



What's with UUS

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



Minister's Message



UUS – JPD
– UUA

The Jumble & What It All Means

Rev. Anya
Sammler-
Michael

“Unitarian Universalism” is a name with profound meaning and a deep historical past. The words Unitarian and Universalist root in the brilliance (later dubbed heresy) of the early Christian church father, Origen, who believed that the faith Christ taught was a faith of one united God and universal salvation. And through the centuries, the words Unitarian and Universalist have graced the faith statements of countless priests, ministers, prophets, and justice advocates. But there is no denying that they are a mouthful! So much that some of our congregations have chosen to omit the words from their name. They choose “All Souls,” “Pathways” or “Wellsprings” instead.

So, what's in a name – that if it were shortened and made easier to pronounce wouldn't smell as sweet?

I happen to love our rich history and find great weight in the name Unitarian Universalist – a weight that I would not shrug off for a simpler pronunciation. However, I recognize a dilemma. Since our name is so long, many of us readily call ourselves UU's. The shortened version has a cute ‘insiders’ ring to it. This to me feels dangerously unwelcoming.

We all try desperately hard to encourage others to appreciate our faith. In a way,

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President's Message



Tending the Garden

Bryan George

Stewardship – the word conjures up a variety of images, impressions, and shades of

meaning. A steward, strictly defined, is one who cares for something he or she doesn't personally own – how this is interpreted depends greatly on the context. As we enter the time of our annual stewardship drive, it's worth considering the definition from the context of liberal religion.

In the context of religion in general, “stewardship” has a rich set of meanings, focused primarily on caring for gifts bestowed by powers greater than ourselves.

In Judeo-Christian belief systems (where the term is most often used), theological stewardship refers to a covenant between Man and God. God provided the gift of the Garden of Eden, and it is Man's responsibility to tend and keep that garden (see [Genesis 2:15](#)). In spiritual belief systems centered on Nature, stewardship refers to our direct tie to the Earth, and to the correlation of our own well-being to how well (or poorly) we treat the Earth, both in reality and as a metaphysical being.

Unitarian Universalists, of course, share and appreciate the concept of stewardship theology, succinctly expressed in our seventh principle promoting “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

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Worship Calendar

March 2nd – “Standing on the Side of Love” – Our stewardship-drive-kick-off worship with Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael and the UUS Choir. An Inquirer's class for recent visitors follows at 12:00.

March 9th – “Whither Music?” Daniel Boothe, our director of music, will lead an aurally rich service that contemplates the meaning and purpose of music in our lives. UUS members will share their favorite recorded songs while Daniel invites us to examine “The Unanswered Question,” by Charles Ives

March 16th – “Religion, Nationalism, and Tribalism” Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael contemplates the connection between these three social manifestations and seeks to determine if they spring from one common source. This is the auction sermon, purchased and proposed by Mike Berger.

March 23rd – “Resurrecting a vision for living” Rev. Anya Sammler Michael will lead a service that celebrates Jesus of Nazareth, and the teaching that his bold living conveys.

March 30th – “And You Welcomed Me” – Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael and Scott Sammler-Michael consider the awesome and often overlooked gift of hospitality while the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling draw their Stewardship Drive to a close.

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the name helps – it is a marker of the faith’s historic depth; but in a way it hinders – it is so long that we shorten it to the enigmatic ‘UU.’

Interestingly, one of the struggles for Unitarian Universalists is combating the perception that we are an enigma! A faith without a creed?! A congregation that doesn’t relate to a hierarchy of religions leaders like bishops, popes or Ayatollahs?! A community that gathers to seek where the spiritual practices of meditation, prayer, and reflection co-exist?! A faith that roots and finds great significance in Christian theology but opens to accept diverse means of naming truth?!

It seems that we need to work diligently to proclaim the groundedness of our faith, to prove that we are rooted through rationality and spirituality to a genuine search for truth and meaning – to show that we are not enigmas, but rather deeply connected to a tradition of religions liberalism.

Does our name help us in this pursuit or hinder us? One definitive hindrance is the proliferation of Acronyms and Abbreviations. Here are a few:

UUS – The Unitarian Universalists of Sterling, our dear congregation.

CUUMA – the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association – the local association of clergy from Southern Maryland, D.C. and Northern Virginia. We meet monthly to worship, share announcements, and learn from one another.

JPD-UUA – The Joseph Priestly District of the Unitarian Universalist Association – our local district that is not really so local- covering Southern N.J., Delaware, Maryland, Northern Virginia and D.C. The JPD is run by a district executive, currently Rev. Richard Speck, and his staff. The JPD provides resources and orchestrates events for the JPD member congregations like the District Assembly (a joyful gathering of lay and professional leaders every spring) and on-line training programs. To find out more about the JPD or the District Assembly go to www.jpduua.org

UUA – The Unitarian Universalist Association is the organizing structure –

an association of over 1000 member congregations, governed by a Board of Trustees, elected at the yearly General Assembly by delegates of the member congregations. To find out more about the UUA or General Assembly visit

www.uua.org

The list could go on. I hope this is a good introduction to the UU *Acronymology!*

What are your thoughts on our name? Do you readily share that you are a ‘UU’ or a ‘Unitarian Universalist?’ Or do you say that you are simply religiously liberal or offer some other accounting? What is in a name?

Regardless of how you share your faith, I welcome you to consider the UU dilemma – how it is a struggle for us to combat the perception that we are an enigma and proclaim that we are a viable, honest, and life affirming faith – a faith that is a gift to our increasingly polarized world.

And may we each and all share what we have come to honor in a way that is understandable and welcoming.

Rev Anya

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However, UUs prefer to understand the concept of theological stewardship without committing to a system of mythology about the nature of the universe and our place in it. In fact, UUs prefer to project stewardship outward from our congregations, because a significant part of our faith tradition involves synthesizing a collective vision of belief from our individual perceptions and wisdom.

Think about that for a minute.

From a strictly theological point of view, contributing to a traditional church is unnecessary. Traditional theology is prescribed, the answers known and written – again from the strictly theological point of view, the church (or temple or synagogue or mosque or...) exists solely for the purpose of communicating and reinforcing those answers to the faithful.

By contrast, a Unitarian Universalist congregation such as UUS is integral to the definition of our denomination’s

system of faith, because Unitarian Universalism is significantly informed by the understandings of belief that members of our congregations bring to it. For us, then, theological stewardship is very much tied to our stewardship of our congregations – when they thrive, our faith thrives.

So, to the Members and Friends of our beloved congregation, I put forth a challenge during our stewardship drive. As you consider what is an appropriate level of financial support to pledge toward your stewardship of UUS this year, ask yourself the question a different way:

What is an appropriate level of financial support toward the stewardship of my beliefs?

There is, indeed, little difference between those two questions – that is one of the greatest blessings of Unitarian Universalism, and one of its greatest challenges. None of us is about to write a holy text we will promulgate over the centuries, through bloody conquest if necessary, to ensure that our beliefs survive.

Ours is, borrowing from the Biblical metaphor, a garden – a wonderful, beautiful garden filled with a delicious variety of beliefs that is much, much greater than the sum of its parts. It is a living thing by definition, and we are responsible for tending and keeping it well and thriving, and to ensure it is delivered in good health to following generations as we pass, because, quite simply, nobody else will do that for us.

With the ministry of Rev. Anya well underway, it has become clear to me that we are presented with the single best opportunity we have had to build UUS into a vibrant congregation. Our congregation now has the potential to bring a tremendously positive, affirming concept of religious practice to the world, at precisely the right place and precisely the right time to have an impact far beyond what we are capable of imagining now.

To realize the full potential of our opportunity will require a significant investment of resources, and those resources will largely come from within the congregation. You will see and hear

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Faith, Friends, & Fun

Linda Weaver

In preparation for the Stewardship Drive, the children talked about UUS on February 17. They were introduced to the word "stewardship" and thought about how both adults and children take care of UUS. For children, this is well described by the basic rules followed in Religious Exploration (RE): respect yourself, respect others, respect materials, and have fun! The children learned that part of stewardship also includes sharing your own likes and dreams. They had an opportunity to do this beginning with the guest speaker's (Lisa Kemper's) Message for all Ages, in which the children shared what UUS means to them. Later, in RE, the Lower Elementary and Tween classes continued by telling what they like about UUS.

The children are enthusiastic about coming to UUS to see their friends, and they enjoy spending time together. They like being with a large number of children in RE on Sunday mornings. This creative group of children enjoys doing arts and crafts, but they also like to talk, learn and work for peace. Even though they like to be active, they also appreciate the relatively serene atmosphere at UUS.

The children were invited to each imagine his or her own perfect church.

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much more about this year's stewardship drive from the committee led by Paul Roche, and I will defer to his ability to describe the details of our stewardship goals, which is far superior to my own.

I will simply ask that you all help tend our garden as best as you can – nothing more, nothing less.

Yours in Faith,

Bryan

They took an imaginary trip through this church and noticed what they saw, heard, tasted, smelled, and how they felt. After this guided meditation, they shared their discoveries. They all wanted to be with a large group of friends. They heard music in their dream UUS - both the choir and children singing. They also got to play musical instruments. In this ideal church, there was at least one large RE room with lots of children. Several mentioned imagining a peaceful environment. They also talked about a playground and a large area outdoors where RE classes could meet or children could play.

Over and over, parents mention how important it is to them to have a place where their children can make friends and build community with people who accept them and their families, no matter their diversity of family composition or beliefs. For many, this is the most important aspect of UUS and the RE program.

However, they also appreciate so much more about this community and RE. Last year several parents met to talk about children's RE and to share goals they feel are important for this program. They want their children to learn about Unitarian Universalism, develop the ability to explain what it is, and learn to be compassionate and caring. They feel it is important that children learn about world religions, so they can better understand and respect the diverse beliefs they will encounter in their lives. They feel that older children should be able to identify and use religious texts as they search for answers. In the true spirit of Unitarian Universalism, they believe it is important that children develop an understanding of their own beliefs and that they realize it is a lifelong search. These parents also concurred with the UUS philosophy of Religious Growth and Learning, that this should take place in an environment that encourages curiosity, a search for answers, a sense of awe, and community building.

Ask the children about their experiences and their dreams for the church. Then share your thoughts with your family and with the children of the congregation. May we dream together of a UUS that offers even more faith, friends, and fun!

Ordination and Installation

Ordination Installation Committee

Ordination: The ceremony of consecration to the ministry.

Installation: The ceremony of installing a minister at a particular post.

On April 13, 2008, the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling will be called to ordain and install their minister, Anya Sammler-Michael. For ministers, ordinations happen only once in a lifetime. For congregations, ordinations and installations are a rare opportunity to participate in a beautiful and meaningful office of stewardship and celebration. There will be a number of ways for everyone to participate, but the most important of all is your presence. Please save the dates for:

A pre-celebration at UUS on Saturday, April 12, 2008, from 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

The installation and ordination service will be held at Bull Run Unitarian Universalists on Sunday, April 13, 2008, from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

The Ordination / Installation Committee members are Celinda Chandler, Rosalie Clavez, and Gus Douoguih. They are supported by the Committee on Ministry members: Steve Dick, Elise Nicely, and Stephanie Roche.

Easter Egg Hunt

Linda Weaver

The annual UUS Easter Egg Hunt will take place after the service on March 23. Just before the announcements, participating children will go to the Religious Exploration space. They will be escorted back after the youth finish hiding the filled eggs.

Religious Exploration (RE) Schedule

	Date	Lower Elementary Topic	Leader / Helper	Tween Topic	Leader	Nursery Adult
	2	Jesus & John the Baptist	Chandler Findley	Mary & John the Baptizer	Rothman	Glass
	9	Social Action Sunday – Houses & Homes	Weaver George	Social Action Sunday – Houses & Homes	Weaver George	Confoy
March	16	Esther (Purim)	Connors Bullock	Jesus	Fitzgerald	Need Help
	23	Equinox / Easter	No RE	Equinox / Easter	No RE	S. Roche
	30	Social Action Sunday - Fair Trade	Weaver Thede	Social Action Sunday – Fair Trade	Weaver Thede	Confoy
	6	Ministry of Compassion	Chandler Confoy	Paul	Rothman	Need Help
April	13	Jesus Teaches by Telling Stories	Connors George	The Gospels	Fitzgerald	Need Help
	20	Taking Action 1	Weaver Thede	Taking Action 1	Weaver Thede	Need Help
	27	Ruth & Naomi	Fitzgerald Confoy	No class – Attend Youth Service	No class	Need Help
	4	Taking Action 2	Reeder Weaver Confoy	Taking Action 2	Reeder Weaver Confoy	M. Stafford
May	11	Mothers Day / Flower Communion	No RE	Mothers Day / Flower Communion	No RE	Confoy
	18	Celebration Sunday	Chandler George	Review & Celebration	Rothman	Need Help
	25	RE Service Rehearsal	Weaver Thede	RE Service Rehearsal	Weaver Thede	Need Help
June	1	RE Service	No RE	Re Service	No RE	Need Help
	8	Trail Clean Up	Chandler Confoy	Trail Clean Up	Chandler Confoy	Need Help

Interfaith Peace Witness

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

UU's around the region will join in an Interfaith Peace Witness, Friday, March 7 at noon.

Gather at All Souls Unitarian for dynamic UU worship led by Rev. Robert Hardies and others; with sermon by Rev. Bill Sinkford, president of the UUA; and music from the All Souls choir. Noon services will be taking place all around the city in various denominational and faith settings, preceding an interfaith peace witness from 2:30 - 4:00 pm (Upper Senate Park is the tentative location), and optional civil disobedience to follow.

Those gathered at All Souls may elect to travel by public transportation to the rally site. Directions can be found at www.all-souls.org. For more information on the events, visit www.uua.org/uuawo or contact Alex Winnett at AWinnett@uua.org. RSVP to Rev. Anya if you wish to carpool (minister@uusterling.org).

Mosaic Harmony Spring Concert!

Judy Gruner

As you may be aware, several of us in this congregation are members of, or have been involved with, a group called Mosaic Harmony. It is a gospel choir that makes inspiring music for many good causes around the beltway, while celebrating its diversity.

I want to bring to your attention the opportunity to attend one of our upcoming fundraising concerts to be held two consecutive Saturday evenings, April 26 and May 3, at McLean High School. Please check our website at www.mosaicharmony.com for details or talk to me about ordering tickets. I thank you in advance for your support.

Joseph Priestly District Conference

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael



Download an Application and brochure at www.jpduua.org under the heading: JPD Conference.



Roving Reporter

By Susan Rose

My friend Shay has a very special birthday—February 29—so she is 16 instead of 64 this year (a leap year baby)! Her birthday reminds me spring is almost here. What signs of spring have you been noticing?

Anna (7) A single robin!

Madison (7) A few buds on some of the trees and little tulips!

Holly (9) I've seen a few flowers!

Logan (5) Little weeds coming up, and worms!

Luke (5) Ladybugs!

Kevin (14) Not yet—it's too cold!

WhaleCoast Alaska 2008

Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to experience our eco-cultural program this July in our 12th year! See *REAL* Alaska, with UU homestays in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Seward, Juneau, and Sitka. UUs host events and lead tours. We visit Tlingit and Inupiat Native Alaskans, see lots of wildlife like bears, moose, caribou, whales, sea otters and bald eagles, and visit Denali and other National Parks. Dave Frey, a 27-year Alaska resident, leads the programs. Visit our website, www.wuurl.org, email waltonfrey@gci.net, or phone 907-322-4966 for a brochure. Reservation deadline March 15.

Coffee Hour

We all enjoy coffee and conversation after the service ... and we really enjoy all the scrumptious treats! Below is the schedule for your family's turn to bring in something wholesome to share. Try to avoid crumbly things that will drop on the floor. Non-sugary things are also appreciated.

Month	Last Name
March	T - Z
April	A - C
May	D - F
June	G - K
July	L - P
August	R - S

Small Group Ministry

Can it be March already? Does this mean spring is just around the corner? Even though we've had a relatively mild winter, I can't wait for spring. I also eagerly look forward to each small group meeting. These groups keep members and friends connected - to themselves and to others in our church community.

Our small group ministry program is an important part of UUS, providing that connection between Sunday services; this contact can be just what you need, especially if you can't make every Sunday service. More information on all small groups is available on our website (www.uusterling.org). Watch for announcements from these groups. UUS small groups are always open to new members.

New Groups

It is easy to start a small group. If you like to read and would like to discuss what you read with other UUS'ers, or if you like to watch and discuss movies, or if you like to quilt or do other fabric related things, you could start a group. More information is available on our website under the drop-down menu Ministry/Small Groups, or contact Shelley Tamres (Board liaison to Small Groups) at shelleytam@aol.com.

Choir

The choir rehearses Monday evenings plus Sunday mornings when we sing, which is at least two Sundays a month. We are rehearsing now for our Easter service. You won't want to miss it! If you would like to join us, please see our music director, Dan Boothe, or any choir member.

Lost and Found

On February 10, a 5x7 picture frame was found in the supply closet at church. The picture is of two kittens in a cardboard box. The frame is wood with gold trim. If this is yours, please contact Diana Menefee at 703-777-4780.

Covenant Groups

Covenant Groups meet once a month during the school year to discuss a topic related to spiritual growth. Our most recent topic was "What We Love." We shared personal stories of people, places and things we love. As a member of a group, you will be able to engage in these kinds of deeper conversations and you will get to know the other members of your group in a way that might not otherwise be possible. There are four groups this year meeting once a month **on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday** evenings and Tuesday at noon. Send an email to Bonnie Lepoff at blepoff@cox.net or contact Rev Anya if you are interested in joining a group or just learning more.

Several people have expressed interest in meeting on Saturday. If you would like to join a Saturday group, please contact Bonnie or Rev Anya.

Elder Care Support Group

The Elder Care Support Group meets for breakfast at 8:30 am the second Sunday of each month at the Virginia Kitchen in Herndon to discuss issues related to caring for our parents. The coffee is always ready for us. If you would like to join this support group, contact Mike Berger at m.d.berger@ieee.org or just show up.

Men's Spirituality Group

The Men's Spirituality Group is meeting on second Fridays for conversation and comradery. Watch for meeting announcements or contact Tony Thede or Al Swett for more information.

Celebrate 60!

Rosalie and Bonnie are turning 60 this April! Can you believe it? Neither can they, but it's true! And they want to share this momentous event with all of UUS by inviting everyone to their joint birthday party. This auction item event will take place Saturday April 5th at Bonnie and Bob's home in Dunn Loring. There will be food, libations, and live music courtesy of our great UUS musicians. The cost is \$30 per person. Please see Nancy McCormick, Bonnie Lepoff or Rosalie Clavez if you wish to come and didn't sign up at the auction.

Stream Monitoring

The UUS Stream Monitoring Group monitors Beaverdam Run in Ashburn. Members get together periodically to conduct a habitat survey and a biological survey according to a protocol. Results are submitted to the Loudoun County Wildlife Conservancy and the Loudoun County Watershed Watch and used for the annual "The State of Loudoun Streams" report. The Stream Monitoring Group encourages environmental stewardship, and is an opportunity to learn, interact, and commune with our local environment in a family-friendly, fun outdoor activity. Contact Scott Findley at sfind39@aol.com for more information.

Women's Earth-Based Spirituality Group (WEBS)

In this circle of UUS women, we explore the UUA sixth source of wisdom - "Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature." The UUS WEBS Group usually meets the fourth Friday of every month. Watch for the announcements. For more information, contact Kim Fitzgerald at Kimberly.fitzgerald@ngc.com.

Clothing Exchange Fund Raiser

Ladies! Do you have perfectly good clothes that you no longer wear? Do you enjoy an occasional night out with other UUS women? Here's the perfect event for you. Save Saturday night, April 19, for a UUS Ladies' clothing exchange. What's a clothing exchange, you ask. It is essentially an internal flea market. Bring yourself, any clothes you think might look good on someone else at UUS, a curiosity about who is getting rid of what, a snack to share, and your usual sense of fun. There will be a small cost for each item taken and the money will go to a cause we select. Judy Gruner, Nancy McCormick, and Bonnie Lepoff are coordinating this event which will be held at Bonnie's home. Stay tuned for more details.

Children at a typical Khasi village school



The Promise of Partnership

UUS Partner Church

UUS is exploring the prospect of becoming a partner church with a Unitarian congregation in the small village of Kut in the Khasi Hills of N.E. India.

This is the second in a series of articles to provide more information about that possibility.

UUS has a unique opportunity to grow. This growth will not necessarily increase our membership, but it will increase our understanding of the world, our values, and our beliefs. Not a bad proposition, if you think about it.

A congregational partnership is a covenant between two communities who reach across continents to join hands and journey together in faith and discovery. Such an act has the power to transform lives and alter destinies.

The collaboration between partner churches fosters understanding and respect, and challenges us to appreciate cultural diversity beyond the context of our local community. Such relationships bring about mutual growth by offering us a lens for viewing the many facets of our UU faith. There are many ways to expand your horizons by getting involved in the interaction right here at

home. Additionally, there are opportunities to visit your partner church, on your own or as part of organized trips.

Partnering asks many things of us, yet gives back much in return. It asks us to trust in unseen possibilities and to understand that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts - that synergy emerges when people forge connections based on shared commitments. Partnering allows us to explore spiritual truths about the unity of all creation and can help us move beyond what we believe to be true to what we know to be true.

By turning our collective gaze outward beyond our local community and extending a hand of friendship to strangers on the other side of the world, we are living out the cherished UU principle that we are all part of the same web of creation. What affects one, affects us all. Such an affirmation of global citizenship has unending possibilities that return dividends beyond what can be measured.

Becoming a partner church also provides a way to directly experience (and test) that unity we hear about every Sunday when we join hands at the end of our service...the unity that makes us all one "in spite of

time, death, and the space between the stars." Partnering can give personal and concrete expression to the "silent witness of that unity." In so doing, we are taking decisive steps towards the UU vision of a world community.

"Our faith is a thread connecting us together no matter how far apart we are." - D. Khriam, Minister, Unitarian Union of N.E. India

As D. Khriam points out in the quote above, our UU faith is like a woven cloth – one that comprises strands of belief which vary in texture and hue. The intertwining of the strands provides both strength and beauty. The fabric of our faith becomes richer and more vibrant as more strands are woven together. We at UUS form one strand in the cloth. The Unitarians in Kut form another. Let us take delight in the interweaving of these two cherished strands of faith.

If you have questions about our partner church opportunity or want to get involved, please contact any of the following individuals: Mike Berger, Rosalie Clavez, E.B. Kirkbride, Linda Reeder, Susan Rose, Al Swett, or Shelley Tamres.

There is also more information at the UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC) website at www.uupcc.org.

**** Stay tuned for next month's article where we will answer specific questions about a UUS partner church relationship with Kut.**



The school and teachers in Kut

INTERFAITH PEACE WITNESS 2008

Join Thousands of People of Faith, Including Hundreds of Unitarian Universalists, As We March on Washington to Promote Peace and Justice!

March 6-
Educational meetings on current peace issues. Hosted by F.O.R. and Christian Peace Fellowship.

Located at **"The Methodist Building,"**
100 Maryland Ave. NE

For More Information please visit:
olivebranchinterfaith.org

For More Ways your Church Can Get involved, Please Visit:
uua.org/socialjustice



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

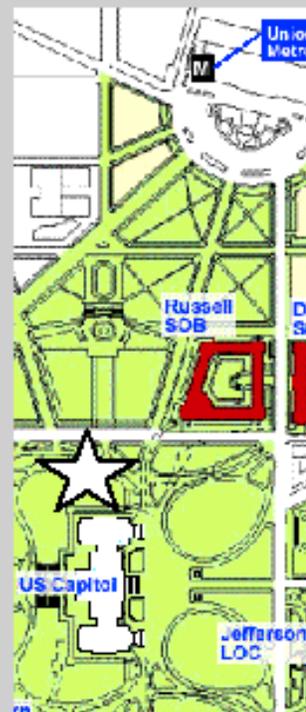
The Unitarian Universalist Association is a member of the Olive Branch Interfaith Peace Partnership; a coalition of over a dozen progressive, spiritual organizations.

March 7- Worship Service at All Souls, Unitarian.
Rev. William G. Sinkford and Rev. Robert Hardies presiding.
12-1:30pm 1500 Harvard St NW

March 7-
Interfaith Peace
Witness
2pm-4:30 Upper
Senate Park

Guest Speakers,
Live Music and
"Rope of Hope"
Action.

Followed by
optional Civil
Disobedience.



UUS Board Meeting Highlights

February 7, 2008

Finance (Paul Roche Alyssa Lum)

Financial situation still strong at 1/31/08. I think there is a chance we can finish the year with less of a deficit than we expected, that would help next year.

No real threat to income foreseen.

Membership (Jeff Chandler)

Web-site – the committee will ensure visitor history updates are posted to the webmaster list for new account request validation.

Coming of Age ceremony plans have been put on hold until the 08-09 school year.

Radical Hospitality classes (Scott Sammler-Michael) on hold until after April.

Minister (Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael)

The committee on ministry did not meet due to inclement weather but is working on bringing a map to post at UUS for members and friends to record their home addresses. They are also supportive of the Ordination/Installation effort.

The membership committee hosted a New to UU class that was attended by 4 prospective members. Two have already signed the membership book, making our winter total - 4 new members. And two others have professed interest. The Membership Committee and Lori are working on crafting a new directory.

The youth, Scottie, and I gathered for pizza and conversation on January 29th. It was a blast! They are working hard on their worship service, and were fine with letting me (but only me) in on the plan. We spoke some on their abiding desire to have 'control' over their activities. I pressed that the purpose of youth groups

was, yes – to empower the youth, but that in the process it was important that a co-equal relationship developed with the youth and their advisors. I will work with them next year, if not earlier on building a covenant that expresses this co-equal relationship.

The first of 4 Lay Ministers foundations sessions had 5 participants – a good number for the work we are to do together. Paul and Celinda are planning a course for the spring on The Happiness Hypothesis. The Worlds Religions course begins on Feb. 6th and has 12 recorded participants.

I continue meeting with the local CUUMA group of ministers and a more local support group of ministers monthly. The last CUUMA meeting was on 'how we do music in our worship services' and Mary Matheny was able to attend. We learned a lot and will work with the music leadership in instituting changes.

I traveled to Richmond to speak with our representatives. It was an excellent experience one I hope to repeat at least twice yearly.

I meet with the Loudon interfaith group once a month. I have been in conversation with Mata Mandir Kaur Khalsa a local Sikh leader who is also a counselor with the Center for Pastoral Counseling. I would like her to lead a class or workshop next year on pastoral presence and listening. This could be a jumping off point for us to form our own team of pastoral care givers – or it could simply be a valuable experience. Mata is also glad to work with UUS individuals and families as a councilor.

The WA's and Terry Dick have worked together to relieve some of the WA Sunday morning burden (making coffee, cleaning up etc.) Terry has added a volunteer position to her Usher sign up for a Sunday Morning Assistant. Instructions on how to make coffee and clean up will be posted in the kitchen.

Music (Scott Findley Mary Matheny)

The music committee has formally morphed into the "UUS Music Forum"

which will meet February 25 from 7:30 – 8:00 PM, and will give everyone an opportunity to suggest names of pieces, styles of music, and ideas for collaboration! All UUS members are invited to join us in this forum and discuss our musical programming and direction!

JPD Music and Worship Arts Festival: Professional and lay worship leaders will enjoy gathering in song and spirit on Saturday, February 23, at the Unitarian Society of Germantown in Philadelphia Pennsylvania. Keynote presenter Jeannie Gagné is known for her leadership in inspirational UU contemporary worship. The registration fee will be \$35. Contact Kathy Smith at kathy@jpd.uaa.org for more information.

We are officially open to the possibility of purchasing a keyboard (piano or possibly an electronic keyboard) and some possibilities are being investigated.

The upcoming Hair service (February 24th) will be a major production that combines a good-sized rhythm section (including trumpet) with the choir.

Personnel (Gus Douoguih)

The Ordination/Installation Team will meet Saturday this week to discuss such issues as budget, logistics, invitations and related matters, among others. We have tentatively scheduled a site visit at BRUU for Monday, February 10 for members of the Team and the Reception Task Force. After that visit, we'll be in a better position to discuss and propose a draft budget for the event.

Social Action (Shelley Tamres)

January collections (\$297.50) have been sent to the Darfur Solar Cooker Project. Linda Reeder has begun monthly meetings to discuss the possibility of UUS joining the Partner Church program.

▶ March 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 5 PM–10 PM AAFJ
2 10:30 Religious Exploration 10:30 Worship Service 12 Noon Inquirer's Class	3 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	4	5 6:30 PM Understanding the World's Religions	6 7 PM Board of Trustees Meeting	7 7 PM Cleaning	8 5 PM–10 PM AAFJ
9 8:30 AM Elder Care Support Breakfast 10:30 Religious Exploration 10:30 Worship Service 3:30 AAFJ	10 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	11 7 PM Worship Associates Group 7 PM Covenant Group	12 6:30 PM Understanding the World's Religions	13	14 7:30 PM UUS Men's Group	15 6 AM– 5 PM AAFJ 10 AM–Noon Lay Ministers Foundations 5 PM–10 PM AAFJ
16 10:30 Religious Exploration 10:30 Worship Service 3:30 AAFJ	17 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	18	19 6:30 PM Understanding the World's Religions	20	21	22 5 PM–10 PM AAFJ
23 6:45 AM Easter Sunrise Service 10:30 Religious Exploration 10:30 Worship Service	24 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	25 8 AM UUS Staff Meeting	26 6:30 PM Understanding the World's Religions	27 7 PM Membership Committee Meeting 7 PM RE Committee Meeting	28 7 PM WEBS Group	29 5 PM–10 PM AAFJ
30 10:30 Religious Exploration 10:30 Worship Service 3:30 AAFJ	31 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal					

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling
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<http://www.uusterling.org>



Your Church Leadership

Minister: Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Director of Religious Exploration: Linda Weaver; **Music Director:** Daniel Boothe

Board of Trustees: *President* - Bryan George; *Vice President* - Dave Miller; *Secretary* - Jeff Chandler;
Co-Treasurers - Alyssa Lum and Paul Roche; *At-large* - Gus Douoguih, Judy Gruner, Scott Findley, Shelley Tamres

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 a.m.

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. Turn left at 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: Terry Dick; **Editor:** Linda Reeder

Production: Jeff Chandler, Susan Miller

Board Liaison: Jeff Chandler

To submit material for publication, send by email to uus-newsletter@yahoogroups.com

Submission Deadlines

3/21/08 for April

4/18/08 for May

5/23/08 for June

6/20/08 for July