



What's with UUS

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



Minister's Message



Ready, Set, Wait!

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

As an only child, I learned how to pass the time quietly, calmly, and creatively. I could daydream for hours or occupy myself building a fort or putting on a solo play. But this capacity did me no good when it came time to WAIT for something I wanted. If it was time to leave for a trip and my parents weren't ready, I would pace until I couldn't stand it, then walk to the car and sit there, feeling like I might explode, until they arrived. And, like most children, I counted the days, even the hours, until Christmas or my birthday.

As an only child, I didn't have many opportunities to practice the art of waiting well. My parents only had me to tend to; they rarely arrived late to retrieve me from school or sports practices.

Now I am grown, and I can control my outward appearance, but I still find that waiting produces inward unease. I have learned to appreciate the reality that life happens when it is ready, not when I am ready... but I still struggle with the disparity! So when I heard that we would likely have to wait until January to move into the office area next door, that we would have to wait many more months before we could expand our worship, hospitality, office, and program space, I was not pleased. We are ready. We have the funds. We have the desire. And, most pressingly, we are stuffed into our space on Sunday mornings and could really use a bit more elbow room.

(Continued on page 2)

President's Message



Memories

Dave Miller

I am beginning to remember this time of year, a time long ago, when I was eagerly awaiting the start of summer vacation, but still knowing that there is time and work before that will happen. I haven't felt this way for a very long time. Since I don't work in the education field, there is normally no sense of an impending big summer vacation. But I am feeling that way now! My term as president of the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling Board of Trustees is coming to an end. I have a few more assignments such as this article, and then yeah! my summer vacation.

There is some jest in the above and some truth, too. Being the Board President has exceeded all of my expectations. It has exceeded my expectations for the amount of time and work it entailed, as well as my expectations for the rewards. There was one expectation it didn't exceed: I was expecting a crown and an ostentatious robe, perhaps an ermine one, but I didn't get that.

But I have had several rewards! Among them are the opportunities to get to work with Rev. Anya and our staff and to get to know them better. When things are going along smoothly, and they generally do, it is easy to overlook the effort that goes into making our services and programs happen. This year has given me the great gift of the opportunity to see and appreciate, even more clearly than I did before, the work done by our many dedicated volunteers.

I think we have had a good year. I know that our congregation is growing in

(Continued on page 2)

Worship Calendar

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

June 7 "Discovering Our Treasures" Children and adults of all ages made many discoveries in the Children's Religious Exploration and Adult Religious Enrichment programs this year. Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael and Linda Weaver celebrate these discoveries and the many people who made them possible, as they invite you to consider what you treasure. The children's choir and their director, Kris Adams, will share their gift of music.

June 14 "The Service of the Living Tradition" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael leads this annual service of recognition, reflection, and passage. We will honor the births, deaths, and major life transitions that occurred between June 2008 and June 2009. Seniors from our Youth Group will bridge to young-adult hood, and we will hear special music from Kris Rector and members of the UUS Choir. The annual UUS Picnic follows our service at Claude Moore Park.

June 21 "On Being a Father and Other Things I Know Nothing About" The jUStUUS Rock Band and Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael celebrate fathers, and the beginning of the summer worship season, with live contemporary music! The service will invite us to reflect on the presence or absence of male role models in our lives.

June 28 "What does it mean to be green?" John Botts and Scott Findley welcome us to explore spirituality and meaning in our lives as we remember that we are part of a greater, natural world. This service will celebrate our environment and ask how we can ensure the integrity of our fragile planet.

See page 2 for news about our exciting summer services!

(Continued from Minister page 1)

On occasion I walk around our building in the early evening, and stare into our neighbor's windows looking for any signs of mobility. But I doubt I will see any for a good while. Maybe I would be better served by pausing here, and using this waiting time as a spiritual encounter.

The new space may not be ours until January, even March, maybe later. I do not and cannot set the pace for life, and cannot force this transition to occur any faster. I can, however, use this time to practice making waiting a sustainable endeavor.

Think of that quintessential experience of waiting in a long grocery line. You can choose frustration, even isolation – getting angry at the clerk for moving so slowly and/or at the customers for chatting or forgetting items in their carts. Or you can pick up one of those ridiculous magazines and laugh at the pictures, or start up a conversation with someone who has a sallow expression, or play with a child sitting in a nearby cart. When you do the latter, the experience of waiting itself slips away and a bevy of other experiences slip in. You move from waiting in expectation of some desired end, to making multi-various other ends possible – joy, camaraderie, even compassion.

If this is possible in a grocery line, maybe it is here as well. Maybe this long wait for a new space will afford unforeseen opportunities. Maybe it will give us the chance to deepen our spiritual capacity – the chance to transform the act of waiting into the art of waiting. Ready, set, wait!

(Continued from President page 1)

numbers, strength, excitement, and enthusiasm. I would like to think that all of this is my doing, but of course it isn't. It is the end result of all of the efforts of all of us.

In Bonnie Lepoff, our next Board President, we have an person of high intelligence, energy, and level-headedness. I know that she will find her term as rewarding as I have found mine. Thank you all again for letting me serve you this year.

Summer Service Excitement!

This summer's liturgical theme is Unity. As the Buddha has said, "He who experiences the unity of life sees his own Self in all beings, and all beings in his own Self, and looks on everything with an impartial eye."

July 5 "Spirituality of Food: Are You What You Eat?" Spirituality of Food Class/Tammi Marcoullier

July 12 "Potlicker for the Seeker's Soul." Wendi Manuel-Scott offers this southern twist on "Chicken Soup for the Soul," sharing the nuggets of wisdom that her great-grandmother, Big Ma, shared with her, and, most importantly, how those shared "truths" have guided her spiritual journey.

July 19 "In Praise of Summertime" Steve Dick and Terry Dick offer music, poetry, and reflections of summers past. The service will feature Paul Roche and the jUUStUUS band.

July 26 "A Play on Words" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael reflects on the emotive aspects of land, giving special attention to the names we give Earth's features. Do you know what a dryki is, or a pokelogan? Both are words native to this country and our experience of this land.

August 2 "But I know how it ends!" Katrina Thralls admits, "for years I refused to watch the movie 'Titanic' because I already knew how it ended." *Know anybody who reads the last page of the book first?* We will explore the concept of knowing the end before the beginning, and how it affects the journey.

August 9 "Lughnassadh – a grain Festival" WEBS (the Women's Earth-Based Spirituality Group) led by Kim Fitzgerald will facilitate this midsummer celebration.

August 16 "Living in the Past" Join Reverend Scott Sammler-Michael for a special music service as we explore the beauty and challenges of history, especially when we work to honor and account for the history of our nation and our church while devising plans for our future. Rev Scott will be joined by several musical guests.

August 23 "The Social Gospel" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael considers the religious leaders of the Social Gospel movement and the relevance of their mission today. At a time when technology is breeding isolation, what can we learn from the liberally religious theology that influenced Martin Luther King and many others? This is the first of a 2009-10 sermon series entitled "The Liberal Religious Landscape."

August 30 "Emerson's Influence" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael reflects on the transcendentalist bard's faith, philosophy, and lived religion. Emerson said: "A Person will worship something, have no doubt about that ... therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshiping we are becoming." What did Emerson worship? And how did his worship change our religious landscape?

September 6 "Songs of God" Tim Einstein offers Poetic expressions about a prime moving deity and His natural manifestations. We will investigate how these are part of every epoch of human history - from emotional idolatry to humanistic theism. The poetic sensitivity suggests, and sometimes rises from, a spiritual (and romantic) sensibility. Selected readings of these expressions, with some explication, put us in closer touch with a most basic human impulse.

UUA President Candidates

You may have heard that there is a presidential race going on right now. You heard correctly! There are two candidates running for the presidency of the Unitarian Universalist Association; the election will take place the afternoon of June 27 at the General Assembly (GA) in Salt Lake City. The term is four years. Our current president, Rev Bill Sinkford, has served for two terms and is not eligible to run again. The two candidates are Rev Peter Morales and Rev Dr Laurel Hallman. I invite you to go to their web sites and a UUA site to learn about their platforms, read their responses to a set of questions, and hear them speak at different forums. We will have a town hall meeting after services on Sunday, May 31' to discuss the positions of these two candidates.

Why do we care? We care because UUS has two votes at GA and your opinions will affect those votes. Paul and Stephanie Roche were elected at our annual meeting as our delegates. They will vote for the presidential candidate whom we, the members of UUS, agree is the right one to lead our denomination into the next decade.

Check out these web sites:

Laurel Hallman's site: <http://www.hallmanforuupresident.com/>

Peter Morales' site: <http://www.moralesforuupresident.org/>

The transcript from a forum at last year's GA: <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/governance/elections/president/117737.shtml>

If you have any questions, please send me an email. And, if you are reading this before the May 31, please plan on attending the Town Hall meeting.

Bonnie Lepoff

Vice Pres UUS Board of Trustees

blepoff@cox.net

New Member News!

Tim Einstein was born in Baltimore, Maryland, but Tim has lived in the Washington area most of his life. He has been married to Cathleen for thirty-two years. He is a freelance writer and has been published both on the internet as well as in local magazines and newspapers. Although writing is his passion, he loves good music and good food and enjoys cooking.



Cathleen and Tim Einstein

Cathleen Einstein was born in New York, but has lived in the Maryland and Virginia area since leaving "the city" some forty years ago. Since that time, she has worked in the private sector as a technical manager and principal consultant and is currently with the Treasury Department. She enjoys her time at home in the garden, growing vegetables and herbs that eventually end up in the "Einstein cuisine."



Reverend Anya, Julia Mariani, and Howie Snowdon

Howie Snowdon and Julia Mariani live in Lansdowne with their dogs Daisy and Zoe. They are new arrivals to Loudoun County and have only lived here less than a year. They enjoy spending time together outside as well as dining out and going to great films. Both grew up just outside Scranton, Pennsylvania. In fact, they actually first met and attended school together as far back as first grade!

After graduating from Penn State, Howie enlisted in the U.S. Army and spent over three years living abroad before returning home to Pennsylvania. Soon after, he began working as an analyst for BAE Systems in Herndon, Virginia. He is now in the Army Reserves and has begun to pursue an MBA in Finance. He is interested in economics and politics, reading, playing with the dogs, playing bass, and attending concerts.

After graduating from Keystone College with a degree in communications and writing, Julia worked for a year as an assistant teacher and professional tutor in English and Communications; she spent the next year at Syracuse University pursuing dual masters in secondary English and inclusive special education. Too far from home (and Howie) Julia returned to PA just as Howie returned from active duty. She is currently deciding where to continue her education; whatever she does, she knows it will involve teaching and writing. Her passions include youth advocacy, nature, and above all, writing.

Howie and Julia feel fortunate to have found UUS because it was *completely* by chance. However, many warm and welcoming individuals in the congregation immediately made them realize quickly that they were in the right place. They both feel fortunate to be a part of a community where they can continue to explore their faith as they enter the next part of their lives together.

But what are they most excited about these days? They're getting married on October 9, 2009, back in Scranton, Pennsylvania!

June & Summer RE

DATE	TOPIC	LEADER	ASSISTANT	NURSERY	FLOATER
June 14	Trail Clean-Up	L. Weaver	New UUS Parents	M. Stafford	-----
June 21	What is Peace?	J. Thede	M. Dougherty	Need Help	S. Greene
June 28	What is Fair?	N. George	J. Heaton	Need Help	Need Help
July 5	Valuing Myself and Others	J. Thede	Need Help	Need Help	Need Help
July 12	Celebrating Our Differences	Need Help	N. George	Need Help	Need Help
July 19	Listening	T. Thede	D. Badgley	Need Help	Need Help
July 26	Feelings	Need Help	A. Lum	S. Greene	Need Help
Aug. 2	Caring for Others	Need Help	S. Greene	Need Help	Need Help
Aug. 9	Resolving Conflict	Need Help	M. Dougherty	Need Help	Need Help
Aug. 16	Forgiveness	T. Thede	Need Help	Need Help	Need Help
Aug. 23	Play Creatively	Need Help	Need Help	Need Help	Need Help
Aug. 30	Caring for the Earth	M. Dougherty	D. Badgley	Need Help	Need Help
Sept. 6	What Can I Do?	L. Weaver	N. George	Need Help	Need Help

Together We Play: Summer RE

Linda Weaver, DRE

This summer's Religious Exploration (RE) program, *Together We Play*, encourages children to develop the skills necessary to play, work, and live well with others. Stories, games, and other activities help children learn what it means to live lives of peace and justice.

During the summer we offer one class for children in kindergarten through 6th grade. The nursery is available for younger children every Sunday. Older children and youth may attend the services or help in RE or the nursery.

Each Sunday one leader, one assistant, and one nursery helper are needed. We are also looking for one additional person each Sunday to be available to help in the nursery or RE class. Leaders will receive a lesson plan with a suggested story, one or two discussion questions, a game, and a craft idea. Assistants and nursery helpers just show up and help watch the children. To find out more about the program or to volunteer, contact Linda Weaver at re-director@uusterling.org.

The Roving Reporter

Susan Rose

As the school year ends and summer begins, what's going on in your life?

Noah (12) School was OK. We will be going to see our cousins in New York State, also family in California. And friends from Germany may be visiting!

Ben (10) We go to the pool a lot, and around the 4th of July we go to Washington State and visit our grandparents!

Libby (8) We'll see our baby cousin there!

Natalie (12) I'll be visiting my grandma in Puerto Rico in July, and helping out, and school's good!

Molly (9) I'll be going to summer day camp. I know it will be awesome. There will be field trips every day!

Shannon (11) School was really great (I've gotten all A's this year.) We might go to a lake house in Seneca, New York, with relatives!

Explore the World

Linda Weaver, DRE

We are exploring world religions and cultures in children's RE next year. Elementary age children will hear stories, do crafts, play games, and celebrate holidays from around the world. Children in middle school will study religions in the local area and visit some of our neighboring faith communities. There are still many opportunities to contribute to these exciting learning experiences and to help ensure that there is a meaningful children's RE program at UUS. We especially need people to lead classes at least once a month in September through June. Lesson plans are provided and the Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) is available if you have questions or need any assistance. There are also openings for people to assist in RE, help arrange child care for special events, plan or help with children's activities during special events, or help chaperon field trips.

To find out more about the RE program at UUS and the volunteer opportunities in RE, contact Linda Weaver at re-director@uusterling.org.

ADAMS Condemns Attack Plots

The following is reprinted from a recent ADAMS center press release. ADAMS and UUSterling work together as member congregations of Loudoun Interfaith BRIDGES (Building Relationships for Interfaith Dialogue, Goodwill, Education, and Service).

All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) is relieved to learn that law enforcement agencies were able to foil a plot to blow up two synagogues in New York, and is appalled that suspects planned to attack places of worship and to commit crimes against national institutions.

We reject unequivocally such violence or any attempt to undermine public safety and national security. We are repulsed by the hatred directed towards the Jewish community and stand in solidarity with our Jewish neighbors...Several media reports referred to the suspects as Muslim. ADAMS rejects the association of Islam with such criminality, hatred and bigotry.

ADAMS has been working actively in interfaith efforts and building bridges of respect and understanding between Faith Communities and All People. ADAMS states clearly that those who commit acts of terror, murder and cruelty in the name of Islam are not only destroying innocent lives, but are also betraying the values of the faith they claim to represent. No injustice done to Muslims can ever justify the massacre of innocent people, and no act of terror will ever serve the cause of Islam.

We repudiate and dissociate ourselves from any Muslim group or individual who commits such brutal and un-Islamic acts. We refuse to allow our faith to be held hostage by the criminal actions of a tiny minority acting outside the teachings of both the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Please see ADAMS Statement on Condemning Terrorism and Fatwa Against Terrorism at <http://www.adamscenter.org/Media/Articles/ADAMSCondemnsTerrorism.aspx>. Please also see more about ADAMS at <http://www.adamscenter.org/Media/MediaCenter/Default.aspx>. *Peace, Shalom, Salaam*

Nominations for 2009 Social Justice Awards

Last year, UUSJ honored Rev. Phyllis Hubbell with the Minister's Award for her steadfast advocacy for the rights of LGBT Marylanders over many years. Rev. Hubbell caught the attention of the media, grew the advocacy for equal rights among citizens, and provided an embrace of justice for all. She led the UUSJ Marriage Equality Task Force. This year, we'll again honor UUs whose actions inspire, support, and express effective social action. Nominations are open for the Second Annual UUSJ Awards to further our vision of a vibrant and united regional community of UUs working for social justice. Submit your nominations by June 30 to CSnavely@uusj.org. 2009 Awards: UUSJ Collaboration Award; UUSJ Economic Justice Award; UUSJ Giraffe Award; UUSJ GLBTQ Award; UUSJ Youth Group Award (up to age 18) Application at www.uusj.org

Travel and Work: A Civil Rights Journey

Things might be glum in the employment sector, but the United States is experiencing a boom in community service and outreach. The UU Service Committee (UUSC) JustWorks trips are transformative opportunities for people interested in human rights, grassroots activism, and community service. Join us in a Freedom Summer: A Civil Rights Journey (U.S. South, July 11-18, 2009). E-mail Anna Bartlett, abartlett@uusj.org for more information on these trips or how to apply.

June: Torture Awareness Month

Visit the National Religious Campaign Against Torture web site for information and opportunities to bring Torture Awareness to our congregation: <http://www.nrcat.org/>.

End Workplace Discrimination Petition

There is no statewide Virginia law to protect people from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. However, more than two-thirds of Fortune 500 companies have nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation and 125 of these company policies include gender identity. Two statewide polls indicate that 87 percent of Virginians believe gay and lesbian employees have the right to be protected from workplace discrimination. Equality Virginia needs your help to translate this broad public support into action at the 2010 Virginia General Assembly. Be counted. Equality Virginia is collecting names on our End Workplace Discrimination petition. It is important for us to have these names to show members of the GA the number of Virginia voters who support this issue. Sign the online petition today at <http://www.equalityvirginia.org/site/PageServer>

Slavery Is Still Here?

A Program about Slavery in the U.S. and Beyond: 27 Million and Growing

Sunday, June 7, 11:30 a.m. at the Accotink UU Church: 10125 Lakehaven Court Burke, VA 22015. Please see www.accotinkuuc.org

Slavery did not end long ago in the U.S.; it still exists, even in the Washington, D.C. area. Find out where it is, why it persists, and how you can help end it at this forum following Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael's 10:30 a.m. service about Juneteenth. The program begins with a 30-minute video presentation, followed by a discussion period with two anti-slavery experts: Ginny Baumann, Director of Partnerships at Free the Slaves, and Kathy Sreedhar, Director of the UU Holdeen India Program.

Can't find the calendar in this newsletter? Look for your free online calendar at UUSterling.org or a genuine paper copy at UUS!



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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

Board of Trustees: *President* - Dave Miller; *Vice President* - Bonnie Lepoff; *Secretary* - Jeff Chandler;
Co-Treasurers - Alyssa Lum and Paul Roche; *At-large* - Scott Findley, Ken Ward, Linda Reeder, Belinda Bullock

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

Communications Committee Chair: Susan Miller

Editor: Bob Brown

Media Relations: Terry Dick

Production: Jeff Chandler, Susan Miller

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

Submission Deadlines

6/19 for July/August

8/21 for September

9/18 for October