



What's with UUS

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



Minister's Message



There is little that happens in a congregation that goes unnoticed, and this is especially true in a congregation filled with dedicated members and friends. There is

someone who notices a full trash can, and takes it out, someone who finds a thirsty plant and gives it water, someone who sees a restless child and engages her in an activity. The life of the community is sustained in this way, through all our multi-various concentrations and considerations. It is an honor to join with you in the work of ministry and to witness your contributions. And it is a pleasure to watch as visitors and new members work to discern how their gifts might jive with the needs of our community – how they might participate in the life of our congregation.

In this way we are sustained. In this way we are changed.

If you peek around the door from the sanctuary that leads into the office and Religious Exploration (RE) area, you may notice signs of this change. Some items have shifted – a desk here, a bookshelf there. We are creating a space that reflects our current needs – a space that affords our part time Director of RE (DRE) with a full-time desk, and a space that will afford our incoming administrative assistant with a computer and work area.

We are creating a space that reflects our needs, which can channel our aspirations.

In this newsletter there is an ad calling
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President's Message



Retreat!

No, this is not the new long-range plan of UUS, so anyone conjuring visions of knights running away from the castle in “Monty Python and the Holy Grail” can stop now... I am referring instead to the recent UUS Board retreat with Rev. Anya.

One of the many reasons I became a Unitarian Universalist is our tradition of and respect for congregational polity, which at this church involves as much transparency and openness as reasonably possible. With that in mind, I would like to use this column as an opportunity to report on some of the outcomes of the Board retreat as they pertain to the direction of the church.

The ultimate goal Rev. Anya set out for the retreat was to develop a priority-ordered set of tasks for the Board to achieve in the first year of her ministry. In order to accomplish this goal, we first had to establish a set of high level “idea goals” for the church. We came up with quite a few, but the ones that seemed to resonate most with the Board and Rev. Anya were the following three.

Make UUS a church community that cares for itself.

As I indicated last month, the ability of UUS to be a caring community during its interim period fell off somewhat, which was a regrettable, if understandable, consequence of losing full-time ministry. Now that we have regained that ministry, facilitating the reestablishment of pastoral and congregational care has to be the top
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Worship Calendar

October 7 “Blessing the Animals”
Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. In this intergenerational service we will share in a blessing of the many beasts that grace our lives. All are encouraged to bring mementos – pictures, water bowls, leashes, etc. that recall the fish, bugs and animals that we care for, or that we know. Stuffed is fine, but no real live beasts please! Children are encouraged to arrive at 9:45 to form an **ad-hoc children's choir** for the service. A **Newcomer's Orientation** will follow at 12:00. Newcomers are invited to RSVP to the chair of our Membership Committee, Mike Masiak at mmasiak@msn.com

October 14 “Processed Cheese Food?”
Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. Have you ever read the ingredients on the back of a pack of processed cheese food? This service will consider ingredients – the ingredients that make up our food – and the ingredients that make up our lives. At 10:10 we will gather for a **Hymn Sing**. All are welcome, regardless of talent! Mary Matheny and the UUS choir will lead this intergenerational event for learning new hymns and warming up for worship.

October 21 Frank Dixon will give a sermon on his special interest, Spinoza. He has done much research on the topic and welcomes a polylog.

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(Minister, Continued from page 1)

for an Arts and Aesthetics Task Force. It is time to re-imagine our beautiful space. If you are interested in this work, I encourage you to find the ad and respond. As you read on, you will also notice ads for Adult Religious Exploration sessions, small groups, and covenant groups. Our president's column expounds the goals set forth at our recent Board retreat. Throughout the year, there will be multiple opportunities for all of us to learn, share, and work together toward personal and spiritual growth.

As you read on, and as you engage in your own unique and essential ways in the life of our congregation, I encourage you to reflect on these developments. We will have an all-congregation retreat, otherwise known as the Ministerial Start-Up Workshop, on October 20. (Information on this, as well, is included deeper in the pages of this newsletter.) When we gather for this retreat, we will be called to reflect on the past and to prepare for our future.

These are exciting times. May we walk together, aware that each of us contributes something precious to our collective experience.

Rev. Anya

(Worship Calendar, Continued from page 1)

October 28 "All Souls, All Saints"
Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. We come together as a community, so that we may be strengthened and nourished by one another, yet each of us is strengthened and nourished by bonds that extend beyond our church community, even by bonds that extend beyond the ranks of the living. On this day, we will recall our dearly departed with word, song, prayer, and contemplation. Our Women's Earth-Based Spirituality Group (WEBS) will create an altar, and jazz guitarist Mike Masiak will provide inventive music.



(President, Continued from page 1)

priority of the Board this year.

If any of us experiences misfortune or conflict, be it with respect to UUS, family, career, health, or whatever, this church must have the ability to provide comfort and support, both in the person of Rev. Anya and in the personal involvement of members of the congregation. This must be the case even if circumstances cause us to be absent from the church – no, actually, this must be the case *especially* if circumstances cause us to be absent from the church.

Make UUS a church community that knows what it really believes in.

I admit that this is a personal favorite of mine. I am irritated by the argument that Unitarian Universalism is a philosophical system rather than a religious system. If we are the former, then we can't honestly be called a church or expect the kind of spiritual connection and support being a church implies. If we fail to be the latter, then it can only be the result of our timidity and lack of imagination.

What I believe in, and what I believe can be shared by even a diverse church community such as ours, is that there is a common unifying aspect of religion that we can discover together and worship universally, regardless of our individual philosophical take on religion. To facilitate this discovery, a crucial task for the Board must be to ensure that Religious Exploration is vibrant, active, and *intergenerational* (read: RE isn't just for the kids anymore).

Make UUS a church community that its members and visitors love spiritually.

Having a church community that cares for itself and knows what it believes in means little if we are unsuccessful at feeding our collective and individual spirits through meaningful and enjoyable worship.

In order to thrive – I've stopped thinking of growth as a goal, incidentally: If we grow we won't necessarily thrive, but if we thrive, we *will* grow – UUS must improve and enliven its worship experience.

We all know how spiritually restorative a good service is – the Board's task this year is to do what it can to make sure as many people in the congregation experience that restorative sense as often as possible. Beyond that, we are committed to ensure that our sense of positive community and worship extend to our visitors who, after all, are our future members.

If, as you've been reading this column, you're thinking "Okay, but what is the Board actually going to do *specifically*?" – that's a fair question, but not one I'm prepared to answer at the moment. For one thing, if I did, we wouldn't have room in the newsletter for anything else. For another thing, we haven't yet decided on the specifics.

We have a lot of possible actions to consider, and, with your help, it will be the business of the Board and Rev. Anya in the following months to decide which of those actions will best address the idea goals described herein while carefully managing the resources of the church. Stay tuned!

Yours in Faith, Bryan

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How to Reach the Minister

Office hours: Tuesdays - Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Available by appointment: Tuesdays - Sundays

Day off: Monday

Day for sermon preparation: Friday

Contact information:

Work: 703-406-3068

Home: 703-433-5776

Cell: 773-206-0407

Email: minister@uusterling.org

I will check voice mail messages on Fridays. On Mondays I will only check cell-phone messages. In the case of an emergency, please, call my cell phone.

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Religious Exploration

Religious Exploration (RE) started with leader and assistant orientation at the beginning of September. A great group attended, and Deb Rose had everyone thinking about ways to include children with differing abilities in RE. This highly motivated group stayed beyond the scheduled time discussing their plans. It should be an exciting and fun year!

The first day of Religious Exploration classes was indeed full of activity and enthusiasm. The Kindergarten through third grade class listened to a story, sang songs, made their own "super hero" capes and talked about how they can be heroes by helping at home. They will continue to explore heroism this year as they are introduced to people in Hebrew and Christian Bible stories and are encouraged to use their own "super powers." The fourth through seventh grade class made a timeline and began to gain perspective on the history of stories from various world religions. Throughout the year, discussion of these stories and a variety of crafts will aid in forming a deeper understanding of world religions, reinforce the UU living traditions, and provide perspective in evaluating religious claims.

To further explore how Unitarian Universalists put their beliefs to work, children in kindergarten through seventh grade will meet together once a month for Social Action Sunday. The theme of the first Social Action Sunday was stream monitoring. Scott Findley shared his experiences and knowledge of stream monitoring and provided music for the class session. Activities introduced children to stream monitoring and helped them explore the importance of conserving water and keeping streams clean. Throughout the year, other adults from the congregation will share how they work to make the world a better place through involvement in a social action project or social justice issue. On the next Social Action Sunday the children will take part in Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF.

UNICEF and Halloween Party

On October 28, the children will talk about Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF and celebrate Halloween. Money raised through Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF aids children around the world by providing items such as medicine, clean water and school supplies. Help your children identify people to visit or encourage them to find other ways to raise money. Return the UNICEF boxes to church by November 11 or donate the money to UNICEF yourself at a Coinstar^R machine, online, or by phone. If you would like to provide decorations or snacks for the Halloween celebration, contact Linda Weaver at re-director@uusterling.org.

Roving Reporter

By Susan Rose

What activities are keeping you busy as the weather turns to fall?

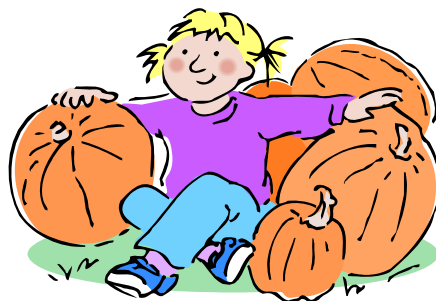
Matthew (13) Soccer, school and playing with the boy next door! (I'm happy that the weather's getting cooler.)

Molly (7) Making Christmas ornaments with my grandma!

Anna (7) A web site on the computer--about pets that you can play with online!

Elin (5) I just had my birthday and it was so fun!

Julia and Sora (15) We redecorated the Youth Group room, and we go to school at Briar Woods!



Sign Up for Covenant Groups

Small Group Ministry has been keeping UUS members and friends connected and engaged in the life of the church for many years. By providing mid-week activities, small groups permit and encourage connections, growth and friendship for all participants, but especially for those who are not able to attend services every week. It is our hope that every single member and friend of this congregation will experience the intimacy, caring, support, and stimulation of a small group at UUS.

Covenant Groups are designed to help UUS Members and Friends maintain that sense of intimacy as the congregation grows. In a Covenant Group, you will, over time, develop a close bond with a small group of people, sharing experiences from your personal lives, as well as reflecting together on ethical, spiritual and religious questions. Covenant Groups do not take the place of Sunday morning worship, but do augment and strengthen that shared experience. People come to church seeking to know themselves better, to grow in their understanding of the world and to ponder the age old questions of faith.

The topics of Covenant Groups have varied over the years. For several years, they were themed so that each month the discussion built on the previous session. One year we chose articles from *UU World* magazine for our topics. This year, Rev Anya will be preparing topics. We are expecting a very interesting year!

There are four groups this year, meeting once a month on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings, and one daytime group whose members will select the meeting day. You can join a group by signing up Sunday mornings or by contacting Rev Anya at minister@uusterling.org or 703-404-3068.

2007-2008 Schedule for UUS Religious Exploration

<i>Month</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Lower Elementary Topic</i>	<i>Leader/Helper</i>	<i>Tween Topic</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Nursery Adult</i>
October	7	No RE	No RE	No RE	No RE	James
	14	Baby in a Basket	Lum Thede	Gilgamesh	Fitzgerald	Need Help
	21	Moses Leads the Escape	Chandler Confoy	Abraham	Rothman	James
	28	Social Action Sunday – Halloween & UNICEF	Connors George	Social Action Sunday – Halloween & UNICEF	Connors George	Lum
November	4	Moses & the Ten Commandments	Lum Confoy	Isis and Osiris	Fitzgerald	James
	11	David as a Boy	Chandler Need Help	Zarathustra	Rothman	Need Help
	18	Social Action Sunday – Guest at Your Table	Weaver George	Social Action Sunday – Guest at Your Table	Weaver George	James
	25	David and the Ark	ConnorsThede	Canaanite	Fitzgerald	Need Help
December	2	Solomon Builds the Temple	Lum Confoy	Elijah	Rothman	James
	9	Social Action Sunday – Gifts with a Difference	D. Rose Weaver	Social Action Sunday – Gifts with a Difference	D. Rose Weaver	Lum
December	16	Christmas People	Chandler George	Ark of YHWH	Rothman	James
	23	No RE	No RE	No RE	No RE	Need Help
	30	Kwanzaa	Connors Confoy	Kwanzaa	Connors Confoy	Need Help
January	6	No RE	No RE	No RE	No RE	Need Help
	13	The Queen of Sheba	Chandler Need Help	Prometheus	Rothman	Need Help
	20	Social Action Sunday - MLK Jr. Day	Weaver Thede	Social Action Sunday - MLK Jr. Day	Weaver Thede	Need Help
	27	Elijah and Ahab	Connors George	Heracles	Fitzgerald	Need Help

2007-2008 Schedule for UUS Religious Exploration

<i>Month</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Lower Elementary Topic</i>	<i>Leader/ Helper</i>	<i>Tween Topic</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Nursery Adult</i>
February	3	Elijah's Fiery Chariot	Need Help	No class – Attend Service	No class	Need Help
	10	Social Action Sunday - Valentines for Vets	Weaver Chandler	Social Action Sunday - Valentines for Vets	Weaver Chandler	Need Help
	17	Joseph and His Brothers	Connors George	Philosophy	Rothman	Need Help
	24	Joseph and His Brothers Meet Again	Need Help	Romulus	Fitzgerald	Need Help
March	2	Jesus & John the Baptist	Chandler Confoy	Mary & John the Baptist	Rothman	Need Help
	9	Social Action Sunday	Weaver George	Social Action Sunday	Weaver George	Need Help
	16	Esther (Purim)	Connors Need Help	Jesus	Fitzgerald	Need Help
	23	No RE	No RE	No RE	No RE	Need Help
	30	Social Action Sunday	Weaver Need Help	Social Action Sunday	Weaver Need Help	Need Help
April	6	Ministry of Compassion	Chandler Confoy	Paul	Rothman	Need Help
	13	Jesus Teaches by Telling Stories	Connors George	The Gospels	Fitzgerald	Need Help
	20	Social Action Sunday -Earth Day	Weaver Need Help	Social Action Sunday - Earth Day	Weaver Need Help	Need Help
	27	Taking Action 1	Reeder Weaver Confoy	Taking Action 1	Reeder Weaver Confoy	Need Help
May	4	Taking Action 2	Reeder Weaver Confoy	Taking Action 2	Reeder Weaver Confoy	Need Help
	11	RE Service Rehearsal	Weaver Need Help	RE Service Rehearsal	Weaver Need Help	Need Help
	18	Celebration Sunday	Chandler George	Review & Celebration	Rothman	Need Help
	25	No RE	No RE	No RE	No RE	Need Help
June	1	RE Service	No RE	No RE	No RE	Need Help
	8	Trail Clean Up	Chandler Confoy	Trail Clean Up	Chandler Confoy	Need Help
	15	Games Day	Connors George	Games Day	Connors George	Need Help

Please Update Your Address Book!

Your talented crew of IT professionals has recently created email aliases to facilitate the easy and consistent access to (and prevent the easy and consistent spamming of) the key leadership of UUS. These addresses are:

Minister (Rev. Anya):

minister@uusterling.org;

RE Director (Linda Weaver):

re-director@uusterling.org

Music Director (Dan Boothe):

music-director@uusterling.org

Board President (Bryan George):

board-president@uusterling.org

Board Vice President (Dave Miller):

board-vice-president@uusterling.org

Board Treasurer (Paul Roche):

board-treasurer@uusterling.org

Board Secretary (Jeff Chandler):

board-secretary@uusterling.org

Church Administrator (TBD, currently the Board list):

administrator@uusterling.org

We will, of course, continue to respond to email sent to our personal accounts, but would appreciate it if you would use the aliases whenever addressing us for church business or to refer contact information to anyone outside the church.

Thanks very much for your assistance!

Bryan George, Board President



How I See It

The following letter was written by Mary Matheny and appeared in the Culpeper Star Exponent, where it was sure to be seen by people who knew Victoria Burke.

On September 1, my husband and I were driving home from the Madison County Taste of the Mountains Festival and came upon an accident that had just occurred at the intersection of U.S. 29 and Alanthus Road. We were headed north and were probably the second car that passed by the accident immediately after it happened.

We stopped to see if there was anything we could do. The two people in the truck, a young man and woman, were seriously hurt. A nurse that was passing in a car going south came over and took their pulses. Then she went to help the young man that was thrown into the median strip.

At that point the girl was breathing, but not often and her breathing was very shallow. I think that the young man had already passed on. The emergency personnel had not arrived as yet.

At the time that I was standing there, I felt a real connection with the young girl. Maybe it's because I have a young daughter myself. I was thinking how beautiful she was and how terrible it was going to be for her loved ones to have to deal with such a terrible and tragic event. People came and went to where I was - a policeman, my husband, another passerby - but then moved on to see if they could help with the ones who had survived.

As I stood there I decided that I needed to stay and for some reason I felt her spirit around me. She stopped breathing after a few minutes. She looked so beautiful and seemed to go in peace.

I really feel that our spirits are all intertwined and that sometimes in this world they connect, and I could feel a sense of her spirit there, connecting with me, at that time. I didn't want to leave her alone, so I stayed there with her until the medics arrived.

I am writing this because, as a mother, I think that under such tragic circumstances - if it were my daughter - it would be really important for me to know that at the time of her passing she was not alone, that somehow she could sense that I was there to help.

Victoria's spirit was real and I sensed it and stayed. And that is all I could do. It would be my wish that her loved ones will read this and know that she wasn't alone.

Editor's note: *Victoria Ashley Burke, 19, and her husband Joshua Lee Burke, 22, were killed in the accident. A passenger, John Lizotte, 22, is in critical condition at Fairfax Inova Hospital.*

Parenting Support Groups

*While we try to teach our children all about life,
Our children teach us what life is all about.*

~Angela Schwindt

Life moves fast. Life moves faster when there are children and youth involved! Let's start a parenting circle for parents and teachers of children and youth. By coming together and sharing our experiences, we will learn from one another, develop deeper relationships, and have some fun! Childcare will be arranged. RSVP to minister@uusterling.org and note if you would prefer to meet before or after church services on Sunday (one Sunday a month).

Arts and Aesthetics Task Force

We are auditory, kinetic, and visual people. Religious and spiritual experience interacts with all three modes of perception. Our religious space is beautiful – a testament to the love and dedication of a community. Yet we have an opportunity to enhance its beauty and its functionality. Let's imagine a more welcoming, warm, and energizing space...Then let's make it so! Artists, creative thinkers, decorators, dreamers, organizers, crafters, builders, planners etc - all are welcome. We will meet no more than three times, draft a plan, and organize the effort. RSVP with your interest, and we will set the date for our first meeting. Contact minister@uusterling.org or 703-404-3068, ext. 2.

Start-Up Workshop with Our New Minister: October 20th

You are cordially invited to attend our congregation's Ministerial Start-Up Workshop, which will be held at the UU Congregation in Fairfax, VA (2709 Hunter Mill Rd. in Oakton) on Saturday, October 20, from 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

What is a ministerial start-up? It is a very important time of focused conversation with our new minister, congregational leaders, and members to establish priorities and goals for the first year of our new ministerial relationship. The Joseph Priestley District of the UUA provides facilitation for such events, bringing to the conversation information of how congregations and ministers achieve positive working relationships. Our facilitator will be the Rev. Melora Lynngood, who has also been a guest preacher for us several times over the past two years.

Why should you participate? Because the importance of this process deserves your time and attention, because your voice matters to your new minister, and because congregations who invest the time tend overwhelmingly to enjoy more satisfying and longer lasting ministerial relationships. Please come!

Preparation question to ponder: Please remember a time when you have felt ministered to. (For the purpose of this exercise, try first to think of a time that you felt ministered to by a professional minister and you just felt, "Wow, I felt ministered to." But if you have not had that experience (yet), then think about any time you have felt that someone ministered to you.) What was going on in the interchange? What were the qualities of the relationship that allowed that to happen? How did you feel about it? We will use your answers in an exercise during the workshop.

RSVP to Jeff Chandler at board-secretary@uusterling.org or 540-338-5326 by October 10, and please let us know if you need childcare (how many children and what age). It is important that we get an accurate headcount (adults and children). Coffee and simple breakfast food, as well as lunch, will be provided.

All Around Our UU World

Book Talk with Kathleen Kennedy Townsend on Sunday, October 14, 5 p.m. at the Accotink UU Church: From the Fairfax County Parkway, take westbound Burke Lake Road (0.2 mi.) to the first left turn onto Lakehaven Lane. The church is located at the intersection of Lakehaven Lane and Lakehaven Court.

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former Lieutenant Governor of Maryland will speak on her book, *Failing America's Faithful*. Following her remarks, there will be a chance for questions, and she will be available to sign copies of her book.

On her website the author summarizes her book: "For millions of Americans, faith defines who we are. For too long, the subject of religion has become polarized – politicized by the right and largely ignored by the left. ... this book is a call to urge churches to reclaim the legacy of an active faith." (See www.kathleenhennedytownsend.com)

Third Annual Joseph Priestly District Racial Justice Conference

Saturday, October 27, 2007; 9:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m. at the UU Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road in Oakton

This day-long conference will offer inspiration and a variety of practical tools and resources for moving our UU congregations toward being Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive, Welcoming, and more diverse communities.

Professor Sherrilyn Ifill, Professor of Law at the University of Maryland Law School, will be the featured speaker. Professor Ifill is nationally recognized as an advocate in the areas of civil rights, voting rights, judicial diversity and judicial decision-making. Her book, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the 21st Century*, was released by Beacon Books in February 2007.

There will be various workshops, videos, an example of transformative worship led by local ministers, and discussions.

Changing the practices that reinforce inequality is hard, especially when they are invisible to those in power. Because everything about race is loaded, even opening our eyes to racial injustice (and what we are not doing to stop it) is a powerful step towards living into our humanity and enabling ourselves to work for the changes that are possible.

We urge as many UUS leaders and members as possible to take advantage of this opportunity. You are invited to stay for dinner followed by a concert by the Jubilee Singers of All Souls Church, Unitarian from Washington DC.

The cost is \$35 for adults and \$17 for youth/young adults (includes lunch, dinner, and concert). Make payments to the Joseph Priestly District. Send checks to the JPD Office, 100 W. 10th Street, Suite 1008, Wilmington, DE 19801. Indicate "Racial Justice Conference" on your check. A \$10.00 late fee will be added to registrations sent after October 15.

UUS Adult Exploration Offerings 2007-2008

Building Your Own Theology – Volume 3, Ethics

Led by Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

This course draws on the concept of the “Moral Compass,” identifying eight modes of ethical decision-making. Case studies and conversation will allow us to explore the processes, values, and theologies that we rely on to make difficult moral and ethical decisions.

Eight Wednesdays in October, November, and December: 10/10, 10/17, 10/24, 11/7, 11/14, 11/28, 12/5, 12/12

Time: 6:30-8:30 (except the first class, which will run from 6:30 to 9:00)

Adult—min-max: 6-15

Conversations on Belief

Led by Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

We will ask questions such as “What have you always believed?” or “What do you believe now, that you did not believe 5 or 10 years earlier?” The format will be a facilitated conversation, with the expressed purposes of exploration and communication.

One Sunday a month in October, November, January, and February: 10/14, 11/11, 1/20, 2/3 (*This class is not a series. You are welcome to attend any or all sessions.*)

Time: 12:00 noon till 1:30 (*Bring a brown bag lunch.*)

Adult/Youth—min-max: 3-20

Lay Minister Foundations

Led by Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

This is a chance to explore topics of Unitarian Universalist interest (history, current events in the movement, faith journeys, etc.) while practicing the “Arts of Ministry.”

We will practice preaching, creating prayers or meditations, writing a worship service, and more.

One Saturday a month in January,

February, March, and April: 1/13, 2/3, 3/15, 4/19

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 noon (after the 4th session we will have a potluck lunch.)

Adult—min-max: 4-8

Understanding the World's Religions: A Study Guide to Huston Smith's – The World's Religions

Led by Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. Some sessions co-lead by seminarian Edward Scott Sammler-Michael.

This course introduces a multitude of religious traditions so that participants may deepen their understanding of the ideas and beliefs of the world's religions, perhaps glimpsing “the transcending mystery and wonder affirmed in all cultures.”

Participants will need to purchase one book and one study guide. As a result, registration for this class is required no later than January 1.

Nine Wednesdays in February, March and April: 2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2

Time: 6:30 - 8:00 or 8:30

Adult—min-max: 5-15

The Spirituality of Food

Led by Rev. Anya Sammler

This class investigates our own relationship to food, our fast-paced and technological culture's relationship to food, food rituals and rites from various faiths, and the potential of using food practices to deepen our commitment to the earth.

Four Wednesdays in April and May: 4/30, 5/7, 5/14, 5/21 (*with a voluntary activity on Sunday June 8*)

Adult—min-max: 5-15

Registration

Register by writing your name and contact information in the Adult Religions Education binder near the nametags in the UUS foyer. Or you are welcome to contact Rev. Anya Sammler with questions at minister@uusterling.org or 703-404-3068.

Cost

All Adult Religious Exploration offerings cost \$5 per session per person. This donation will pay for food, drink, and supplies. Any additional money will be held in the Adult Religious Education account and may, in the future, cover the cost of guest educators. All payment is due on the first class session.

Childcare

For multiple-session courses, UUS can help participants find childcare if the class leader is notified at least one week prior to the first session. For single-session courses, UUS can help participants find childcare if the class leader is notified at least one week before the session which you plan on attending.

Inclusion Resource Team

Deb Rose is forming an Inclusion Resource Team. Members of this group are available to lay leaders and the adults and children of the congregation. They will support children and adults in their endeavor to fully participate in the life of UUS. They can provide information, resources and support to lay leaders to help them better serve all our members, friends, and visitors. They are also available to provide information or identify resources for children and adults experiencing their own or a family member's special needs.

Deb Rose is a valuable resource at UUS. She received her physical therapy degree from Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, New York. She has been practicing for 24 years, the last 13 with the Fairfax County Public Schools. As a school-based pediatric physical therapist, she supports children with a variety of abilities to fully participate in their educational program with their peers. She utilizes a family-centered care approach, supporting parents and families. She is very active in Girl Scouting and is currently a council trainer. She co-chairs the inclusion

task force at the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital in Washington, DC and serves as a resource to leaders, parents, and girls. She is a student at Drexel University and will receive her clinical doctorate in pediatric physical therapy in June of 2008.

If you have experience in this area that you would like to share, serve as a resource on the team, or if you have questions, please contact Deb. If any member of your family has mobility, vision, hearing or learning challenges or any other special need, let us know how we can best serve her or him.

Welcoming Everyone

People often feel awkward when meeting someone with different abilities. Here are a few suggestions that may ease the awkwardness.

- Use a normal tone of voice. Don't raise your voice unless asked to do so.
- Offer to shake hands. Using your left hand is acceptable, especially if that is the hand the person offers.
- Look directly at the person, not an aide or parent who may be accompanying her or him.
- If the person uses an interpreter, converse and maintain eye contact with the speaker, not the interpreter.
- Consider a wheelchair to be part of a person's personal space. Do not lean on it or attempt to move it unless specifically asked to do so by that person.
- Ask before offering help. If the person wants assistance, ask how you can help. Do not assume you know what is needed.
- If a person with a visual impairment wishes to be guided, allow her or him to take your arm just above the elbow.

Small Group Ministry

The excitement of fall has come with cooler weather, the start of a new school year, and the arrival of Rev Anya. You can just feel the energy on Sunday mornings! Carry that energy through the week by participating in one of these groups. Our small group ministry program is an important part of UUS, providing a way for members and friends to keep in touch and stay connected during the week; 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 always looking for new members. See our music director, Dan Boothe, or any choir member if you are interested in joining the choir.

Covenant Groups

Covenant Groups meet once a month during the school year to discuss a topic related to spiritual growth. As a member of a group, you will be able to engage in deeper conversations than coffee hours permit, and you will get to know the other members of your group in a way that might not otherwise be possible. You don't want to miss this opportunity! The groups will begin meeting again this month on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings. A daytime group is being formed as well. Rev Anya will

work with the groups this year, so be prepared for some interesting session topics! Sign up on Sunday or contact 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@ieec.org or just show up.

Men's Spirituality Group

The Men's Spirituality Group meets at the church on the second Friday of the month from 8 - 11 pm. If you are interested in joining this friendly game of poker, contact Tony Thede at tdthede@yahoo.com.

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.

UUS Board Meeting Highlights

September 5, 2007 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Communications (Jeff Chandler)

Terry Dick sent sermon synopses for the month of September to multiple publications.

Denominational Affairs (Dave Miller)

Facilitator for Congregational Retreat: The JPD has arranged for Rev Melora Lynngood to be our facilitator for the retreat. When a congregation calls a new minister, the JPD provides this service free of charge.

Finance (Paul Roche)

The Board approved the Finance Committee's affirmative recommendation of Rev. Anya's proposal to reallocate unused relocation expenses.

The Board approved the Finance Committee's recommended split of Rev. Anya's salary and her housing allowance.

Fundraising (Alyssa Lum)

Michelle James has enthusiastically agreed to serve as co-coordinator with Nancy for the year. Nancy is fine with staying on to help Michelle get up to speed on things and they are getting together this weekend at the yard sale and will discuss the details.

Membership (Jeff Chandler)

Preparing for New Member Ceremony Sept. 30.

Music (Scott Findley)

Dan Booth has been in contact with Anya and members from the choir. He indicated in an email that he expects to be back with the choir as early as the week of September 10.

Dan has also been in contact with other UU choir directors, to share ideas, and is hoping to collaborate with them in the future.

The choir is changing its rehearsal time slot from Thursday evenings to Monday evenings.

I have prepared a list of UUS musicians, which I will be reviewing with the music committee at their next meeting, which will be when Dan comes back.

Reverend Anya has provided the music committee with the current schedule of services, which extends into 2008.

The Teasley concert has been publicized on the UUS website and a number of local newspapers. The concert information has also been shared with other area UU churches.

New hymnals have been ordered for choir members.

Personnel (Gus Douoguih)

At the moment the part-time office administrator job description has been updated with input from the minister and is being posted in a number of venues.

Religious Education (Linda Weaver)

Met with Deb Rose on Aug. 6 to talk about inclusion of special needs children in RE. She will teach a children's RE class on inclusion one Sunday.

Revised a form from another church to get information about children's interests and needs to help class leaders better serve every child in RE. Sent it out with cover letter.

Still looking for adults to help in the nursery.

RE leader orientation scheduled for Sept. 8 and meeting with nursery parents planned for Sept. 16.

Eight people will be leading two children's RE classes this year.

First Social Action Sunday will be Sept. 23rd with Scott Finley.

Walls cleaned and nursery and smallest RE room painted. Space cleaned.

Supplies inventoried and replenished through in-kind donations.

RE (Gus Douoguih)

Dave Scher has agreed to serve with Susan Miller as Youth Group advisor. I approached Dave after consulting with Linda Weaver and after reviewing with her the pool of "available" candidates. Dave has prior youth group advisory experience and gracefully accepted the invitation to serve.

Bonnie Lepoff has friends, a retired couple, who own a 180-acre farm near Culpeper and who have agreed to let us use part of their farm for our Youth Group overnight camp out. I am in the process of consulting with parents, DRE and advisors to see if we can organize a camp out this year. At a minimum, I'd like to visit the farm with the youth to thank the owners and plan for next year. The owners want to make sure that we have insurance to cover the youth and adults during our sojourn.

Worship Associates (WA) (Judy Gruner)

Rev. Anya will preach three Sundays a month and the WA will be in charge of a fourth Sunday. One service a month will be intergenerational.

The WA discussed many ideas for the off Sundays, which will soon be implemented.

The WA and Rev. Anya have organized/envisioned all the services through the end of December. If there is a fifth Sunday in a month, Rev. Anya will plan for a pulpit exchange.

Rev. Anya is happy to consult on any service planned and implemented by the WA. Rev. Anya suggested that there be a Sunday planned for child dedications and recognition of new members.


The next board meeting is 7:00 p.m. at UUS on Tuesday, October 9, 2007.

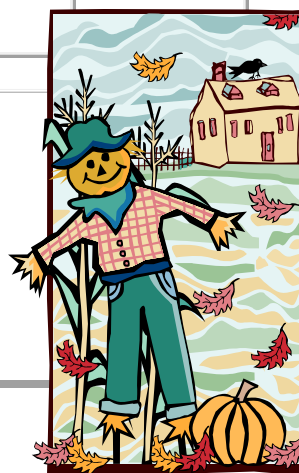
Sunday Coffee Hour

We all enjoy coffee and conversation after the service but 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 very appreciated.

Month	Last Name
October	A - C
November	D - F
December	G - K
January	L - P
February	R - S
March	T - Z
April	A - C
May	D - F
June	G - K

October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:30PM-9:00PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> - <u>Mary Matheny</u>	2 7:00PM Covenant Group Leaders Meeting	3	4	5	6 5:00PM-10:00PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10:30AM-11:30AM Worship Service "Blessing the Animals" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael; Children: No RE; Nursery: James 3:30PM-9:30PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy	Monday Night <u>Covenant Group</u> - Reston 7:30PM-9:00PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> - <u>Mary Matheny</u>	7:00PM-9:00PM Board Meeting <u>Bryan George</u>	6:30PM – 9:00PM Adult RE: Building Your Own Theology	Thursday Night Covenant <u>Group</u> - Ashburn		6:00AM-5:00PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:30AM - <u>Elder Care</u> Breakfast @ Virginia Kitchen in Herndon - <u>Mike Berger</u> 10:30AM-11:30AM Worship Service "Processed Cheese <i>Food</i> ?" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael; <u>Children</u> : Baby in a Basket (Lum, Theode); Nursery: help needed 12 PM – 1:30 PM Adult RE: Conversations on Belief 3:30PM-9:30PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy	7:30PM-9:00PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> - <u>Mary Matheny</u>	Tuesday Night <u>Covenant Group</u> - Sterling	6:30PM – 8:30PM Adult RE: Building Your Own Theology		November Newsletter Deadline	8:45AM-4:30PM UUS Annual Retreat: Ministerial Start-Up Workshop 5:00PM-10:00PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10:30AM-11:30AM Worship Service Frank Dixon will give a sermon on his special interest, Spinoza; Children: Moses Leads the Escape (Chandler, Confoy); Nursery: James 3:30PM-9:30PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy	7:30PM-9:00PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> - <u>Mary Matheny</u>		6:30PM – 8:30PM Adult RE: Building Your Own Theology		7:00PM-10:00PM Women's <u>Spirituality</u> - <u>Becky Fockler</u>	5:00PM-10:00PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy
28	29	30	31			
10:30AM-11:30AM Worship Service "All Souls, All Saints" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael; <u>Children</u> : Social Action Sunday: Halloween and UNICEF (Connors, George); Nursery: Lum 3:30PM-9:30PM AAFCJ - Joan Confoy	7:30PM-9:00PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> - <u>Mary Matheny</u>		7:00PM-9:00PM Membership Committee - <u>Mike Masiak</u>			



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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

10/19/07 for November

11/23/07 for December

12/14/07 for January