

Newsletter

Happy New Year!

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton

January 2007

Sermons

A New Year Story

Jan. 7

Let us pause together at this dawn of a new year to tell a story of what it can mean and what will become of us if it does.

Jan. 14, Naming God in a Godless World

Isn't there a spiritual book with a title like *The Hundred Names of God* or even *The Thousand Names of God*? I'm

not sure that I could write out more than a handful, and in our present age, I'm not sure that any of them are that acceptable. In this godless world where war is an acceptable means of international communication and murder is looked upon as a category of religion, one wonders whether god should be named at all.

Jan. 21, At Home Inside Ourselves

As a Welcoming Congregation, we proclaim ourselves welcoming of people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender. But are we really at home with this bold proclamation? Our sermon this morning kicks off a 2-week program in our Wednesday evening Adult Religious Education series that deals with transgender issues and our faith. *Note that our service today will start at 4:30 p.m.*

Jan. 28, African American Heritage in Song

We will welcome singers from The Society for the Preservation of African American Arts (SPAAA). Their program of authentic songs recalls plantation life and travel on the Underground Railroad. The SPAAA Singers have performed throughout the Eastern Shore with the goals of teaching and reviving African American heritage.

Read the weekly sermons and continue our after-sermon multilogues at <http://uufe-dialogue.blogspot.com>

Mark Your Calendars

Service Time Change for January 21

4:30 p.m.

The Friends of Third Haven Meeting are hosting a few Quaker groups, with their meeting concluding in time for us to have a service, a bit later than usual. We will return to our 3 p.m. schedule on January 28.

Sunday Service and School, 3:00 p.m.

Third Haven Friends Meeting House
405 South Washington St.

Parents and Friends of Children's RE

Important Meeting

January 6, 2-4 p.m.

@ Third Haven

Child care and light refreshments for adults and children.

Please R.S.V.P. to the church office (410-822-8103).

See p. 4 for details

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Minister's Office Hours

Tues. & Wed., 9:00 a.m.-12 p.m.
Mon., Thurs., Fri. by appt.
410-822-8103 (Office)
410-770-9772 (Home)
410-253-8881 (Cell)
jmbatmd@aol.com
Appointments encouraged.

What a Difference \$20 Can Make

Three times a year, our fellow UUs write a check to JPD Chalice Lighters. Why?

Chalice Lighters enjoy the special, good feeling that comes from helping to start new UU congregations or existing congregations to grow. Chalice Lighters in our 64 JPD congregations have combined their \$20+ contributions to help 42 congregations grow over the past 17 years. *UUFE is one of those fortunate congregations.* Our 2007 grant of \$20,000 will help us to meet our increased mortgage payments for the first couple of years.

Twenty dollars isn't much, but combined with thousands of others in JPD, we have the most successful program to jump start new congregations and pump "growth hormones" into congregations that want to grow. If you are not already in on this special pleasure, visit the Chalice Lighters's table when we have our Chalice Lighters Sunday soon.



Ministerial Thoughts

A Special New Year

This is the year! In 6 months or less, we should take possession of our refurbished building—so completely made over that we might as well call it new. The outside is pretty much completed, and all the internal systems are just about finished and inspected. Once that's done, the sheet-rocking can begin. Every step has made our building that much more enticing. It's going to be hard to wait until the completion, when we're handed the keys!

So many years of planning and dreaming have gone into the process that has brought us to this year—so many hopes, so many needs. Now hardly a day goes by that someone from the greater community steps forward to congratulate us on the wonderful improvement that our building bodies forth. Nobody's called yet to ask about a wedding in the building—with the exception of Eric and Sandra Henry-Stocker, who sort of jumped the gun—but those calls will probably start coming before we even call the place our own.

Already we've taken to giving out pictures of the place to special people at special times. Jean Rhian and the staff have been looking at the floor plan and talking about what areas can serve what purposes best. And on my side of the office downtown, I dream occasionally of the study that will be in so short a time.

Some folks say we should call the new building a church. Some folks say we should always be a fellowship. Some wonder about other possible names—like congregation or community or even gathering. But I honor all those terms and more, and I am glad that we will have such a wonderful place to call our own. *But for a little while longer, I'll see you at Third Haven on Sundays or at our offices in the Stewart Building downtown!*

Jim Bank

President's Corner

Blessings Counted

I'm one of those people who takes stock this time of year. I count my blessings, look ahead, and look back.

I have now been serving as your co-President or President for 18 months—it's hard to believe, but it's true—and I count that among my blessings. It's been a time of learning and challenge. It's given me great satisfaction, happiness, and some small measure of sleepless nights on occasion. But I thank you for giving me this opportunity to work hard on behalf of something that is so important in my life: Unitarian Universalism and UUFE.

I have 6 more months to serve, but I know that time will accelerate for my term as President from here on out. There is so much happening and on the horizon. A *big* priority now is to secure the best future we can for our Children's and Youth RE program. And I am, with the help of others, hard at work on that. Then will come the mighty work of spring: the operating canvass, fun while fund rais-

(Continued, p. 4)

Gatherings

Men's Lunch Bunch, Jan. 3, 17, & 31: Men from the Fellowship gather promptly at 11:30 a.m. at the Easton Airport Cafe.

Now on First Thursdays

Women's Spirituality Circle, Jan. 4: All women are invited to come together at 7 p.m. to honor the female divinity in this monthly circle. We will meet at Beth Hansen's home at 117 N. Locust Lane in Easton. For directions, please contact Beth (410-253-0214; sagefirebeth@yahoo.com).

Women's Lunch, Jan. 11, Noon: We will be meeting this month at Legal Spirits in Easton. Please call Edie Swallow (410-745-5170) if you can come, but drop-ins are certainly welcome if your plans change at the last minute.

Dinner and a Movie Night, Jan. 12, "Cars" (G). Prepare to peel out with this revved-up animated adventure, featuring classic automobiles, plenty of fender benders, guffaws galore, and a Route 66 road trip with a crew that doesn't make pit stops. Who could ask for anything more? The star-studded voice cast includes Paul Newman, Owen Wilson, Bonnie Hunt, Katherine Helmond, Cheech Marin, John Ratzenberger, racing legend Richard Petty, and sportscaster Bob Costas. Dinner is potluck. *Showtime:* 6:30 p.m. at Third Haven.

Drumming Circle, Jan. 19: Join us at 7 p.m. if you want to learn or just have fun. There are always extra instruments. For more information on meeting location, please contact Debra Hathaway (410-770-9057).

Fourth Sunday Potluck, Jan. 28: We will continue our fourth Sunday potluck gatherings in the Third Haven common room immediately following worship service. Come prepared with a dish to share and the anticipation of seeing old friends and meeting newcomers. If bringing an offering is not convenient, don't let that keep you away! There is always food to spare.

A Good Time Was Had By All!

Annual Holiday Potluck a Resounding Success

Many people deserve thanks for such a wonderful event, but first and foremost, thanks go to everyone who attended and to those who brought an amazing array of food and desserts. Extra-special thanks go to *Beth Hansen* for organizing a crew of helpers: *Thelma Geary, Rita Barker, and Mairade Ronning* for decorating the tables; *Eric and Sandra Henry-Stocker, Eric Ruben, and George McManus* for washing the "real" dishes so that we did not have to use disposables; *Philip Maher* and the *Henry-Stocker's young neighbor* who cleared the tables; our recorder and flute trio of *Rene Bond, Sue Loweree, and Jean Rhian*; and last, but not least, *Sue Loweree* who led caroling that made us sound like a choir. It was a wonderful afternoon!

Calendar

Men's Lunch Bunch

Wed., Jan. 3, 17, & 31, 11:30 a.m.

Women's Spirituality Circle

Thurs., Jan. 4, 7 p.m.

Women's Lunch

Thurs., Jan. 11, 12 p.m.

Dinner and a Movie Night

Fri., Jan. 12, 6:30 p.m.

Drumming Circle

Fri., Jan. 19, 7 p.m.

Fourth Sunday Potluck

Sun., Jan. 28, after service

Choir Calendar

Jan. 4, 11, 18
Thursday Rehearsals

Third Haven common room

(President's Corner, continued)

ing; nominations for next year's Board; final building decisions; the annual meeting; and *moving!* Whew! It will be a whirlwind!

So let's hang on together, enjoy the whirl, and grow ourselves and our beloved community through our work together.

In faith,
Jean Rhian
President



Goodbye, Nicole

They say misfortune comes in threes. Nicole Meehan is the third (and therefore the last, right?) of our treasured UUFE members to leave the area since October. Of course, this is a wonderful opportunity for Nicole: A move to the Massachusetts corner of the Berkshires; a job that is in her field of interest; and a future that promises an array of choices not available for her here. However, for us it means the loss of a vibrant and involved staff member who offered a creative and imaginative approach to religious education for our children. As Director of Religious Education, her job description included leading occasional worship services. These were memorable for the planning evident in their presentation and the insights that they brought to those who were present. Nicole was able to strike a balance between her role as a staff member and that of a member of our congregation. She did both with grace. We, of course, also will feel the absence of her three children: Merritt, Ellery, and Juliette. We bid farewell and fare thee well to our good friends.

Social Action Donates to the Brighter Christmas Fund

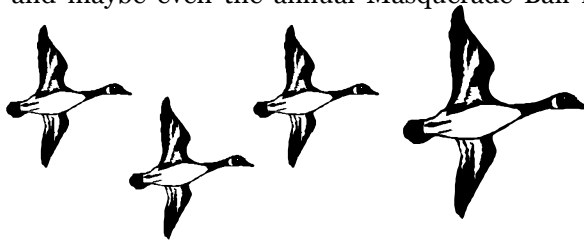
Once again, the Social Action voted to make \$150 annual donation to the Brighter Christmas Fund on behalf of UUFE.



Thoughts for All Ages

An Incredibly Positive Experience

Dear members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton, as many of you may know, we will be relocating to the Berkshires in Massachusetts in January, and I have resigned as Director of Religious Education. It has been a spiritually fulfilling experience to both serve as your Director of Religious Education and to be a member of this vibrant congregation. This Fellowship offers a supportive, warm, and intellectually stimulating community of faith and an incredibly positive experience for families and individuals of all ages. I am confident that many of the friends we have made here will continue to be lifelong friends. I wish all of you the best as UUFE moves forward into a new era and a new building. I look forward to visiting for the rededication of the new building... and maybe even the annual Masquerade Ball in February. (I had to plug that!)



Blessings,
Nicole Meehan
Merritt, Ellery, & Juliette

Important RE Meeting: We Have Big Shoes To Fill!

All of us at UUFE will be sorry to see Nicole, Merritt, Ellery, and Juliette go, but Nicole's opportunity in Massachusetts is too great to pass up. Nicole's resignation as DRE requires us as parents, members, and friends of UUFE to mobilize our combined efforts to fill her shoes!

On **January 6 from 2-4 p.m.**, we will have a meeting for parents and friends of RE at Third Haven. (Child care and light refreshments for adults and children will be provided.) We will be making short-term plans to be used until we hire a new DRE, define our goals for RE for the rest of this year, and begin planning for our program once we move back into our new building in the fall. We also hope to revitalize our RE committee.

After this meeting we will finalize a new job description for the DRE position, and that will be the foundation for the work to be done this year. We will work closely with our Personnel Committee to follow a process to identify and hire the best candidate for the position. We hope to move swiftly through the hiring process, while still ensuring the best possible result.

All are welcome to come to the January 6 RE meeting. Please contact the church office (410-822-8103) so we can plan accordingly.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns please talk to either Jim Bank or me. We welcome your input. I am confident that if we work together, we will emerge from this change with a healthy, strong RE program for our children and youth.

Jean Rhian

Adult Religious Education

Speaking of Faith Series

Jan. 10

This series within our series is based on the weekly radio program hosted by Krista Tippet where she explores a wide range of issues regarding faith and values. Join John Turner to discuss a recent program. You can listen Sundays on WSDL (90.7) at 11 a.m. or go to <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org> and click on Archives. Listen online or download the program to your computer or MP3 player. At each session, we will discuss the program aired 10 days earlier (e.g., this session will discuss the Dec. 31 program). If you cannot listen to the program in advance, join John in the Uufe office at 6 p.m., and he will play the program before the Adult RE session at 7 p.m.

The Theology of Film Series

Based on the principle that going to the movies can be a spiritual experience, each evening will include the viewing of a film followed by discussion. The theme of our winter/spring series is *Challenge of Faith*.

Jan. 17, "Simon Birch"

This film is loosely based on John Irving's "Prayer for Owen Meany." It is a rare and wonderful testament to the ardor and resilience of faith. Leader: Gail Woodall

Jan. 24, Talking of Transgender Issues

In the sermon on January 21, Jim Bank will address the issue of transgender people. Tonight, we will watch the film "Different for Girls," which deals with this issue. Discussion will follow. Leaders: Tineke Tan and Jim Bank

Jan. 31, Talking of Transgender Issues II

Taking off from the sermon and film of this past week, we will continue our discussion of this topic. Jean Elliot and Rev. Rebecca Steen will be with us. Leader: Tineke Tan



Special Programs

The Art of Possibility, Mondays, Jan. 29–Feb. 26

This program will take place on five successive Mondays, beginning on Jan. 29. The course is based on the popular book, *The Art of Possibility*, by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander. Although purchase of the book and regular attendance is encouraged, you are invited to attend as often as you can. Of the book, the authors say that "in the face of difficulty, we can despair, get angry...or choose possibility." For further information, call leaders Cathy Miller and Jim Bank (410-770-9772).

Thursday Film Series

Join Jim Bank at the Easton Cinema for the art film series at 7 p.m. on Thursdays and for the discussion that he leads after the credits finish. This program reaches out to members of the greater community. For more information, contact Jim.

"Yes Men"

A Film Sponsored by the
Interfaith Social Action Coalition

January 19, 7 p.m.

Third Haven Common Room

All are invited to view this film that is both funny and disturbing. With poker-faced impersonation as their weapon and World Trade Organization officials as their target, the Yes Men pull off one bold prank after another in an effort to raise political consciousness. When their outrageous acts are actually swallowed hook, line, and sinker, they must up the satirical ante and push the art of public spectacle to hilarious new heights.



Mask-Making Workshop

Saturday, February 3
1–5 p.m.

Welcome and Resource
Center, Easton

It's time again for our Mask-Making Workshop in preparation for the Second Annual Masquerade Ball coming on February 24! The workshop will be held at the Easton Welcome and Resource Center, 11 S. Harrison St. Materials to complete your own mask are included in the \$20 cost of admission along with refreshments. Contact Debra Hathaway (410-770-9057) to reserve a space or if you are interested in volunteering to help set up, clean up, bring food or drinks, or assist others with their masks. All proceeds will go to benefit Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton.

Thank You For All You Do

It's really amazing how many people pitch in and in a great variety of ways to keep UUFEB the growing and thriving religious community that it is. Here are just a few examples of folks who deserve big THANK-YOUS for the work they have done recently:

- *Janet Pfeffer, Gail Woodall, and Lois Greenburg* who helped define our operating canvass process for the Spring
- *Colleen Ronning* who came to the Board meeting on behalf of the Masquerade Ball committee and volunteered to represent RE at the space planning meeting in January
- Personnel Committee members *Jane Terebey, Nancy Orr, and Liz McGrory* who are helping with the process of hiring our new DRE
- *Margaret Garey* who volunteered to help the Aesthetics and Furnishings Committee design and spec the floor for the new meeting room
- *Dick Doughty* who assisted the Finance Committee mightily (in addition to all his construction work) in finance strategizing
- *Jean Griffith* for leading the creation of our Caring Quilt and all the others who made squares for the quilt and helped with this project
- and *Tom Anovick* for help with relocating RE materials.



Music Notes

Wired for Sound

No one doubts that our new building will be pleasing to the eye. If you drive past on Route 50, the attractiveness of the renovated building practically jumps out at you. In fact, I find it hard to imagine sometimes that any part of the old building is still inside that beautiful new structure.

What isn't obvious is that the new building also will be pleasing to the ear. Although the sound system wasn't included in the original building design, the importance of sound to everything that goes on in our congregation quickly made it a priority. Considerable thought has gone into designing a sound system that will make our new meeting space as functional as it is lovely. A rack of mostly new equipment will be loaded onto a movable cart. New speakers at the front and middle of the room will allow everyone to hear what is being said at the front of the room, and wireless microphones will be available to transmit sound from other locations in the room. Speakers also will be installed in the nursery, allowing our child care provider to listen to the service.

The wiring for the new sound system probably will be installed by the time you read this *Newsletter* (before the drywall is installed). Although we will have opportunities later to add microphones or fine tune the meeting room acoustics, this first stab at a good sound system is likely to improve the quality of our services for everyone.

Sandra Henry-Stocker

Board News

Caring Quilt Now Complete

Gail Woodall displayed our caring quilt which was made with special patches produced by members on one side and by several of our children on the reverse side. The Board expressed its appreciation to *Jean Griffith* for her many hours of work in producing this thoughtful comfort item, which will be loaned to members while they are ill or recovering from an operation. A journal will be kept to record the names of the recipients.

Minister's Report. Jim Bank noted that Joannie Bayard and Denise Stahre had become our two newest members.

Treasurer's Report. Nancy Dimond advised that the after reconsideration by the Finance Committee, the decision to send out pledge reminder notices six times a year instead of four had been rescinded.

Building Oversight Committee Report. After much work and consideration by Sandra Henry-Stocker, Dick Doughty, and our audio expert, a sound system for the worship room had been approved by the committee for a cost of \$7,475. The Committee believed that this was an essential element of our worship services and agreed that new equipment should be used except for the CD player. The project is proceeding on schedule; the HVAC work is finished, and the insulation should be installed by the end of the year. Installation of dry wall will follow.

UUFE Contacts

Minister	Rev. James Bank, 410-770-9772 or 410-822-8103
President	Jean Rhian, 410-822-5807
Music Director	Patty Rubin, 410-745-2000
Minister Emeritus	Daniel G. Higgins, Jr., DMin, 410-745-3462
Newsletter Editor	Amy Eutsey, 410-820-7971 uufenewsletter@hotmail.com

Many thanks to the Folding and Stamping Crew. *We can't get the Newsletter to you without them! :o)*

The deadline for the February *Newsletter* is January 15.

Bring a Friend

Enrich the day and the life of someone you know by inviting him or her (or them) to attend a UUFE service or a weekday event with you. We have an impressive array of groups to fit a variety of interests from the Drumming Circle to the Adult RE offerings. Do a mental survey of your friends, neighbors, and coworkers and talk to them about the reasons why you are a UU. We know that personal invitation is the best way of sharing our faith. We have much to offer our Mid-Shore community if we let our light shine outward.

Unitarian Universalist Principles

Unitarian Universalism is a faith for those who want the freedom to develop their own religious values and beliefs without being bound by creed or dogma. These are the principles that we share:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.

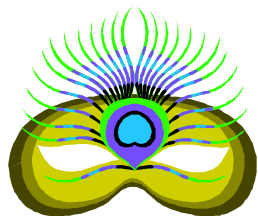
We Want To Hear From You!

UUFE is always interested in hearing from members and friends about new ideas for small group activities. Contact President Jean Rhian, and let' make your ideas a reality!

January 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Men's lunch, 11:30 Adult RE, 7 p.m.	4 Women's Spirituality Circle, 7 p.m. Choir, 7-8:30 p.m.	5	6
7 Service & RE, 3 p.m.	8	9 Social Action Mtg., 7 p.m.	10 Adult RE, 7 p.m.	11 Women's lunch, 12 p.m. Choir, 7-8:30 p.m.	12 Dinner & Movie, 6:30 p.m.	13
14 Service & RE, 3 p.m.	15	16 Board Mtg., 6:30 p.m.	17 Men's lunch, 11:30 Adult RE, 6:30 p.m.	18 Choir, 7-8:30 p.m.	19 "Yes Men" film, 7 p.m. Drum Cir., 7 p.m.	20
21 Service & RE, 4:30 p.m.	22 Women's Spirituality Cir., 7 p.m.	23	24 Interfaith Lunches, 10 a.m. Membership Mtg., 3:30 p.m. Adult RE, 7 p.m.	25	26	27
28 Service & RE, 3 p.m. Fourth Sunday Potluck, after service	29	30	31 Men's lunch, 11:30 Adult RE, 7 p.m.			

Coming in February



Second Annual Masquerade Ball

Mask-Making Workshop, Feb. 3