

December 2011

The Sojourner

newsletter of the Unitarian-Universalist
Fellowship of Pottstown

1565 South Keim St
Pottstown, PA 19465
(610) 327-2662
www.uupottstown.org

There will be a 10 minute period of silent meditation from 10:15-10:25 before services. Please enter the sanctuary quietly.

Sunday, December 4, 2011

Nothing Gold Can Stay

Rev Dave Farrington

Though it may feel like winter we are still in Autumn, still over a month away from the real nasty season. Fall is a time associated with dying in some cultures and life simply going underground in others. Today we will explore Autumn and whatever symbolic meaning it may hold for us.

Sunday, December 11, 2011

A Sunday of Songs

Lay Leader: Emily Quarles-Mowrer

As Plato said, "Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything." We will explore the power of music through a service composed almost entirely of tunes.

Please join us for a Sunday of Songs.

Sunday, December 18, 2011

Re-imagining Christmas

Rev Dave Farrington

As we approach the Yule season we will take a look at traditional observances of Christmas, Yule and the winter Solstice and compare them with our own Unitarian Universalist views as they have evolved over time.

3rd Sunday potluck will follow the service.

Saturday, December 24, 2011

7:00 PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Rev Dave Farrington

Join us on Christmas Eve for an evening of readings from the Gospel of Luke accompanied by traditional Christmas carols and other festive holiday music.

Sunday, December 25, 2011

No Service

Merry Christmas! Enjoy the holiday with friends and family. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year!



From the Minister's Desk

Sitting to write this message, I find myself in a far too-familiar place -- fresh out of rehab, coming down from significant pain with the help of strong medications and enjoying your get-well messages. The latter were particularly pleasing, as the irony of having a "new" car crashed into the very day of registering and insuring it was not lost on you. To my delight, you felt comfortable laughing with me at life's unexpected diversions. Thanks again, for graciously accommodating a reality none of us would have chosen.

The TV is on and I hear Anderson Cooper explaining how he and his mother stopped celebrating Thanksgiving following the tragic death of his brother. My friends from Florida who will be giving me a ride back home to Pottstown Sunday just called to see if I knew anyone who might install a new set of brakes on their van before setting out on the trip. The element in Carole's oven gave up the ghost yesterday. Service was available but the part was not, necessitating the challenge of preparing Thanksgiving dinner using a microwave and electric skillet! So much for idyllic holidays.

Yet, for all of it, I feel a strange peacefulness. The kind of feeling one gets from unexpected but pleasant surprises - like getting an iPad 2 for Christmas when one would have been happy with an Etch-A-Sketch. (People under forty might want to consult a responsible adult for an explanation!)

My joy stems from the wonderful people I know or met in rising to recent challenges. For the help of competent medical staff in two hospitals and at-home aftercare. For being able to say "thank-you in advance" to my friends from Florida who will be going out of their way to get me back to PA; for the mechanic I've traded with for years and can call upon to help others in need; for a stranger, the appliance repairman who made himself available if he or we could find the needed heating element.

And, this summer, when my recuperation from surgery was longer than anticipated, for the quick and effective response of Lisa Jokiel and the Worship Committee to my unexpected and protracted absence. And to Emily and the others who so ably supply the pulpit on these occasions. And to Kay Price for again accepting a late submittal of a newsletter article and sermon topics. There are times when I'm sure I'm on her last nerve but she is always gracious and forgiving. Thank you, one and all.

And finally to you, my equally accepting and forgiving congregation. The worst days of my career in ministry have been with you starting this summer. You have never been anything but supportive and caring and I pray I am worthy of these gifts.

I also pray that as we enter the Yule season you will find light, joy and happiness in all things - and that my days will be dull, boring and without incident!

Blessings,

Rev. Dave

610-850-3728/dfarrington@uuma.org

President's Message

Thank you all for attending the Leadership Retreat and all UUFP potluck and video on October 22. The feedback I have been receiving is that the information was interesting and that it was fun especially in the all UUFP portion of the retreat. And of course we had delicious food on hand! During the board portion of the retreat we established annual goals for the board and for the congregation to guide us and offer a common sense of direction and purpose for the events and programs offered at UUFP.

UUFP Annual Goals 2011-2012

The board will develop a five year plan and strategies for execution to include the following:

- 1. Foster growth by promoting member and friend involvement in the UUFP community*
- 2. Create a strategy to improve communication and relationships with greater outside community*
- 3. Create a strategy to provide financial stability*
- 4. Ensure ongoing full-time ministry*
- 5. Identify, develop and nurture leadership within our community*

The goal for the congregation is to Improve Stewardship:

- 1. Foster growth by promoting member and friend involvement in the UUFP community*
- 2. Create a strategy to improve communication and relationships with greater outside community*
- 3. Implement strategies developed by the Board and Committee Council to increase income*
- 4. Nurture leadership within our community*

May you be blessed with a safe and happy holiday season as you gather with family and friends. Please join in community at UUFP as we bring in the holiday season with celebration and love.

Linda



Religious Education

Religious education classes for teens and children are held every second Sunday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. In November, the K-6 age group, taught by Laurie Young, studied the lesson, "Everyone is Special." In December, Marianne Yarnall will teach "Long Ago and Far Away: the Birth of Jesus." The little ones still need a volunteer for April to teach "The Web of Humankind." Lesson materials are provided. If you can devote an hour of time to the children that month, your help will be greatly appreciated.

Deni and Bob Gross continue to facilitate the Fellowship's teen religious education classes, with help from guest moderators who are members and friends of the Fellowship. In November, Dr. Jon Dreazen engaged the teens in a lively discussion about medical ethics. He presented the following scenario. Two sisters face a dilemma. One sister needs a kidney transplant, and the other sister is a perfect match. However, the proposed donor sister does not wish to donate her kidney. Does she have the right to refuse? Do her parents have the right to force her to comply?

In December, Reverend Dave Farrington will lead the teens in a discussion about their view of God, including asking them to portray their personal vision of Deity through a picture, symbol, poem, etc. April and May dates are still open to anyone who wishes to facilitate a teen discussion on a topic of your choice. If you care to volunteer for the teen or K-6 classes, simply contact Deni or Bob at re@uupottstown.org.

Free nursery services are also provided every Sunday of the month for children who are too young to participate in classes.

Many sincere thanks to all our religious education volunteers.

Deni



Healing for Those in Need

Sally Martin, Bev Jensen and Deni Gross host a healing network for those who are ill. If you or someone you know is sick or in emotional distress, Sally, Bev, Deni and the other members of the healing network will include that person in a monthly distance healing ritual for as long as necessary. Members of the healing network are all volunteers and include registered nurses, Reiki practitioners, therapists and others who offer their services free of charge. The only personal information that is required is the complete name of the person requesting healing.

To participate, simply send names to Deni at RE@uupottstown.org. When you feel that a person no longer requires the services of the healing network, simply request that their name be removed from the list. Please feel free to let others know of this service.

GETTING TO KNOW UU

Judith Van Beek

Though not a birthright Unitarian or Universalist, Judith figures she came by her liberal religious views naturally--having been raised by a "free thinker." Judith's mother, the bright daughter in a solidly traditional middle class family in Holland, was intellectually adept from early on. She was referred to as a "vrijdenker" or "independent thinker," and had read and discussed Schiller and Goethe by the age of twelve. After getting an education and, not especially interested in settling into a traditional Dutch middle class lifestyle, she married an artist and left with him to settle in Paris. Years later Judith's mother returned to Holland with Judith and her sister where she bought a twenty-two-room house -- a sort of duplex -- in which she boarded students who attended a private school in town.



During the invasion of the Netherlands in WWII, their home was taken over by the Waffen-SS. The little family was displaced into a small apartment over a garage in the same town. Judith explained that this apartment became available because the young man living there had run off to hide from the SS who would conscript any young Dutchmen they found to work in munitions factories in Germany. As well, this apartment served as one of many secret way stations for young Jewish girls seeking safe passage through the country. Judith, a teenager at the time, remembers the night the SS came and searched the apartment - poking into all of the closets with bayonets, looking for hideaways. Fortunately for all of them, none were hidden there at the time.

After the war, Judith's family returned to the big house, which, after much repair and renovation, again served as a boarding house but this time for families rather than for students.

Judith attended a Montessori school in her youth...of course! She went on after high school to study for her degree at the Institute of Business Administration and Languages. She studied English, French, German, and Spanish besides her own native Dutch. Upon graduating she was hired as a translator by an International Radio Conference. She was hired and paid for one month for her efforts but the conference never got off the ground and was eventually cancelled. So her first job lasted for only one paycheck.

Judith met her husband working at a company in the Netherlands - he a comptroller and she a secretary. They decided to go to the United States as a kind of adventure. A friend found work for both of them in Illinois so off they went to the U.S.A! At this time Judith also spent time and energies helping to settle Dutch Indonesians into the country. Though she and her husband, Bert, had planned to stay for only two years, their little adventure was stretching into a long visit.

...continued pg 6

continued from pg 5...

While they raised their family, her husband's work as a systems analyst took them to Wilmington, DE. This is where Judith first attended UU services and, though she didn't attend a UU church regularly at that time, she always knew that a UU congregation or fellowship would be the right place for her.

After a stint in Brazil for a few years, where she added Portuguese to her language studies, Judith and Bert landed in Malvern, PA. Judith and her husband lived and worked in Malvern during the 80's. She refers to this time as her stint in the "rag trade" for she worked at Calico Corners where she converted decorating ideas into work orders. Judith was a natural at this since she was a detail-oriented person, had calculation skills, and worked capably and happily with fabrics. She loved her job and enjoyed her co-workers. As she looks back she remembers that she and the others had great fun working on the projects and challenges that clients brought to them.

In 1991 Bert's health took a turn for the worse. Judith brought her "rag" work home with her. She was able to care for him and make a "workroom" in their newly purchased house in Elverson. This arrangement served them well until, after a long illness, Bert passed away in 2000.

One month after the death of her husband, Judith attended a service at UUF. "This community has kept me afloat since then." Judith avers. I suspect this community could say just that about Judith. After living a life of dangers, challenges, adventure, creativity, joy, and loss, she has come to us and has helped to keep us afloat since the day she arrived.

We're grateful for her resilient and nurturing gifts of festival making, practicality, and wise council and that her winding path has led to our door.

— *Miranda Van Horn*

Judith playing "sjoelbak"



Meditation Moment...

"...the main instruction is simply to lighten up. By taking that attitude toward one's practice and one's life, by taking that more gentle and appreciative attitude toward oneself and others, the sense of burden that all of us carry around begins to decrease."

— Pema Chodron

Simply Sitting meets on Mondays at 7:30 pm. Visitors are always welcome.

Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation is offered on the first first Monday of each Month



Coffee, Coffee... and Books!

*The coffee kiosk is
not just about coffee.*



Each week members buy from the book sale...and each week members donate books to the sale so we have a collection of titles that's constantly changing for your perusal. Check the table often for publications that might be of interest to you! Also, donate some of your old (or recent) favorites for others to enjoy and help UUFP at the same time!

*Find the Coffee Kiosk after Sunday
Service at Coffee Hour.*

氣 *Tai Chi Classes*



CJ Rhoads invites anyone who would like to join in with participants from her April auction item: a 5 session series of Tai Chi/Chi Gong classes which began on Friday, November 18th.

December classes will be held on Friday, December 2nd, 9th and 16th from 5:45-6:45 PM.

If there is enough interest, (at least 5 people) classes will continue on after that (\$10 per person per session) with proceeds benefiting the Church.

These classes are open to anyone who wishes to take them for the original auction price.



Holiday Craft Sale

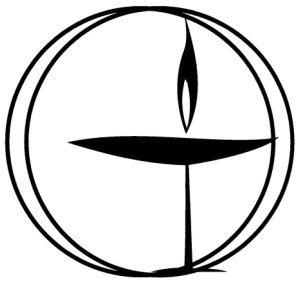
On December 11th, several UUFP members, family, and friends will be offering up their arts, crafts, and handmade treasures for sale in the social room after the service. Pottery, drawings, ornaments, wool miniatures, and cards are just a small sampling of the offerings you can expect to see. This is a great opportunity to get some holiday shopping done, support local artists, and contribute to the Fellowship at the same time, since a portion of all sales will go directly to the UUFP.

Join us for a wonderful afternoon!

So far, we have a handful of crafters, but there is always room for more!



Please contact Bonnie Donohue if you are interested in offering up your own works of art.



UUF Calendar

December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Yoga 7:00	2 Tai Chi 5:45-6:45	3
4 Choir 8:30 Adult RE: 9:30 Service:10:30	5 Meditation 7:30 <i>1st Monday Intro to Meditation</i>	6	7 Membership Mtg: 7:00	8 Yoga 7:00	9 Tai Chi 5:45-6:45	10
11 Choir 8:30 Adult & Ch RE: 9:30 Service:10:30 <i>UUF Craft Sale: 11:30</i>	12 Meditation 7:30	13	14	15 Yoga 7:00 <i>Sojourner Deadline</i>	16 Tai Chi 5:45-6:45 Committee Council Mtg: 7:30	17
18 Choir 8:30 Adult RE: 9:30 Service:10:30 <i>3rd Sunday Potluck: 11:30</i>	19 Meditation 7:30	20	21	22 Yoga 7:00	23	24  <i>Christmas Eve Service 7:00</i>
25  <i>Christmas Day</i> No Services Today	26 Meditation 7:30	27	28	29 Yoga 7:00	30	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i>

Who's Who at the UUFP

Minister: Rev. David Farrington

Board of Directors:

President: Linda Pallay

Vice President: Open

Board Secretary: Tara Boroson

Treasurer: Mary Ryan

Board Member: Carla Johnson

Board Member: Jon Price

Board Committees:

Committee on Shared Ministry:

Chair: Marianne Yarnall

Congregational Committees:

Committee Council:

Chair: Rev Dave Farrington (interim)

Stewardship:

Chair: Mary Ryan

Bookkeeper: Open

UUAction:

Chair: Carla Johnson

Worship:

Chair: Lisa Jokiel

Choir: Marianne Yarnall

Member Services:

Membership: Miranda Van Horn

Greeters: Judith Van Beek

Sunday Coffee Teams: Judith Van Beek

Newsletter: Kay Price

Website Updates: Bob Gross

Facilities:

Chair: Jon Price

Committee Council Rep: Frances Provost

Religious Education:

Children's RE Coordinators: Bob and Deni Gross

Important email contacts:

Minister@uupottstown.org – Rev David Farrington

President@uupottstown.org – Linda Pallay

VicePresident@uupottstown.org – Open

BoardSecretary@uupottstown.org – Tara Boroson

Board@uupottstown.org - Board members

Committees@uupottstown.org – Open

Office@uupottstown.org – Office staff

Mailings@UUPottstown.org --Judith Van Beek

Newsletter@uupottstown.org – Kay Price

UUAction@uupottstown.org - Carla Johnson

Programs@uupottstown.org – Lisa Jokiel

MemberServices@uupottstown.org – Miranda Van Horn

Facilities@uupottstown.org – Jon Price

Finance@uupottstown.org - Mary Ryan

Stewardship@uupottstown.org - Mary Ryan

Sharedministry@uupottstown.org - Marianne Yarnall

Webmaster@uupottstown.org – Bob Gross

RE @uupotstown.org- Deni and Bob Gross

Change of email, phone or street address? Email your new contact information to mailings@uupottstown.org or hand over new info in person to Judith Van Beek.

Sojourner Policy/Deadlines

The Sojourner is the voice of the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown. Notices pertaining to the Fellowship, its activities and members, and denominational news may be submitted to the Fellowship in writing or by email. **The submission deadline is the 15th of each month. Please note the email address for the Sojourner: newsletter@uupottstown.org**

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP OF
POTTSTOWN

1565 South Keim Street
Pottstown, PA 19465

Phone: 610-327-2662

Email:

office@uupottstown.org

Website:

<http://www.uupottstown.org>

*Pottstown Cluster food pantry collection during service
every second Sunday of the month.*