



What's with UUS

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling
A Welcoming Congregation
Sterling, Virginia



Minister's Message



Fasting – A Way to Slow Down

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

“When the stomach is full, it is easy to talk of fasting” – St.

Jerome

We Unitarian Universalist like to work. Many of us are “do-ers.” We put our values in action, we live our faith, our deeds, and our creeds. What happens when we pause and give a whole day to emptiness?

That is some of what UU Fast day is all about. And fasting is a part of our Unitarian and Universalist heritage. Begun by the Puritans, Fast Day became a state sponsored holiday in the 17th century and remained as much in New England throughout the 19th century.

Whereas the counterpoint holiday, Thanksgiving, is for praising the harvest and recognizing all that is good in the world, Fast Day is for slowing your life and pausing long enough to recognize what is amiss, what is problematic, what hurts.

In July of 2006 Rev. Fred Small of the First Church Unitarian in Littleton Mass., and others in Littleton fasted for three days to draw attention to global warming. Then in the Fall of 2006 the Rev. David Blanchard of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse, New York, fasted for 30 days as a way of expressing opposition to the war in Iraq. Many other Unitarian Universalists fast during Ramadan to show support for our Muslim brothers and sisters. And many in this

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President's Message



It is Spring! Bonnie Lepoff

How could I write about anything else? Daffodils and crocuses are sprouting from the ground. Red buds are budding and red

breasted robins are making appearances in my back yard. And it is possible to leave the house without a coat! I just love it! There is new energy everywhere you look.

Especially there is new energy at UUS. Our larger sanctuary with new paint and carpet and our new separate hospitality area are really nice. The space is so inviting, people are hanging around after services much longer. Rev Anya commented in amazement one Sunday last month that she was not the last person to be leaving!

Our Arts and Aesthetics group is also energized as they meet to discuss where to hang art work and how to make the best use of our space. (Including making sure we have a nice area for Nancy's retail corner.) You will see changes as we use our space and decide how we fit.

The following changes are coming soon. Our very nice coffee bar will be installed in our hospitality area; it will have cabinets underneath so napkins, sugar, and coffee cups won't have to be carried back to the kitchen each Sunday. Art work will be back on our sanctuary walls and children's art will be displayed in the hallway by the new nursery and in the RE area. And of course our new chairs! I will keep you posted on the status of their delivery.

Let me or Rev Anya know if you like what you see or if you have an idea for

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Worship Calendar

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

April Theme: Salvation

Writer Hermann Hesse remarks: “You know quite well, deep within you, that there is only a single magic, a single power, a single salvation...and that is called loving.” Salvation is a verb rather than a noun. It is not something we get, but something we do, when we offer, receive, uphold, revere, and pronounce love.

April 4th – “Hallelujah” - an Easter Service for rejoicing. Let's find reason to celebrate the many messages of liberation, hope, and salvation found in the Easter vision. Our service will be led by Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. We will hear music from the Messiah by the UUS Choir led by Kris Adams and accompanied by a special guest concert pianist! An inquirer's class will follow our service.

April 11th – “Salvation”: Is it hiding under a bush? Is it deep within your mind? Is it gliding on an arc out in the middle of an endless sea? Is it something we come to know after we give our last breaths on earth? Where is salvation and is it something we wish to know ourselves? Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael shares our service and Andy Johnston, Executive director of Loudoun Cares and Appalachian Singer brings his music.

SPECIAL SERVICE – Thursday April 15th – UU Fast Day Break-Fast Worship at 6PM with a Soup-Salad-Bread Potluck to Follow. UU Fast Day is A holiday with historical roots and modern significance. Historically, Fast Days are times to consider the struggles in your own life as well as the struggles that wrap about our globe. (More information in Rev. Anya's Article:

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(Minister, Continued from page 1)

congregation have fasted for one day in April, both last year and the year before.

We are building Fast Day into our traditional pattern of holidays and holy days at UUS. Some say that fasting brings them closer to God or what is of ultimate significance in their lives, others say that fasting helps them understand the plight of those who go without, and still others say that fasting helps them slow down long enough to feel the weight of this world, and the depth of their being.

We will fast again this year on Thursday April 15th. Some will choose to fast completely. Some will stay hydrated with water or tea. Some (especially children) will eat a modest amount of plain foods. Fasting can come in many forms. What matters is that you choose a form that fits your bodily needs while drawing you into a way of being that feels somewhat foreign.

We will gather at UUSterling to break our fast at 6PM for worship, followed by a Soup-Salad-Bread potluck, and a collection for Loudoun Interfaith Relief. All are encouraged to bring with them cans or cupboard items in the quantity that they would have eaten, had they not fasted.

All are welcome from within our congregation and beyond. If you have family members or friends who appreciate the spiritual exercise of fasting, please invite them to participate. Fasting does not belong to us; it is a means to connect more deeply with our world.

Please feel welcome to ask me any questions, or to RSVP.

Yours in Faith Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael (minister@uusterling.org)

(President, Continued from page 1)

something different. We are full of energy for new ideas.

Enjoy spring! Enjoy our new space. See you in church!

Bonnie Lepoff blepoff@cox.net

Roving Reporter

Sue Rose

What are your thoughts on Spring? (signs on its arriving; plans for spring break)!

Anna (9) I can't wait until a friend's birthday party at Benihana's and a sleep over afterwards!

Makayla (9) Flowers are blooming on our rosemary plant (herb garden)!

Grace (8) We're going to Florida for spring break to celebrate our grandfather's 70th birthday!

Molly S. (10) We're going to my Gramma's in New York State and my brother's coming of age celebration will be here at UUS!

Robert (7) and Katherine (5) We might be going to a museum in Washington, DC!

Natalie (13) As to signs of spring I've been noticing it's been raining a lot! I'm wondering if we'll have spring break after all because of all the snow days!

Shannon (11) I know spring's here because it's getting warmer! We're going to my aunt's beach house at Sanibel Island, Florida!

(Worship Calendar, Continued from page 1)

"Fasting, a Way to Slow Down."

April 18th – "Of the Earth" – A Green Sanctuary Service with members of our Green Sanctuary Task Force and Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. This service is fully intergenerational and will include drums, ritual, vision, and hope! All are invited to bring "Something of the Earth"... an item, such as a shell or rock, stick or flower, etc. Our choir will sing and we will find ways to celebrate Earth Day after our service!

April 25th – "Youth Service" – This annual service is a gift from our high-school youth group to our congregation. Come share in an unforgettable experience and witness the brilliance of our youth who intend to craft the whole service from beginning to end!

Building Dedication

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Saturday Evening May 22nd

Doors Open at 5:00

Ceremony of Dedication at 5:30

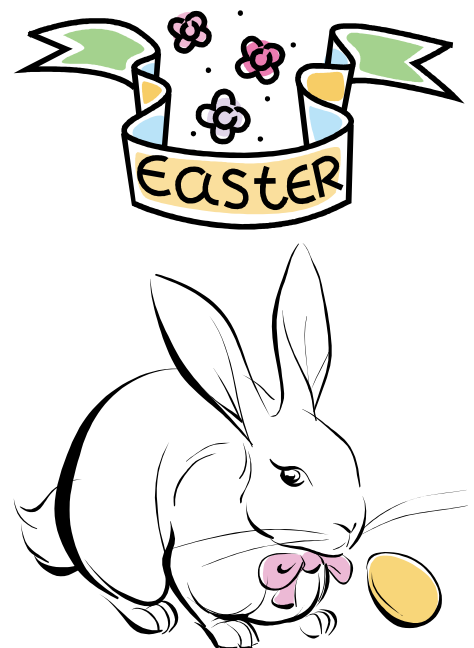
Dinner at 6:15 care of Chef Extrordinaire and Board Member, Dorine Scher.

"Broadway Night with the Stars" Musical Extravaganza to follow! Care of Music Director Kris Adams and her cast of celestial geniuses!

All are welcome! Let's celebrate our new space with our intergenerational community, our partners in the interfaith arena and distinguished guests from the wider association of Unitarian Universalism. We have made a bold step. We deserve a night of awe and appreciation.

Child care will be available for the Ceremony.

RSVP to Office Administrator, Phaedra Edwards at administrator@uusterling.org or 703-406-3068.



Lifespan Faith Development

Linda Weaver

At the beginning of this year UUS broadened its vision and formed a Lifespan Faith Development Council, embracing and expanding on the work of the Religious Exploration Committee. In doing this, UUS is building on the current Unitarian Universalist vision of creating multigenerational communities that nurture the faith development of all ages and that emphasizes the history, traditions and beliefs that make our Unitarian Universalist communities and faith unique.

In March the UUS Lifespan Faith Development Council discussed faith development and concluded that it touches and is touched by every aspect of the congregation and the world. Faith development happens through classes, mentorships, testimonials, conversation and worship. It happens in the way the church is governed and it happens in the actions and the language that is modeled whenever we gather. It also happens at home, in the car and at events outside of UUS. In all of these settings anyone can influence another person's faith development. Even the youngest can teach the oldest or most educated.

These are realizations being made throughout the Unitarian Universalist denomination. We are discovering that our churches can be powerful entities in the lives of individuals, families and communities, by providing a place where all ages can learn together and from each other. Church is a place where we can learn, through our interactions with others, how to live lives of love, meaning, and joy.

Chance interactions and social events are important to faith development. However, we also need activities that are consciously planned to meet specific developmental needs and that encourage reflection on the experiences of life. This is where Religious Exploration or Lifespan Faith Development programs come in. They are the means by which we make sure that faith development is nurtured, that significant experiences are provided at each stage of life and that the many messages that bombard us are explored. It is also an important means of making sure everyone has a place s/he fits in at UUS and that connections are formed between individuals and within small groups.

To find out about the children's RE program or to let us know how we can serve your family contact Linda Weaver at re-director@uusterling.org or 703-406-3068. Information is also available on the UUS website at www.uusterling.org or in brochures near the door at UUS.

Children's RE Program Planning

Linda Weaver

Planning for next year's children's Religious Exploration program will begin soon. Look for meeting announcements and make a point to attend at least the first meeting so you can take part in exploring the many exciting possibilities and help ensure the program meets the needs of all children and families as well as possible.

Adult Education – Contemporary Bible Study

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Leader: Rev. Anya

Number of Sessions: 6

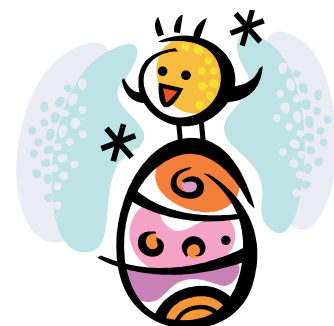
Days and Dates: Sundays: April 11, 18, and 25, 2010; May 16 and 23, 2010; June 6, 2010.

Time: 12:30 till 2:00 p.m.

Open to: Adults

Our study will be based on the book *A Wind Swept Over the Waters - Reflections on 60 Favorite Bible Passages* by John Nichols. Whether you have given many hours to studying the bible or none whatsoever, this class promises to inspire and invite introspection as well as discussion.

RSVP to Susan Miller



To find the names of the leaders and assistants for each session, go to the UUS calendar at <http://www.uusterling.org/>, find the correct month and day and then click on the RE class session you would like to view.

Children's Religious Exploration Schedule

	Preschool Circle	Kindergarten - 5 th Grade	Middle School
April 4	Easter	RE Social Justice Sunday – Green Congregation	
April 11	Cooperation	Taoism	Unitarian Universalism
April 18	All Colors	Attend Service	
April 25	Lei Day	Sikhism	Attend Youth Service
May 2	Mother's Day	UU – Mother's Peace Day	Unitarian Universalism
May 9	Caring for Our Earth	Attend Service	
May 16	Bodies are Beautiful	UU - Partner Church and Celebrate UUA Birthday	Unitarian Universalism
May 23	Bodies are Beautiful	RE Service Rehearsal	
May 30	Celebration	Celebration	No Class

Transforming Theological Education for a Changing World

Rev Anya Sammler-Michael

Meadville Lombard Theological School integrates the experiential, academic, and reflective work of ministerial formation. Our three-year curriculum challenges our students to cross borders and become ministers for multicultural, multiracial, and interfaith communities.

Learn about our Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Religion, Dual

Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Leadership Studies and Doctor of Ministry degree programs.

Meet our world-class faculty

Learn about our TouchPoint distance learning format, which allows you to

complete your degree program within your existing network of support

Learn about financial aid options and scholarship opportunities

Prospective Student Conference, Chicago

April 21-22, 2010

Come spend two days on our campus in Chicago learning about our degree programs and the opportunities Meadville Lombard has to offer you. You'll spend the time with our faculty and staff, other prospective students as well as current students and graduates. This is your time to figure out what it is like to be in seminary, what it is like to be a minister. More information and registration: meadville.edu

Prospective Student Brunch, General Assembly

June 25, 10:00 - 11:30 am

Going to be at General Assembly in Minneapolis? Come get a snapshot of what Meadville Lombard has to offer you.

Contact Justine Urbikas, Assistant Director of Recruiting and Communications, or visit our website for more information. Download the

The Reverend Peter Morales Visits Annapolis

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

President of the Unitarian Universalist Association invites you to join him on:

Saturday, April 24, 2010

from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m.

at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis

333 Dubois Road,
Annapolis, MD

Come visit with President Morales and hear about his plans for the Unitarian Universalist Association and the ways that the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland is empowering UUs in Maryland to address those issues of value and importance to us all.

UU Delegate Alfred Carr, Jr & Executive Director of Equality, MD Morgan Meneses-Sheets will also be in attendance.

Jazz music by Blake Kramer & Friends and Light Refreshments will be served.

Space is Limited.

Please RSVP by April 19th to info@uulmmd.org

or

Call 410-266-8044, ext. 111.



registration form here.

Meadville Lombard Theological School
meadville.edu

5701 S. Woodlawn Avenue | Chicago IL
60637 | 773.256.3000 x250

Affiliated with the University of Chicago and a member of the Association of Chicago Theological Schools.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of North Bay

Wine Country Holiday

Bonnie Lepoff

“Napa was as delightful as I had expected. What was equally important and somewhat unexpected was the profound connections I felt with my hosts and hostesses.”

Carol Lim, Los Angeles

The UU's of Napa, California proudly announce a new season of our Wine Country Excursions. Again, we offer a variety of options for an inside look at one of America's most beautiful areas, internationally known for fine wines, gourmet dining and spectacular vistas.

There much to see and do in the Napa and Sonoma Valleys: e.g. wine tasting at renowned and boutique wineries; visits to art galleries and museums; exploring the natural beauty of our hills and valleys on miles of hiking and bike trails or by car on our highways and back country roads.

We offer two choices: Both start with comfortable lodging in members' homes with full breakfast (up to 3 nights). You can choose a 2-day “Wine Country Excursion,” a guided, personalized tour conducted by one of our members--some with wine industry experience--or lodging and self-guided touring. If desired, we provide guidance, maps, etc.

The program runs from April through October. Our fees are below market rate for similar services and all proceeds go to our small fellowship. For complete details contact: Tom Wilson (707-254-7443) or 2wilsons1dog@comcast.net

We look forward to sharing our lovely “home” with you!

Nurturing a Culture of Hospitality – One Day Conference

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Featured Keynote Speaker: Dr. Amy Oden

Wesley Theological Seminary,
Washington, DC

Saturday, May 1, 2010

9:30am to 3:30pm

(Registration begins at 8:45am)

Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring

10309 New Hampshire Avenue

Silver Spring, MD

This unique conference will include large group presentations and small group discussions focused on developing a spiritual sense of hospitality in our congregations.

Cost: \$20.00 (\$25.00 at the door)

Lunch will be provided and is included in the cost of registration.

Childcare is free but must be reserved in advance.

Go to jpduua.org to download a registration form.

Unitarian Universalist Summer Camps and Conferences

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Forum on April 11th at 11:45

Yes, they exist! Yes, they are wonderful.

Come hear about the opportunities out there on Sunday April 11th after our worship service at 11:45.

Looking for a low-cost vacation as an individual or for the family with opportunities to meet others in the larger UU community? Looking for a camping experience for children where you can be sure the other children will share your religious-liberal values? Looking to expand the mind or pursue a favorite hobby?

...And if you can't come to our forum or if you want to do some pre-forum research, visit "The Council of Unitarian Camps and Conferences" on line at - <http://www.cu2c2.org/>

“On a Personal Note ...”

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Scott Sammler-Michael, Goobie the cat and I are moving! We have purchased a home in historic Fairfax City. Please know that while my address will be in Fairfax my professional focus will remain in Loudoun County, and more specifically in Sterling as I am dedicated to serving UUS as we become a force for justice, hope, and faith in Loudoun County. The location in Fairfax City is between Scott's and my respective congregations. It also provides easy access to the District and our Beltway neighbor congregations – places my work, on an interfaith and collegial basis, calls me to with frequency.

We intend to move sometime in early May. I will keep you posted. There may be a moving party!

Yours in Faith and Dedication,

Rev. Anya

**Happy
Easter**



UUCF Event of Interest

Susan Bennett

The Women's Spirit Circle of the UU Congregation of Fairfax is thrilled to bring Max Dashu to present *Feminine Spiritual Heritages of Crete, Greece and the Aegean* to our sanctuary at 2709 Hunter Mill Rd in Oakton, VA on Wednesday night April 21 at 7:30pm. Max Dashu is an artist, writer, and teacher who founded the Suppressed Histories Archives in 1970 to research women's history internationally and understand how systems of domination established and perpetuate themselves. For more information on her work, www.suppressedhistories.net and for more information on the event, Susan Bennett scbennett@cox.net

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling-Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes March 3, 2010

Joan Johnson

Present:

Minister: Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael
President: Bonnie Lepoff
Director of Religious Exploration: Linda Weaver
Former President: Dave Miller
Secretary: Joan Johnson
At-Large: Lindy Reeder
At-Large: Ken Ward
At-Large: Dorine Scher
Youth Member: Julia Burns

Absent:

At-Large: Belinda Bullock
Treasurer: Paul Roche

Committee Liaison Reports:

Lindy reported that she received letters and pictures from our partner church in Kut, India. We have a new contact person in Kut whose English is better; this should improve communication. Lindy will distribute letters from the children to their pen pals on Sunday.

Rev. Anya requested that the Board review our mission and vision statements from the Strategic Plan and keep them in mind during the stewardship drive.

New Space:

- Dave requested inputs for the final punch list of items to be completed for his meeting with the landlord. He will ask for representatives from Arts/Aesthetics, Lifespan, and Worship Associates to participate in a walk around on Sunday for the punch list.
- Dave reporting that we have a cabinet and counter coming. We confirmed that we need to remove the lock on the nursery door.
- Rev. Anya started a list of housekeeping tasks to be completed with places for volunteers to sign up.

- We discussed using the nook at the end of the hall for a social action area where we will put recycling bins and food collection bin and notices to Put Your Values in Action.
- We need extra long tablecloths for the Fellowship Area so we can put bins for storage under the tables.
- The Youth Room space is too small. Rev. Anya and Linda Weaver will look into whether youth can share the old nursery with the middle school kids. Joan will check the subtenant lease to see if restricting access to that room is possible.
- Bonnie is buying dishes and we are soliciting donations of flatware.
- Phaedra will contact the cleaners about schedule and larger space.
- The hearing assistance device test was successful. Bonnie would like to find someone to order a similar system for us. EB Kirkbride has offered to donate funds for this purchase.
- We have many things stored in our old space that need to be brought into our new space.

Website: Dave Lum asked about our website policy. Dorine will draft one.

Church records: Joan will draft a records retention policy.

By Laws: Joan will submit any unresolved issues to the Board.

Subtenant: Joan to contact subtenant to ask whether instead of having the church on May 8 as currently provided in the lease, we can have it on May 22nd for the new Building Dedication and Broadway Night. Joan will verify whether meetings dates are specified in the sublease and if not, schedule meetings. They've agreed to build shelves in the front closet.

Chalice Lighter Grant: We have submitted an application for \$20,000.

Stewardship: The dinners start March 13. Our goal is to have everyone signed up by March 7.

Annual Meeting: The new date for the annual meeting is June 6. We will vote on General Assembly delegates and

submit names to UUA. The revised by laws will be submitted with the meeting notice and slate. Joan will check when the annual reports are due.

Building Dedication: The date is changed to Saturday May 22nd. The dedication will be at 5:30 with Broadway night following at 7:00. We will invite the landlord, Tim.

Mythica Music concert will be March 12. Tickets are \$10. After UUS expenses, half of the ticket price is for Mythica and half for Loudon Cares. There will be a wine tasting.

Upcoming **JPD Spring Conference** is April 16-17 in Valley Forge.

The **Youth Service** will be April 25th.

Thank you cards were signed for Adam from Standing on the Side of Love and for Rev. Ann Holmes.

Board Host Schedule:

Mar 14 – Dorine
Mar 21 – Ken
Mar 28 – Bonnie
Apr 4 – Belinda (Easter)
Apr 11 – Lindy
Apr 18 – Joan
Apr 25 – Julia

Next Board Meeting April 7. Soup by Rev. Anya, readings by Dorine and bread by Ken.



April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6 Craft Night 7:30 Choir	2 6:30 UUS Band Practice	3 5 AAFCJ
				4 10:30 "Hallelujah" Rev Anya 3:30 AAFCJ	5	6 12 Covenant Group—Celinda Chandler 6:45 NA 7 Covenant Group—Stephanie Greene
11 10:30 "Salvation" Rev Anya 12 Contemporary Bible Study 12 UU Summer Experiences Forum 3:30 AAFCJ	12 7 Covenant Group—Deb Rose 7 Committee on Ministry	13 6:45 NA	14 7:30 Finance Committee Meeting	15 6 UU Fast Day—Break Fast Worship and Pot Luck 6 Worship/Music Planning Meeting 7:30 Choir	16 JPD Spring Conference 6:30 UUS Band Practice	17 JPD Spring Conference 5 AAFCJ
18 10:30 "Of the Earth" Rev Anya 12 Divorce and Separation Support Circle 12 Contemporary Bible Study 3:30 AAFCJ	19	20 6:45 NA	21 7 Lifespan Faith Development Council	22 2 Cleaning 7:30 Choir	23 6:30 WEBS Monthly Meeting	24 10 New to UU Class 5 AAFCJ
25 10:30 "Youth Service" 12 Contemporary Bible Study 3:30 AAFCJ	26	27 6:45 NA	28	29 7:30 Choir	30 6:30 UUS Band Practice	



Unitarian Universalists of Sterling

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Suite 104
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Office hours are:
Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday
10:00 AM—4:30 PM



Your Church Leadership

Minister: Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Director of Religious Exploration: Linda Weaver; **Music Director:** Kristina Adams

2009-2010 Board of Trustees: *President* - Bonnie Lepoff; *Secretary* - Joan Johnson;

Treasurer - Paul Roche; *At-large* - Dorine Scher, Ken Ward, Linda Reeder, Belinda Bullock; *Youth Member* - Julia Burns

UUS Mission Covenant Statement

The Unitarian Universalists of Sterling offer a place where reason and spirituality converge. We welcome members of the community who are seeking such a religious home.

Our mission is to make the community a better place to live by promoting a variety of religious expressions, working toward social justice, and fostering diversity. In order to carry out this mission, we covenant to listen to each other, encourage the exchange of creative thought, and respect our differences.

UUS Sunday Services 10:30 AM

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling meets at the Sterling Oaks Commerce Center Sterling, a handicapped-accessible 24-7 facility, located on 22135 Davis Drive near Route 28 and Church Road in Sterling, Virginia. Child care and children's religious education are both provided during worship services. Dress is casual. Children are encouraged to wear play clothes.

From Northbound Route 28: Take Route 28 North exit from the Dulles Toll Road. Turn right at Church Road. Turn right on Davis Drive. Go about one block and turn right into the parking lot.

From Southbound Route 28: Take Route 28 south from Route 7. Head east on Church Road. Turn right on Davis Drive. Go about one block and turn right into the parking lot.

From Westbound Route 7: Turn left at Sterling Boulevard. Turn right at Church Road. Go three miles. Turn left on Davis Drive. Go about one block and turn right into the parking lot.

What's with UUS

Editor: Bob Brown

Media Relations: Terry Dick

Production: Jeff Chandler, Susan Miller

Board Liaison: Bonnie Lepoff

To submit material for publication, send by email to newsletter@uusterling.org

Submission Deadlines

4/16 for May

5/21 for June

6/18 for July/August

8/20 for September

For information about times and dates of events concerning the life of the congregation, please go to www.uusterling.org / Keeping In Touch / UUS Calendar