



What's with UUS

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



Minister's Message



A Year by Any Other Name Would Smell as Sweet

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

I mentioned at an Inquirer's Class a few weeks back that a new schedule of Adult RE classes would be set at the beginning of next year. "January, really ... that far away," was the response. "Oh no, I said, next year... in September." There was silence. I laughed.

We can all get so used to our own ways of being in the world that we forget the idiosyncratic nature of our personal experience. September is the beginning of our new church year... when new programs begin, when we wake from the slumber of summer. If however you want to know when the new pledge or stewardship year begins, well, the answer to that one is July 1st. And then of course there is January 1st – a different sort of new year altogether ... but who really pays attention to that one anyway?

One of the most difficult things for members of a growing congregation to remember is that not everyone knows what you are talking about when you say "the beginning of the next year," or during Joys and Sorrows, "John is in the hospital," or during announcements, "the JPD meeting."

We at the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling have made a commitment to be welcoming to visitors. One half of hospitality is taking the extra time to explain what we mean when we say X, so the idiosyncrasies that make our

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President's Message



It's a Big UU World Out There!

Bonnie Lepoff

I just got back from two days in Valley Forge, PA, where Rev Anya, Linda

Weaver, and I, plus three other UUS members, attended the Joseph Priestley District Spring Conference. What is the JPD and what is a spring conference, I hear you ask. I'll answer that at the end of this column. I want to share the energy first because a very important part of this experience is sharing it with those who weren't there.

I attended three workshops and, while they weren't intentionally matched, the topics very nicely complemented each other. Strategic Planning and The Future of UUism both resonated with our strategic planning exercise last year. I listened carefully at both these workshops for ways we can turn our ideas into goals and turn our goals into action.

We would like to be a public church, involved in and known to our community. How can we get there? Some questions from the workshops that can guide us towards an answer: What percentage of our budget is spent on social justice activities? Do we have a connection with the social justice projects we fund? What percentage of our members and friends participate in these activities? Can we connect our actions with our faith? And there are questions for church leaders. Do we believe we are leading our congregation rather than just overseeing the operation? And are we developing a spiritual discipline?

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Worship Calendar

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

The liturgical theme for May is Truth. Albert Einstein wrote, "Whoever undertakes to set himself up as a judge of Truth and Knowledge is shipwrecked by the laughter of the gods." How or where do you discover truth? Have you ever judged something to be true then experienced the shipwreck of which Einstein spoke?

May 2nd "The Little Priest; the story of Norbert Capek" Norbert Capek was the leader of the Unitarian Church in Prague, Czechoslovakia during World War II. Come celebrate this brave UU martyr, who once wrote: "We prefer building to destroying. ... The [religion] we seek must be first of all for the heart: it should bring a cure for the sick heart, give joy to a sad heart, vigor to a feeble heart, courage to a fearful heart. It should put us in harmony with the infinite." This is a pulpit swap led by Reverend Scott Sammler-Michael

May 9th "Mothers' Gardens" We will celebrate our annual flower communion while honoring mothers and the bonds that sustain us throughout life. Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael will lead our intergenerational service which will be graced by the talents of our youngest musicians. Please bring one flower per

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congregation what it is do not make newcomers feel like outsiders.

Think of what it might feel like to hear someone say: "You all know Barry," when you have no idea who Barry is.

Believe me, I am not pointing a finger. Many people whom I consider mentors have shared that "a minister preaches exactly what she needs to hear." I am the one who said, "the beginning of the year" and meant September. No innocence here!

Some of this work requires recognizing who we gather to serve, when we gather. We certainly need to find a space that nurtures our spirits, but I believe it is possible to nurture our spirits while working with a depth of meaning to make certain that everyone who walks through our doors feels like he belongs ... like she has what it takes to fit in ... like they matter.

The Irish poet and philosopher John O'Donohue writes, "The hunger to belong is not merely a desire to be attached to something. It is rather sensing that great transformation and discovery become possible when belonging is sheltered and true."

We hold the keys to helping or hindering others from experiencing a sense of belonging, a sense that opens the door to transformation. That is a heavy key. Let us use it wisely and with open hearts and open arms.

May it be so.

Yours in Faith, Rev. Anya

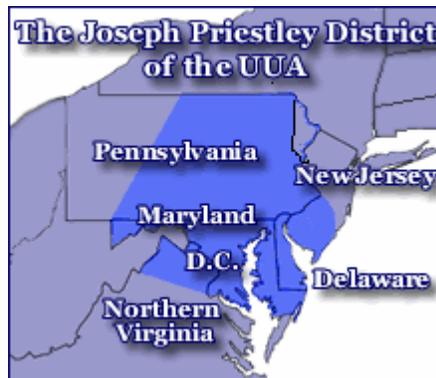


(President, Continued from page 1)

I'm rapidly running out of space, and I think you can see that this is just the start of the conversation. A very big part of my job is listening to you. We will have more structured sessions to set goals and talk about ways to achieve them, but that will never replace your opportunity to talk to me or other board members. Catch me after church or send me an email. This is your church and we want to hear your ideas.

Back to the first question, what is the Joseph Priestley (portrait above, map below) District? Our Unitarian Universalist denomination has divided the country into administrative districts; our district, the JPD, includes Northern Virginia, Washington DC, Delaware, Maryland, Eastern Pennsylvania, and Southern New Jersey. The JPD has a small staff and provides leadership training, workshops, and conferences. There were approximately 250 people from 65 congregations at this conference. It is exciting to realize that we are not alone in this world; there are more of us out there! We share ideas and learn from each other. We worship together, sing together, and shout "Amen" together. It is truly an amazing experience. Hope to see you at the next one!

Bonnie Lepoff blepoff@cox.net



Building Dedication

Saturday May 22, 2010

Doors Open at 5:00 p.m.

Ceremony of Dedication at 5:30 p.m.

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Dinner will be at 6:15 p.m., under the care of our own chef extraordinaire and Board member, Dorine Scher. A "Broadway Night with the Stars" musical extravaganza will follow! Entertainment will be provided by our 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.

(Worship Calendar, Continued from page 1)

person (or more to share) for our flower communion.

May 16th "The Truth Will Set You Free" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael reflects on the various meanings of the word "truth" with the hope of discovering the one that will set us free. Scott Findley shares guitar music and we will celebrate recognition of our newest members to the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling.

May 23rd "Our Liberal Religious Landscape" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael concludes her sermon series on "Our Liberal Religious Landscape", a series that has delved into an array of faith traditions with the hopes of widening our understanding of what it means to be liberally religious. Our choir will reprise Broadway songs.

May 30th "Logos and Mythos" Spirituality and project management - are they mutually exclusive? Consider this and other questions about spirituality and reason, as Scott Findley tells a story of love, empowerment, and the PMP exam.

Faith Development for 2010-2011 and Beyond

Linda Weaver

These are exciting times as the entire denomination looks at ways to better serve diverse families and communities and members of all ages in this rapidly changing world. UUS is exploring developments in children's religious education (or faith development) and looking at innovative ways to use our sparkling new rooms. Whether or not you have children, decisions about programs for children will affect you as UUS strives to enhance faith development and deepen the relationships among all ages. As UUS moves forward into the next decade, remember that the way we support the growth and learning of children and encourage their involvement in the life of the church is an important part of what UUS is.

Be an active part of UUS and the children's program in 2010-2011. Consider how you can contribute your talents and passion to the children's RE program and how children's RE can kindle your soul and grow your UU faith. It is amazing work with numerous rewards, not the least of which is being recognized by a child and greeted with a

smile after you have helped in a class. Members at UUS have expressed interest in adding even more music and games and incorporating more hands-on projects that make real contributions to the UUS community and the world. To provide the vibrant and meaningful program envisioned, requires many people. The more who help, the more it is possible for each person to concentrate on sharing what s/he truly loves.

There are many opportunities to provide input or help with planning for next year. To take part in further discussions and help with planning, attend the Lifespan Faith Development Council meetings. If you are interested in exploring curriculum resources, attend the Webinar on the Tapestry of Faith to find out about this latest series of UU programs and resources. If you are interested in taking part in a curriculum task force to further explore and help choose among the many options, let Linda Weaver or the Lifespan Faith Development Council know.

To find out more 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 on the UUS website at www.uusterling.org.

Tapestry of Faith

Linda Weaver

Tapestry of Faith is the newest series of Unitarian Universalist curriculum resources. This free, online source provides material for all ages that nurtures faith, spiritual growth, UU identity, and communities of justice and love. Each session includes a core story and a large number of activity options, which allow customization for specific groups with a variety of learning styles and interests. It is located at <http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/index.shtml>.

To find out more about the series, join Linda Weaver at her home for a Tapestry of Faith Webinar session led by Gail Forsyth-Vail, author of "Stories in Faith" and Adult Programs Director in the Lifespan Faith Development staff group. Contact Linda Weaver 703-406-3068 or re-director@uusterling.org if you would like to attend or have questions.



Roving Reporter

Sue Rose

What is your birthday month and your favorite birthday-party memory?

Andrew (9) April—I got a hole-in-one at miniature golf!

Katie (5) June—I liked pin-the-treasure-chest on the X (a version of pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey)!

Luke (7) September—We went to the Great Wolf Lodge, a water park!

Jonah (6) July—Yesterday I went to my friend's birthday party at Chucky Cheese—and I liked it!

Evan (8) January—I remember once we went to the ice rink!

Molly (10) February—At my party we played my favorite songs—it was fun!

(Note – yesterday my grandson, Henry, had his first birthday party—there were six kids and a "down-on-the-farm" theme!)

Children's Religious Exploration Schedule

	Preschool Circle	Kindergarten - 5 th Grade	Middle School
May 2	Mother's Day	UU – Mother's Peace Day	Unitarian Universalism
May 9	Caring for Our Earth	Attend Service	
May 16	Bodies are Special	UUA Birthday / Neighborhood Clean Up	Field Trip
May 23	Differences	Loudoun Interfaith Relief Project and RE Service Rehearsal	
May 30	Celebration	Celebration	
June 6	Attend Service / Free Play	Attend Service	
June 13	Games	UU Partner Church	
June 20	Father's Day	Fathers Day and Games	
June 27	Begin Summer Schedule		

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.



Eco-Tips

Kim Cleland

This month's eco-tips are about reducing your paper usage, in keeping with the theme of the April Earth Day service. First of all, try to reduce the amount of junk mail you get. Sites like catalogchoice.org help you get off many mailing lists at once. You can also call or email companies to stop receiving catalogs, and charities to get off their mailing lists. Given how many of us do our shopping and make donations online, many paper mailings are redundant. Some sites even have a comments box when you buy or donate, and you can add a note asking not to be added to their mailing list. If a mailing includes a window envelope that doesn't already have an address on it, use it to mail bills or letters. Next, buy recycled as much as you can. Demand for recycled products is necessary to "close the loop". Finally, be creative with your paper use. You can use the other side of (unfolded, unwrinkled) single-sided paper in your printer, and even somewhat crinkled paper is good for scrap paper or drawing paper for kids. And post-finally, recycle (of course)!

Kim Cleland, for the Social Justice Council

Something to think about:

The JPD Endowment Fund for Growth

Building Dreams and Affirming UU Values

We drink from wells we did not dig and eat from vineyards we did not plant. We have been warmed by fires we did not kindle. *Deuteronomy, VI:10-11*

The Joseph Priestley District Chalice Keepers Endowment Fund complements the Chalice Lighters fund and helps to:

- Purchase land and create inspiring buildings that will nurture our children and grandchildren.

- Support awareness and growth of Unitarian Universalism in the region

- Initiate special programs such as campus chaplains for college students and young adults vital to our future.

Your gift to Chalice Keepers will strengthen JPD congregations and sustain our vision

Many of us care deeply for our church and want to make Unitarian Universalism accessible to more people. The JPD Endowment will enable small and growing congregations to apply for significant funds to help them acquire land or build inspiring sanctuaries that will attract more members. This need is urgent as the cost of land and buildings continues to escalate out of reach.

Many of us support the Chalice Lighters Program with annual donations. Much more could be accomplished by thoughtful planning and end of life gifts through bequests and planned giving. You can even provide for your own church, the UUA, and the JPD District at the same time through umbrella giving, assigning a percentage to each according to your wishes.

Generations of Unitarian Universalists have framed our principles and built congregations where the inherent worth and dignity of every individual are respected. We honor our past pioneers and seek to build on their legacy. We believe that many people are looking for what we have to offer, but they know little if anything about Unitarian Universalism and have never found their

way into one of our churches.

You can help to enable healthy, growing and diverse congregations expand Unitarian Universalism in the Joseph Priestley District by becoming a Chalice Keeper. One-hundred percent of the JPD Board, members of the Growth & Extension Committee, the staff, and many of our ministers and religious educators have made generous pledges and gifts. You can join them and help to promote awareness and deepen understanding and commitment to UU principles and values.

Our successful Chalice Lighter program has accomplished a great deal, but we dream well beyond our existing resources.

From jpd.uaa.org

Tell Us What You Think

UUS has two main email lists. The Announce list is used for news, official and unofficial, directly related to the life and community of UUS. Announcements about upcoming services and activities are distributed this way. If you are reading this newsletter, you should be a member of this list. Send an email to uus-announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Please tell us who you are if it's not obvious from your email address.

However, we are UUs and nothing defines us more than the fact that we all like to share our opinions, hear what other UUS-ers have to say, and share our opinion some more. Isn't that right? The Discuss list is the place for these conversations. Discussions on this list have been political, theological, and sometimes just interesting thoughts.

If you would like to share your opinions or "hear" what others have to say, subscribe by sending an email to uus-discuss-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Again, tell us who you are if it's not obvious from your email address and join the conversation. To post to this list, use this address: discuss@uusterling.org. Let's hear what you have to say!

There is, or will be soon, a subscription link on our website. Just click and fill in the requested information. One way or the other, subscribe to these lists. Stay informed with Announce and share your thoughts with Discuss

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling-Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes of April 7, 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

Absent:

At-Large: Lindy Reeder

At-Large: Ken Ward

Youth Member: Julia Burns

Committee Liaison Reports:

Paul Roche reported that the budget looks good; we expect a surplus at the end of the current fiscal year which will help with covering deficit we expect next year. If requested, Paul will provide details about all expenditures made from the building fund for our new space in the current facility. We have \$172,000 in pledges for our next fiscal year. Our current budget assumes \$176,000. We expect about 9 more pledges for a total amount of about \$173,000 for the next fiscal year budget.

Old Business:

New Space. Facilities/Aesthetics. The cleaning company is going to assign a new cleaner. The Board discussed the cleaning charges and agreed that it is a good value. Tim is checking on changing the bathroom doors. John Boone is the new facilities coordinator. The Arts and Aesthetics committee is working on wall décor. The kitchen counter in the old space is going to be installed by Bill Roman (Joan to follow up). Joan will check on when AAFCJ will install shelves in the closet at the front of the sanctuary. Bonnie will check with the Membership Committee about setting up a place to collect dirty dishes during Fellowship. The order for the new chairs has been issued and we are hoping for delivery in time for the building dedication. We discussed special lighting for the sanctuary and additional microphones. Paul will get estimates for this new equipment.

Building Dedication. Invitations for the building dedication will be issued Monday. Dorine will gather volunteers for a Building Dedication Committee and meet with them. Belinda will be the Board liaison for the committee.

Website Maintenance. Paul will see if Bryan can help with fixing the audio recording problems. Mike Miller will be the new audio tech when he's trained.

Bylaws. The Board reviewed the latest draft and recommended changes. With the revisions, Dorine made a motion for approval of the revised Bylaws and Belinda seconded the motion. A Town Hall meeting will be held after church on May 23rd to provide members with the opportunity to discuss the changes. Joan and Bonnie will meet to discuss presentation of the changes for this Town Hall and for the Annual Meeting.

Subtenant Church, AAFCJ. Joan and Rev Anya will meet with representatives from AAFCJ regularly.

JPD Events. The JPD Spring Conference in Valley Forge will be attended by Paul, Joan, Bonnie, Yvonne, Linda W. and Rev Anya. Rev Anya and Linda W. will attend the Hospitality workshop at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring on May 1. The Leadership Day that was snowed out will be held at Cedar Lane UU Church on May 8th. Bonnie is planning to attend.

Stewardship Campaign. Paul reported that the Finance Committee's draft budget totals \$176,000. This assumes that we will receive a Chalice Lighters grant. The campaign raised \$173,000. The budget will be submitted to the Board before the next meeting for review and approval.

New Business:

Religious Exploration. On Monday, April 12, from 6 to 9, Rev Linda Olson Peebles, the Minister of Religious Exploration at the UU Church of Arlington will be at Unitarian Universalists of Sterling (UUS) to facilitate a conversation about Transforming Religious Exploration at UUS. Childcare will be provided. Dinner will be provided with a requested donation of \$5.00.

Annual Meeting: Scheduled for June 6. Bonnie, Joan and Rev Anya will meet to arrange notices and mailings.

General Assembly in Minneapolis, MN. Our candidates for delegates are Paul, Bonnie and Clarice. The congregation will vote Sunday April 11 to name two delegates. [Bonnie and Clarice will be the UUS delegates.]

Church Name. The Board agreed to add a proposal to change the name of UUS to the Annual Meeting agenda. The vote is to decide if we will vote for a new name at the 2011 Annual Meeting.

Building Fund Expenditures. To date, we have spent \$4,800 from the building fund on various items including the chairs and dishes. Additional expenditures are planned. Purchases from the fund must be tangible and transferable so that they could be used in a new church building.

Hymnals. Joan made the motion, Dorine seconded and the Board approved ordering hymnals using the Building Fund. We will hold a fundraiser later to recover the cost of hymnals for the general fund.

Lifespan Faith Development Council. Linda W. reported that the Lifespan Faith Development Council has requests for purchases totaling \$1,300 including shelves, seating, and flooring in the nursery. Some of the items are eligible for funding from the Building Fund and some will need to come from the budget. Linda W will send an email to Paul with the details.

Summer Internship. The Board decided to consider funding an internship next year.

Mythica Concert. Joan made a motion, Dorine seconded, and the Board approved hosting Mythica on August 27 for a two-hour show. This will be a fundraiser with half of the proceeds for the band and half for UUS.

Cards. The Board signed cards for Steve and Michelle for their work on the Stewardship Campaign and a get-well card to Lindy Reeder.

Next Meeting. The next Board meeting will be May 5th. Belinda will provide readings and salad.

May 2010



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 9:00 a.m. JPD Hospitality Workshop
2 10:30 a.m. RE Classes 10:30 a.m. Service 7:00 p.m. Tapestry of Faith Webinar	3	4 12:00 p.m. Covenant Group 6:00 p.m. HOA Meeting 7:00 p.m. Covenant Group 7:30 p.m. Choir	5 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting 	6 6:00 Craft Night	7 6:30 p.m. UUS Band Practice	8 Time: TBD Social Justice Council meeting
9 10:30 a.m. RE Classes 10:30 a.m. Service 	10 7:00 p.m. Committee on Ministry 7:00 p.m. Covenant Group	11 7:00 p.m. Covenant Group 7:30 p.m. Choir	12 7:30 p.m. Finance Committee 	13 2:00 p.m. Cleaning	14	15
16 10:30 a.m. RE Classes 10:30 a.m. Service 12:00 Noon Divorce and Separation Workshop 12:00 Noon Contemporary Bible Study	17 7:00 p.m. Book Group This month's book is "Heat."	18 7:30 p.m. Choir 	19 7:00 p.m. Lifespan Faith Development Meeting	20 6:00 p.m. Worship/Music Planning	21 6:30 p.m. UUS Band Practice	22 5:30 p.m. Church Dedication and Broadway Night! 
23 10:30 a.m. RE Classes 10:30 a.m. Service 12:00 Divorce and Separation Workshop	24 7:00 p.m. Membership Committee	25 7:30 p.m. Choir	26	27 2:00 p.m. Cleaning	28 6:30 p.m. WEBS Monthly Meeting	
30 10:30 a.m. RE Classes 10:30 a.m. Service	31 Memorial Day Holiday 					



Unitarian Universalists of Sterling

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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

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**