



# What's with UUS

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



## Minister's Message



### Oil

Rev. Anya  
Sammler-Michael

Pools of oil fascinated me as a child. I would watch for them on the pavement of parking lots – and stare at their rainbow rings and swirls. I knew they were beautiful; I didn't look at them and see danger.

Anything in excess is dangerous except love.

And love is helping me to find comfort, as I witness the destruction of the excess of oil that is spilling into our gulf.

I love this congregation, its members, friends and visitors. I love the interconnection that lives in our relationships – how we reach for one another when we are in need, how we are committed to nurturing all the children that call our congregation home. I love this interconnection – the bonds that bind us one to another in shared dependence. I love this interconnection when it reminds me of our strength and our beauty, but especially when it recalls me to my best self again, when I falter or go astray.

It is so easy to place blame. This oil spill has me, has us, demanding accountability, raging at those we call wrongdoers, whether they are heading corporations or our nation. The interconnection that I love in our congregation, begs me to reconsider my rage.

I look around and I see how we comprise a micro cosmos of the players in the oil spill catastrophe. How some of our members are environmentalists and  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## President's Message



### It's a New UUS Year!

Bonnie Lepoff

I think it's a good thing that our church year starts in July. The church schedule is slower, many of us take summer vacations so our attendance is a bit lower, the RE program is more relaxed, and some days it's just too hot! This is northern Virginia after all. We can ease into our new year and our new board can get used to being on the board before church activities pick up and fill our schedules in the fall.

But I'm writing this in mid-June, as I'm getting ready to fly to Minneapolis for General Assembly, the UU annual meeting. Attending GA is energizing; there are so many seminars to attend and booths to visit to learn about so many UU related activities that there is no way you can return and not bring some of that excitement with you. The slow, relaxed summer schedule provides the perfect space to use that energy to plan activities around ideas brought back from GA. Last summer, the Social Justice committee was formed and by the start of the school year had lots of good ideas for us. Who knows what exciting things will arise this summer?

I will be sure to let you know! But right now, I have a plane to catch.

See you in church.

Bonnie Lepoff  
blepoff@cox.net

## Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team



Rev. Anya

...A new team committed to anti-racism and multiculturalism is forming at the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling.

The work of anti-racism and anti-oppression is essentially spiritual work. The term Journey Toward Wholeness expresses the spiritual nature of the work and a recognition that there is a brokenness caused by racism.

As we move towards healing and transformation we acknowledge the causes of this brokenness and take a fresh look at ourselves while learning to identify our personal and institutional relationships to oppressive systems.

We will learn skills to help dismantle racism in our institutions. At the same time that we will work to get our own house in order moving into authentic multiracial, multicultural, and interfaith coalitions for effective spiritually-driven action for justice.

Team members are presently Yvonne Centala, Joan Johnson, Michael Masiak and Katrina Thralls. The team is interested in expanding and hopes you will join us. Questions can be asked of any team members or Rev. Anya who is serving as the team facilitator:  
[minister@uusterling.org](mailto:minister@uusterling.org)

## UPCOMING SERVICES:

|          | Service                                     | Worship Leader       | RE Topic       | RE Leader         |
|----------|---|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| June 27: | "The Value of Temperance"                   | Jonathan Hammer      | Creation       | Steve Dick        |
| July 4:  | "What is the 4th of July to me?"            | Wendi Manuel-Scott   | Earth          | Yvonne Centala    |
| July 11: | "Aesthetics of Imperfection"                | Rev. Anya            | Air            | Stephanie Greene  |
| July 18: | "Be a Dignitarian"                          | BRUU Band            | Fire           | John Botts        |
| July 25: | "Never Underestimate the Impossible"        | Katrina Thralls      | Water          |                   |
| Aug. 1:  | "Crone Ceremony with Celtic grain Festival" | WEBS                 | Sky            |                   |
| Aug. 8:  | "Bible Thumpin' Rock and Roll"              | Bible Class/jUUStUUS | Seasons        | Suzie McMullen    |
| Aug. 15: | "Communitas"                                | Rev. Anya            | Plants         | Stephanie Roche   |
| Aug. 22: | "These Windows and Doors"                   | Rev. Anya            | Animals        | Clarice Douvoguih |
| Aug. 29: | "To Re-Enchant the World"                   | Rev. Scott           | Circle of Life | Terry Dick        |
| Sept. 5: | "Labor"                                     | Rev. Anya            | Stories        | Yvonne Centala    |

(Minister, Continued from page 1)

animal activists, how some have homes or families on the gulf coast, how some have traveled to New Orleans for rescue efforts, how some own stock in the oil companies, how some work for oil companies, how some work for companies that provide support to the government agencies working to clean up the spill.

I realize this and I love this congregation even more – as it reminds me again and again that this world is astoundingly complex and for that, nothing is solved with easy solutions. Rage is easy. Love is difficult; it is complex, and it is the only way we can move from pain to healing – for ourselves, and for our

precious world.

We need to love this world so much that we will give ourselves to the task of healing – healing relationships broken by anger, healing animals snared by a toxic spill, and healing communities by advocating for compensation for those who will lose their livelihoods. But let us do all of this– understanding that our interconnection is just as holy as our call to justice... as justice rises from acts of love, just as rainbows swirl in pools of oil... unexpected, astounding, beautiful.

Rev Anya



## Summer RE

Linda Weaver

The children's Religious Exploration theme this summer is "Keepers of the Earth." Sessions are based on Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac and a supplement created by UU Director of Religious Education, Dawn Star Borchelt. Stories and activities encourage an appreciation of nature and provide some summer fun.

If you have children return the registration form soon. It includes a release so they can participate in the outdoor activities. The form is available at UUS or from Linda Weaver at [re-director@uusterling.org](mailto:re-director@uusterling.org).

During the summer, UUS offers one RE class for children entering kindergarten through 6th grade. Older children may participate, help in the class or attend the entire worship service. The nursery is available every Sunday for children 5 or younger.

To find out more contact Linda Weaver or check out the UUS website at [www.uusterling.org](http://www.uusterling.org).

## Weaving a Tapestry of Faith in 2010-11

Linda Weaver

Beginning September 19, several age groups will begin using the newest UU curriculum resources, The Tapestry of Faith. The UUS curriculum task force are excited by the rich and meaningful content that nurtures ethical development, spiritual growth, faith formation, deepening UU identity, and community building. They are also impressed by the large variety of activities geared to many different interests and learning styles, the guidance given to leaders, the many ideas offered to put faith into action, and the information and resources provided for families.

The plan for next year is to provide four classes for children in preschool through middle school, with all except the preschool/kindergarten group using Tapestry of Faith. We already have many amazing leaders and assistants for next year, but a few more are needed to make this possible. Especially needed are one or two more people to lead the preschool or 3rd through 5th grade groups one Sunday a month. If you would like to help, contact the Director of Religious Exploration at [re-director@uusterling.org](mailto:re-director@uusterling.org) or 703-406-3068.

## Roving Reporter

Sue Rose

I bet you've already started your summer activities! What special plans do you have for July or August?

Jordan (3) I still go to school; I can swim by myself!

Holly (12) For July I am going to Florida for a month!

Madeleine (3) I go for walks with my mom and we see some birdies!

Evan (8) Once I get my cast off I'll be on the swim team!

Jonah (6) I'm going to have my birthday party in July!

Anna (3) I'm going to the pool and the beach, and to a cabin in the Shenandoah!

Langston (5) I'm going to work on inventions like a cave and a castle and a base (with Imaginettes, my favorite toy)!

Derek (16) I'm lifeguarding and playing lacrosse and I'm going to England with my grandma!

Matthew (16) I'm going to Iowa and Reno (for a juggling convention)!

## RE September Dates

Linda Weaver

September 11 – Orientation for all RE leaders and assistants. Receive valuable information and tips, begin your work together with other leaders and assistants, and determine your schedule for the 2010-2011 year.

September 12 – Don't forget to bring back water from your summer travels or from around your home as the church year begins with the annual In-gathering Service and Water Communion.

September 19 – First regular RE sessions. Parent Orientation after the service.

## Children's Religious Exploration Schedule

|                | Topic          | Leader      | Assistant   |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>July 4</b>  | Earth          | Y. Centala  | J. Jelinski |
| <b>July 11</b> | Air            | S. Greene   | K. Houck    |
| <b>July 18</b> | Fire           | J. Botts    | S. Tamres   |
| <b>July 25</b> | Water          | Help Needed | J. Gathard  |
| <b>Aug. 1</b>  | Sky            | M. Masiak   | K. Cleland  |
| <b>Aug. 8</b>  | Seasons        | S. McMullen | C. Gherst   |
| <b>Aug. 15</b> | Plants         | S. Roche    | A. Lum      |
| <b>Aug. 22</b> | Animals        | C. Douoguih | S. Tamres   |
| <b>Aug. 29</b> | Circle of Life | T. Dick     | D. Corbo    |
| <b>Sept. 5</b> | Stories        | Y. Centala  | J. Boone    |

# Community Service Project for COA

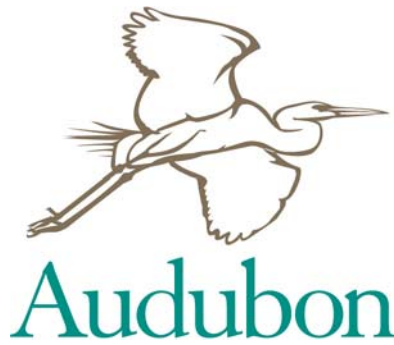
Noah Scher

For my Coming-of-Age, I chose to do a Community Service Project. The idea of this is that we, the people who came, donate something for a cause. The cause that I chose is something to help the animals (makes sense, doesn't it? I mean, being Noah and all). They are called the Audubon Society. They are helping clean the animals that are affected by pollution.

As many of you know, several months ago there was a gigantic oil spill in the Gulf Coast. The oil spread throughout the Gulf, consuming many areas. And with it, the animals. I have asked you all to bring Dawn Dish soap, not because we will be washing dishes, but so that they can be shipped down to the Gulf in order to help clean of the animals that have been consumed by the oil.

Thank you,

Noah



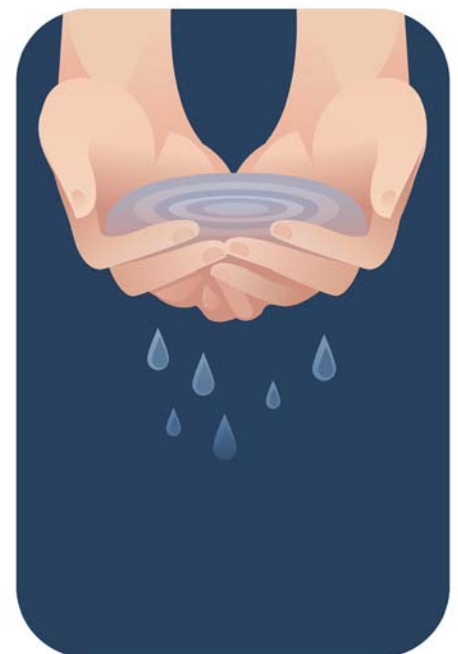
# Collect Water Over the Summer

Rev Anya



As you engage in your summer activities, remember to collect water for our annual Ingathering service and Water Communion. On September 12<sup>th</sup> we will officially begin the next church program year with the opportunity to gather all the water we collect over the summer into our Water Communion Vessel – representing the deep and abiding connections that are born of a spiritual community.

Collect water when you travel or in a special near-by pond or lake, or in your sinks tap – somewhere that has special significance for you or your family. You only need a little bit.



# Our Visiting Khasi Minister

## Partner Church News

**Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael**

The Unitarian Universalists of Sterling (UUS) were grateful to receive Rev. Helpme Mohrmen on June 8, for a potluck meal and presentation. Rev. Mohrmen serves many congregations in the Khasi Hills of India including one in the small village of Kut.

The Kut congregation and UUS have been partner churches for about a year and are experiencing the richness of their budding relationship. Rev. Mohrmen will be delivering drawings from the UUS Religious Exploration classes to the children in Kut. This will help weave another strand in our evolving connection.

Rev. Mohrmen encouraged us to see the Khasi Hills Unitarians as brothers and sisters in faith – while pointing out the many beautiful aspects of the Khasi Unitarian religion that grow from their deep traditional culture.

Francis David, a great Transylvanian Unitarian reformer, said: "We do not need to think alike to love alike." It is an honor to be a part of a religious tradition that welcomes participants to seek the truth as their consciences are called, while providing some ethical and theological standards to support spiritual growth and compassionate living. Rev. Mohrmen's visit proclaimed the potential of this religious presentation – a force that can build bridges between souls.

- Rev. Anya



*Rev. Anya with Rev. Helpme Mohrmen at UUS reception June 8*



*Rev. Helpme Mohrmen preaching in Puriang, March 2008 (partner church of UU Fairfax)*



**Unitarian Church in Kut, India**

*(Note the chalice window)*

## Lisa Groat



Having recently moved to the area after joining the staff of Ayuda as a social worker serving immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, I feel lucky to have found a faith community that aligns so perfectly with my personal and professional values. I look forward to sharing my love of Latin American literature with the UUS book club, and to advocating for the rights of my clients and other community members through the Social Justice Council.



## Eco-Tips

Kim Cleland

Here are some tips on how to reduce the amount of stuff we throw in the trash, and, by extension, our landfills. Instead of drinking bottled water, fill up a reusable water bottle or travel mug and bring it with you. Bottled water is usually no better quality than tap (sometimes worse), and you'll save a lot of money and reduce the amount of plastic you use. (Plus you can add ice to keep it colder!) Bring your travel mug when you want to buy coffee somewhere. Many places, including Starbucks, give you a ten cent discount for bringing your own mug. When grocery shopping, many of us bring our own bags, but you can minimize waste even more. When buying produce, consider whether or not you really need one of those small plastic bags-- a squash or bell pepper does fine without one! (And you can stick the weight/price label right on it, if necessary). If you do need one, bring your own. There are a variety of small reusable bags at [reusablebags.com](http://reusablebags.com). This site also has great little "wrapping mats" that you can use to wrap sandwiches, veggies, etc. for lunches instead of using a baggie or plastic wrap. Cloth napkins also work-- just tie opposite corners in two knots. Finally if ordering take-out food, tell them not to give you any "extras" that you don't need, i.e. disposable chopsticks, plastic utensils, paper napkins, yet more soy sauce packets... Have a green summer!

– Kim Cleland, for the Social Justice Council



## Lavonne Luquis



Lavonne Luquis earned a journalism degree from the University of Colorado and became an award-winning reporter and editor in her hometown, San Juan, PR. When the newspaper she worked for was sold, and the staff was not told who bought it, she moved thousands of miles to work as city editor at a newspaper near Seattle.

She caught the Internet bug early and co-founded the first Hispanic-focused website in the US. Over the next six years, she hired a wonderful staff, opened offices in San Francisco and New York and thoroughly enjoyed the ride while it lasted. When the Internet bubble burst, she went to work for the University of California. In 2004, she moved to Virginia to work for AOL. In 2006, she went to work for the National Education Association. In 2008, she left the NEA to travel in an RV with her husband. When her husband's health deteriorated, she cared for him until he died.

From those ashes arose a determination to create a life designed to satisfy her desire for meaningful connection, for service, for travel, for joy. One of the first steps on that journey was a trip to Italy. Then a blog chronicling 101 Things Lavonne wants to do in 1001 days. She is enrolled in a Martha Beck Life Coach Training program, and looks forward to building a strong coaching practice in the year ahead.

# Unitarian Universalists of Sterling-Board of Trustees

## Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2010

Joan Johnson

Present:

President: Bonnie Lepoff

Secretary: Joan Johnson

Treasurer: Paul Roche

Minister: Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Director of Religious Exploration: Linda Weaver

Former President: Dave Miller

At-Large: Dorine Scher

At-Large: Belinda Bullock

At-Large: Lindy Reeder

At -Large: Ken Ward

Absent:

Youth Member: Julia Burns

Finance Report: Paul reviewed the final balance sheet that he will present at the annual meeting next Sunday. Paul sent reminder letters to members with remaining balances of unpaid dues. We have about \$39,000 in the building fund. Starting now, our monthly expenses are about \$20,000 for the coming year. We will need to collect \$16,000/month in pledges to meet our obligations. Paul requested the Arts and Aesthetics expense report no later than June 30.

Old Business:

Space/Facilities/Aesthetics. Delivery date of the new chairs is unknown. A garbage disposal is being purchased and installed. We are talking with the landlord about who will cover the cost to repair the air conditioning. The repair bill was \$850. The Board appointed Dave, Gus, Bonnie and John Boone to resolve. The Board will accept the decision of the appointees.

Website Maintenance. Dave Lum is

doing a great job managing the website. Dave Miller has become the technical lead for audio; Bryan will provide his knowledge and expertise when needed. The Worship Associates will be responsible for the schedule, making sure a sound person is in attendance each Sunday.

AAFCJ. Joan explained that the tenants asked to use the church overnight on June 5 as a 'make up' day for one Sunday last month they did not use their time. There were two days they didn't have services; they will likely ask for another overnight use later in the summer. The Board agreed to allow use as long as the church RE rooms are neat and clean and things are in the same location. They will leave by 8:00 a.m.

Chalice Lighters. Slips filled out during the service were misplaced so anyone wishing to join Chalice Lighters should go to the website.

Chalice Keepers. Paul will coordinate a visit by a representative to explain how this works.

Annual Meeting. Dave Scher will be parliamentarian. Paul will provide actual financials for budget discussion. Alyssa or Al will lead the budget review. Bonnie will ask Wendi to include a reminder about the annual meeting in the weekly announcement. We will use the projector. We will ask that greeters remind everyone of the annual meeting and hand out ballots to members who will not be able to stay for the meeting.

JPD Leadership Weekend is August 26-29. Board members are encouraged to attend.

Concert. A second Mythica concert, set for August 27th, has been cancelled. Any ideas for other bands for a concert should be submitted to the Membership Committee.

New Business:

Church calendar. The next Board meeting, July 7, will be with both old and new members. Dates for fall events will be set at the July meeting.

Communication policy. The Board discussed the use of the UUS Announce list. The Board reviewed the new communication policy. Rev. Anya and

Bonnie will confer with Tammi Marcouli about social media.

Church directory. We will add a note in OOS that if you wish a soft copy of the directory, contact the administrator. A note indicating that the directory is only for church related activities will be added to the directory.

We will not have a Board meeting in August but will have a meeting to plan the church retreat.

Rev Anya will review the staff job descriptions and contracts and send updates to Board so that new contracts may be issued in July.

The Board signed Thank You cards to our building dedication guests.

Board Host assignments are:

June 6 – Bonnie

June 13 – Belinda

June 20 – Ken

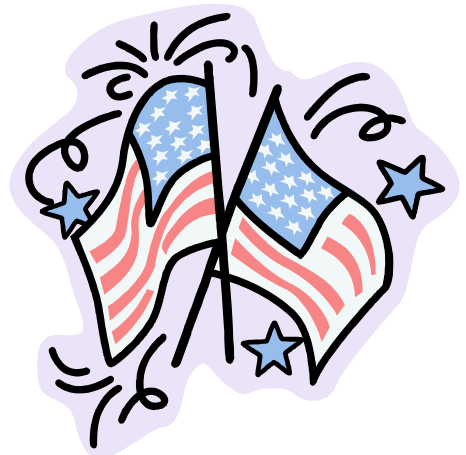
June 27 – Lindy

July 4 – Joan

July 11 – Dorine

July 18 – Bonnie

The next Board meeting will be July 7th. Bonnie will provide readings and Dorine will provide salad at 6:00.



# July 2010

| SUN   | MON                                  | TUE  | WED                               | THU                                    | FRI | SAT                         |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|-----|-----------------------------|
|   |                                      |  |                                   | 1                                      | 2   | 3<br>5 AAFCJ                |
| 4<br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ  | 5                                    | 6<br>12 Covenant Group—Celinda Chandler<br>6:45 NA<br>12 Covenant Group—Stephanie Greene | 7                                 | 8<br>2 Cleaning                        | 9   | 10<br>5 AAFCJ               |
| 11<br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ   | 12<br>7 Covenant Group—Deb Rose      | 13<br>6:45 NA<br>7 Covenant Group—Mike Berger  | 14<br>7 Finance Committee Meeting | 15<br>6 Worship/Music Planning Meeting | 16  | 17<br>6 am AAFCJ<br>5 AAFCJ |
| 18<br>10:30 Worship Service<br>12 Divorce and Separation Support Circle<br>3:30 AAFCJ | 19                                   | 20<br>6 Old Sterling Gable HOA meeting<br>6:45 NA  | 21                                | 22<br>2 Cleaning                       | 23  | 24<br>5 AAFCJ               |
| 25<br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ   | 26<br>7 Membership Committee meeting | 27<br>6:45 NA  | 28                                | 29                                     | 30  | 31<br>5 AAFCJ               |





# August 2010

| SUN  | MON   | TUE   | WED                                      | THU   | FRI                            | SAT                                |
|--|---|---|--|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b><br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ  | <b>2</b>                                    | <b>3</b><br>12 Covenant Group—Celinda Chandler<br>6:45 NA<br>12 Covenant Group—Stephanie Greene | <b>4</b>                                 | <b>5</b>                                      | <b>6</b>                       | <b>7</b><br>5 AAFCJ                |
| <b>8</b><br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ  | <b>9</b><br>7 Covenant Group—Deb Rose       | <b>10</b><br>6:45 NA<br>7 Covenant Group—Mike Berger  | <b>11</b><br>7 Finance Committee Meeting | <b>12</b><br>2 Cleaning                       | <b>13</b>                      | <b>14</b><br>6 am AAFCJ<br>5 AAFCJ |
| <b>15</b><br>10:30 Worship Service<br>12 Divorce and Separation Support Circle<br>3:30 AAFCJ | <b>16</b>                                   | <b>17</b><br>6:45 NA  | <b>18</b>                                | <b>19</b><br>6 Worship/Music Planning Meeting | <b>20</b>                      | <b>21</b><br>5 AAFCJ               |
| <b>22</b><br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ   | <b>23</b><br>7 Membership Committee meeting | <b>24</b><br>6:45 NA  | <b>25</b>                                | <b>26</b><br>2 Cleaning                       | <b>27</b><br>7 Mythica concert | <b>28</b><br>5 AAFCJ               |
| <b>29</b><br>10:30 Worship Service<br>3:30 AAFCJ   | <b>30</b>                                   | <b>31</b><br>6:45 NA  |  |   |                                |                                    |





## Unitarian Universalists of Sterling

PO Box 1632  
Sterling, VA 20167  
(703) 406-3068  
<http://uusterling.org>

22135 Davis Drive  
Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20164

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

**Board Liaison:** Bonnie Lepoff

To submit material for publication, send by email to [newsletter@uusterling.org](mailto:newsletter@uusterling.org)

#### **Submission Deadlines**

8/20 for September

9/17 for October

10/22 for November

11/19 for December

**For information about times and dates of events concerning the life of the congregation, please go to [www.uusterling.org](http://www.uusterling.org) / Keeping In Touch / UUS Calendar**