC on our many great accomplishments this year. I am pleased to report that the following slate of new leaders was unanimously endorsed at the meeting: **Board of Trustees:** Polly A. Papp (2014), Eric Pourchot (2014), Dick Youngflesh, (2014) and Ben Roberts (Youth Member – 2012). **Program Council Coordinators:** Karen Tyson (Communications - 2013), Dianne Brown (Membership Development - 2013), Liz Bessel (Religious Education - 2013), and Anne Ulm (Sunday Services -2013). **Nominating Committee:** Tony Barkume (2013), David Napier (2013), and Carolyn Slenska (2013). All of these people are exceptionally well-qualified and they represent a great cross section of our Church – I am so glad that they have agreed to take on these important assignments.

The congregation voted to reauthorize two Social Justice task forces: Route 1 and Green Sanctuary. The Route 1 Task Force reaches out and supports community empowerment programs for the homeless and marginalized population on Route 1 (Richmond Highway). The Green Sanctuary Task Force provides environmental leadership, vision, and organizational support for MVUC.

The congregation voted to amend our 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. Having a contribution of record will make it easier for membership to better track the status of members and also give a little more emphasis to the reality that without our collective financial support, we can't have a church. Of note, there is a strong trend among UU churches to add a financial contribution as a membership

requirement and most all of our local area UU Churches also have a financial contribution requirement for membership.

We also had a short presentation and discussion about our building renovation project. In a non-binding straw poll, it was agreed that the subcommittees that have been formed to explore three “limited project” proposals should continue with their efforts to further refine these proposals. In the coming weeks and months, we will try to get the entire congregation involved in the discussion about possible next steps with our building renovation.

All in all, it was a great evening – the room was filled with lots of energy and love and respect and it was great that so many people were able to attend. I was so proud to have Rev. Speck see MVUC in action. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to help make the dinner and the meeting such a great success.

On July 1, my term as Board Chair will expire and Becky Brandt will take over as our new Chair. I thank you all for making this year such a success.

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

One service at 10:00 am unless otherwise noted



Sunday, June 5

"When Your Heart Is In A Holy Place"

Meagan Henry and the Religious Education Council

Sunday, June 12

"I Matter"

MVUC Coming of Age Group

Sunday, June 19

"The Courage of Abraham"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

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!