



Newsletter

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton

December 2009

Sermons

Saints

Dec. 6

This is St. Nicholas Day, and in many European countries it is a special day for all children. Rev. Gabi will use this occasion to explore the concept of sainthood and look at a few saints, both old-fashioned and modern-day ones.

Dec. 13, Buddhism and the Bible

Rev. Gabi will give a brief introduction into Buddhism, along with a comparison of Judeo-Christian and Buddhist teachings.

Dec. 20, Hope

Advent is a season of hope; but the holidays also fill many individuals with hopelessness. Rev. Gabi will explore what gives us hope, and what keeps us going.

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve - Thursday 5:00 p.m.

Traditional Christmas Eve service -- Rev. Gabi's homily will focus on "Mary, Mother of God."

Dec. 27, Winter Magic

Lay Leader Dwayne Eutsey will explore some of the magical aspects of this season's biggest celebration.

**Sunday Service
and School
10:00 a.m.
7401 Ocean
Gateway**

Inside....

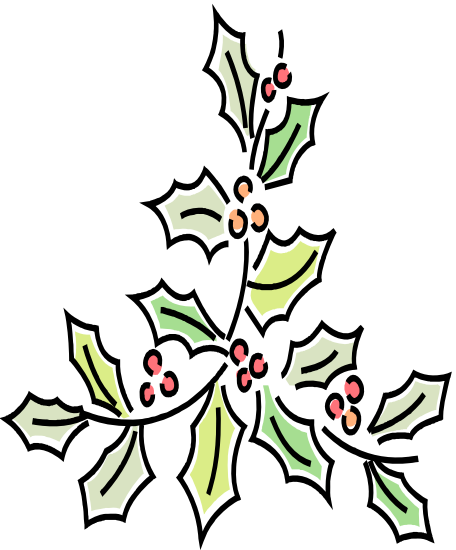
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Pick yours up on the first Sunday!
The FUNdraising committee will sell
handcrafted wreaths after the service on
December 6.

So...

Come in Saturday, December 5th at 9 a.m. to help with the Wreath Making Workshop. Help make the Christmas wreaths to be sold Sunday following the service. All materials will be on hand. Have a question?
Ask Colleen Ronning or Debra Hathaway



President's Corner

The holiday season has started with Thanksgiving behind us and December celebrations staring us in the face. I don't know about you, but I'm really excited that our Children and Youth Religious Education group is planning a float for the Easton holiday parade on December 5. Please come out to support our kids and our faith! But that's not all. If you look at the calendar it's chock full with the Wreath Sale, the Decorating of the Halls, our holiday potluck and even a time for quiet amidst the hubbub (Yuletide Recharge). *If you are new to our congregation, participating in these events can especially help you form deeper connections beyond attending Sunday service.* We hope you will participate as your hectic schedule allows.

...and then there's the new year... personally it's often a time to look forward. Early in the new year of this Fellowship we will look forward together as a congregation to where we want to go from here. It's been about nine years since our congregation has taken the time to do this. This "visioning" process is still in the planning stages, but I invite you to go ahead and spend some time thinking about where you would like to see the Fellowship go. Looking back at our past you may consider what we do really well and wish for a continuation of that aspect of our Fellowship. Or you may think about what you'd like from the Fellowship that doesn't exist or ponder programs that have potential to be enriched.

If you are new to our congregation we especially encourage and ask for your participation. The combined vision of newcomers **and** long-time members will sustain this congregation and ultimately our faith.

Namaste,

Nancy Sawyer

Minister's Message

At the start-up workshop a few weeks ago, an interesting topic was raised, a topic that was also frequently brought up at seminary: "Healthy Boundaries." It seems logical that in the relationship between a minister and his/her congregation, guidelines and structures are necessary in order to draw the line between work and fun, or between appropriate and inappropriate phone calls, e-mails, etc. However, it's not always easy.

As a relatively new minister, for me this is still an area of experimentation and questioning. Let's start with phone calls: I have decided to risk the occasional unnecessary call and have given my cell phone number to all of you for 24/7 emergency pastoral care. Many of my colleagues are horrified by that thought, but for me it is important to be available for you when you need me. I trust that you will not abuse this particular loose boundary.

The next boundary-related question is, "If it's fun, is it still work?" What I mean by that is that some of the meetings I go to are a lot of fun; for example, meeting with clergy colleagues or sitting in on some of our committee meetings. Along similar lines are those social occasions when I might come to your house for dinner, or when I attend a social function at UUFE like the Auction or the Fall Festival. Is it work, or should I consider that my personal time?

I have found it impossible to make a definite statement either way because it always depends on the situation and circumstance. In most cases it is work because we usually talk about stuff related to UUFE. If, on the other hand, I consider a visit social and something work-related comes up, I will probably say, "I'd like to talk to you about this, but now is not the appropriate time. Let's meet at the office." I hope you'll understand!

E-mail is another area where boundaries are hard to define. Sometimes I receive over 50 e-mails from the congregation in a single day. I hope we will eventually come up with a church communication policy on sending e-mail, cc'ing and answering messages.

Our Committee on Congregational Ministry and I are working on a covenant between the congregation and me that clearly spells out what our promises to each other are. Hopefully, this will also help us with the boundaries issue. I invite you to talk with me about your perceptions and ideas so misunderstandings are kept to a minimum!

Warmly

Rev. Gabi

Gatherings

YULETIDE RECHARGE

On Wednesdays, Dec. 2, 9, 16 and 23. From 7 pm to 7:45 pm take a break from the hectic busy-ness of the holiday season and join Rev. Gabi for 45 minutes of quiet music, silence, and reflection.

Men's Lunch, Wednesdays, Dec. 2, 16, and 30. All men of all ages are invited to meet at the Airport Café about 11:30. In the past, this gathering was sometimes called ROMEO's; however at least one attendee prefers not being referred to as "Old". Breakfast is served until 11:30.

First Friday Youth Night, Dec. 4: At 7 p.m. we will make "top your own tacos" (including veggie ones), play games and make final plans for the upcoming spaghetti dinner. Bring a friend. We're sure to have a smokin' good time. 😊

Save the date- On Friday Jan. 8 the Youth Group will host a spaghetti dinner and donate 50% of the proceeds to the Haitian School project. Be on the lookout for the kids selling tickets.

Juliets, Thursday, Dec. 10: We will gather at Jean Rhian's home at 7607 Easton Club Drive at 12:00 for lunch. Please contact Jean to let her know if you plan to attend. jerhibanks@goeaston.net or 410 822-5807. Bring your own lunch. Jean will provide beverages and dessert.

Book Group, Thursday, Dec. 17. We meet at the Fellowship at 11:30 a.m. in the Archer-Shee room and invite all to bring a brown bag lunch and share in our very informal discussions. Even if you haven't read the book, please feel free to join us. The selection for December is *The Guernsey Literary Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. Nancy Orr will lead the discussion. In January we will discuss *Gardens of Water* by Allen Drew with Gail Woodall as leader. At the December meeting we will choose five books for the remainder of the year. The tea kettle will be boiling and coffee made. Please let us know if you would join the Book Group if we met at a different day or time. For more information, call Joanie Baynard at 410-770-8277.

Juliets, Monday, Dec. 21: We will meet at the Fellowship at 7 p.m., take a break from the holiday crush and enjoy each other's company. Bring your own dinner. Beverages and dessert will be provided. If you plan to attend, let Ann Davis know at awd1620@aol.com or call 410 745-2461.

Member Services

The next meeting is Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 3:00 p.m. at the Fellowship building.

Holiday Potluck, Sunday, December 20

Get ready to bring your favorite Christmas or Hanukkah dish to our annual holiday potluck, immediately following the worship service. No need to sign up ahead of time. Just be there and ready to enjoy yourself. Music and caroling will follow the meal. Sandra Henry-Stocker and Friends will provide leadership for the sing along. This event always seems to provide a perfect respite in the midst of holiday preparations. If you have questions call the Uufe office at 410-822-8103.

Gail Woodall



Wedding Bells

An 88-year-old man said to his best friend, who was 89.

"So, I hear that you are getting married?"

"Yep, I am," answered his friend.

"Do I know her?"

"Nope!"

"This woman, is she good looking?"

"Not really."

"Is she a good cook?"

"Naw. she can't cook at all."

"Does she have plenty of money?"

"Nope. poor as a church mouse.."

"Well, then, is she good in bed?"

"I don't know."

"Why on earth do you want to marry her?"

"Because she can still drive."

(taken from *The Elderberry*, retired UU Minister's Newsletter)

Board News

Highlights from the November 2009 Board of Trustees Meeting

- The Board approved a youth-hosted spaghetti dinner at UUFE to raise funds for the Haiti Project and for youth activities.
- The Board approved the participation of UUFE children and youth (and adults) in the Easton Holiday parade on December 5.
- The Board approved the expenditure of up to \$500 for audio-visual equipment by the Adult Enrichment Committee to up-grade the UUFE Home Theater.
- The Board approved up to \$400 for the purchase of eight chairs with arms to be placed in aisles during worship services to better serve those with disabilities.
- UUFE will host the Talbot Interfaith Shelter from January 24 through February 7 with Emily and Todd Cranwell coordinating.
- Rev. Gabi is seeking a date with Rev. Melora Lyngood for visioning sessions in mid-January. All members and friends will be encouraged to take part.

Janet Pfeffer

Everyone loves a parade!



UUFE will participate in the Easton Olde Thyme Holiday Parade Saturday December 5. Line up is at 5:45 p.m. with the parade starting at 6:30pm. Our theme is "Peace on Earth, Goodwill towards ALL". Please talk to Jamie Walter or Liz Hausburg for further info.

Religious Education-Youth

Calendar Events

- Dec. 6 Let My People Go (Freedom from Oppression)
- Dec. 13 The Ten Commandments (Rules and Responsibilities)
- Dec. 20 Holiday celebrations!
- Dec. 27 Make Way for the New Year!

Donation Needs this month: drink boxes

Our Religious Education Year

Our religious education this month is a combination of celebration and improvements. We continue with our story of Moses as he leads the Hebrew people out of their oppression in Egypt, a story that has become an important symbol for freedom fighters around the world and a symbol of how freedom can be gained even when it seems impossible. Our celebrations continue on December 20 as we look at the holidays this month: Dec. 12 – Hanukkah; Dec. 21 – Winter Solstice; Dec. 25 – Christmas; and Dec. 26 – Kwanzaa. We will have crafts, stories, and snacks for the holidays!

On December 13 and 27 we will look at our responsibilities as community members and set goals for 2010. We try not to set unattainable goals, but ways we hope to improve. Are there things we can do better? We hope so.

This month we will seek to align ourselves with UU beliefs

- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all

As a reminder, I will be available two evenings a week at the Fellowship. My office hours are 6:30 p.m. to 8:20 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of the month. If you have questions about our Religious Education for children and youth, Friday Youth Nights, or just want to chat about kids, please feel free to drop in. My office is in the Nursery in the RE wing.

Something to Think About this Month

from Jane Bartlett's book *Parenting with Spirit*.

Why Prayer Nurtures a Family's Spirit

- Prayer helps children feel connected to a larger reality.
- Prayer promotes the development of an interior life.
- Prayer encourages an examination of conscience.
- Prayer develops gratitude and joy.
- Prayer brings parents and children together.
- Prayer develops a reverence for the world.
- Prayer increases children's engagement in the world.

See you in Fellowship!

Liz Hausburg, CRE

Social Action

Carol Engle has agreed to represent UUFE as our envoy to the UU UNO (UU United Nations Office) and attended a training meeting in Brooklyn, N.Y. on November 21. An Envoy acts to represent the UU United Nations Office within their local congregation. For more information about Carol's role on behalf of UUFE, visit the web site <http://uu-uno.org/what-is-a-uu-uno-envoy-/what-is-a-uu-uno-envoy.html?Itemid=76>

It's a big step forward for our Social Justice Committee to participate in this group with its national and international focus on human rights.

Maryland, You Are Beautiful Award

In November, UUFE member Mary Young was awarded the annual "Maryland, You are Beautiful Award" at the Historical Society and was honored by the presence of local officials as well as state representatives Richard Colburn, Addie Eckhardt and Jeannie Haddaway. She received this award in honor of her tireless work on behalf of the poor, the elderly and the imprisoned in our community. Her volunteer activities include collecting books and clothing, delivering lunches, and helping clean trash off Oxford Road. Mary tutors in English, shelves books at the local library, and records minutes at meetings. This amazing, generous and kind hearted woman makes the lives of many people nicer. Mary, You Are Beautiful!

Sandra Henry-Stocker

November 7th Workday A Big Success!

The Fellowship building and grounds look much nicer as a result of the diligent effort of seventeen volunteers who washed windows, cleaned the kitchen, tended the flower beds, painted the parking lot lines, spruced up the Nature Trail, cleared vines from a large evergreen tree, and cleared land for additional parking. The weather was beautiful and participants enjoyed the time working together. If you missed this opportunity, be on the lookout for the work day next spring. *Dick Doughty*



Something New is coming to UUFE!

"Always In Stitches" will bring folks together who like to be creative with needles and hooks. If you like to knit, crochet, tat, macramé, or quilt, this group might be perfect for you. **Always In Stitches** will be another covenant group similar to the Chalice Circles that are led by Debbie East-erling, Dwayne Eutsey, and Ann Davis. Hopefully, it will enhance a close relationship between the participants and will help individuals along the path of spiritual development. The group will write a covenant of right relationship and how they want to interact with each other. The covenant will decide how often they will gather, session lengths, and the duration of the group. Service to the congregation and the wider community will also be included in their covenant.

A primary interest in needlework will bring them together. A deep respect for each other and the satisfying experience of sharing and growing will keep them together.

This group will begin meeting in January. If you think you would like to be a part of **Always in Stitches** please contact Melanie Ball-Pearson, better known as Molly. She can be reached at mollysmagick@gmail.com.

Ann Davis

Newsletter News

To submit an article or notice for the next newsletter, send it to editor@uufeaston.org by Tuesday, December 15. Please attach any photographs separately. Space permitting, you'll see your contribution in the January UUFE newsletter on-line at www.uufeaston.org.

If you don't have internet access, request that a copy be mailed to you by calling our office at 410 822-8103.

Adult Enrichment

Movie News

On November 11, over 20 people attended the premiere of our new high definition video projection system. The movie shown was **Doubt**, starring Meryl Streep and Philip Seymour Hoffman. Thanks to everyone who made this possible, including Carol Engle for donating the Epson video projector, Paul and Peggy Sharp for donating the Sony Blu-Ray DVD player, Ed Schmidt who gave us the Pioneer stereo system, and Norman Wolcott who donated a pair of Fisher speakers. We are still looking for a pair of small bookcase speakers to add surround sound, and a VHS player. If you have either of these kicking around in your attic and want to put them to good use, call Paul Sharp at 410-822-1623.

The system is also now capable of projecting directly from a PC laptop for Powerpoint and MP4 presentations. If your committee or group would like to take advantage of our new system, call Paul Sharp for a brief tutorial.

YULETIDE RECHARGE

See the first item under "Gatherings" page 3 for more information about this December Adult Enrichment program.

January 2010 Adult Enrichment Programs

For a preview of exciting programs for the new year see the next page, page 7.



Building and Grounds News

The Building Fire Alarm System & Emergency Exits

Fortunately we have a modern fire alarm system installed in our fellowship building. The system has a number of smoke and heat detectors located throughout the building which detect the presence of smoke or abnormally high temperatures. If any of the detectors are activated, the fire department is automatically called. A black box located outside to the right of the main entry door contains the master key for the building. Only fire department personnel can open this box if the alarm system is activated and firemen need access to the building.

Emergency egress is facilitated because most rooms in the building have doors leading directly to the outside. The exceptions are the Shared Office, the Kitchen, and the three bathrooms directly connected to a hall or room which has an exit to the outside. The doors intended for emergency egress have exit signs with a siren and flashing red light located in close proximity to the exit doors of each room. A siren and flashing red lights are automatically turned on when the fire alarm system is activated.

The main entry door to the building is **not** considered an exit door because it opens into the building. People in the main foyer or hall should exit either through the door at the north end of the hall in the religious education wing or through the south door in the Administrative Office. People in the Meeting Room should exit directly to the outside using one of the four exit doors in that room. In the event of a fire, do **not** attempt to exit from the Meeting Room into the main hall because the entry doors open into the Meeting Room. Children in the religious education classrooms will exit directly to the outside and will join their parents outside. If the fire alarm is activated, do not re-enter the building until the extent of the hazard has been determined and the "all clear" has been given.

We are happy to report that recently the fire alarm system worked correctly when food spilled in the oven caught fire, activated the system and the fire department responded. If you have questions about the fire alarm system, please contact any member of the Building & Grounds Committee.

Dick Doughty

During the past year, Roger Williamson has served as UUFE's building custodian. Roger and Linda will be leaving Easton soon. We appreciate the careful and reliable way in which Roger has kept our house of worship in excellent condition. Before departing, Roger helped us review our custodial duties and practices to improve efficiency and results. UUFE member Russell Steffy has assumed the custodial position in Roger's place. An outline of the custodial duties can be found online at www.uufeedon.org/BGC/Custodial.doc. If you have questions or suggestions about the maintenance of our UUFE house, please contact Russ or Don Barker, the UUFE chair for building maintenance.

Don Barker

Articulating Your UU Faith

A Preview of Adult Enrichment programs coming in 2010

Articulating Your UU Faith
What do you say after you say "I'm Unitarian"?
January 7, 14, 21, 28
Thursday evenings at 7 pm

A four week program designed to help you think through your beliefs and values and how you can communicate them to others. You don't have to know a lot about Unitarianism or even about religion, but you do have to be willing to engage in lively discussions about both those topics.
Led by Paul and Peggy Sharp

January 7

What do you believe?

Before you can explain your beliefs and values to others, you must first understand them yourself. So what do you believe about the universe, life, God, and religion itself? Does being open to other's beliefs mean that you are ambivalent about your own beliefs?

January 14

Close Encounters of the Four Kinds

When people ask you about your beliefs, what are they really asking? How to separate the sincere questioners from the merely polite. What is a Unitarian, and why do people become Unitarian?

January 21

Exploring Your Spiritual Heritage

What is the heritage of Unitarian Universalism, and what does that mean for you today? Does it pass the "so what" test? What do people want from religion and can UU provide for those needs? And if Unitarianism is such a dynamic, all-embracing religion, why are so few people UU's?

January 28

Articulating Your Faith

Using the principles of communication theory, refine your belief system to a simple, easily remembered credo. Then learn how to frame questions in a positive manner to allow open-ended exploration of beliefs and values. Write your own "Welcome to UU."

Advance registration is required. Participants are expected to attend all four sessions if possible and complete some homework and reading assignments. To register, call **410-822-8103**. For more information about the program call Paul Sharp at **410-822-1623**.



*Emerson
Cafe*
A feast for the Mind and Spirit

In January we will launch a Wednesday night discussion group called **Emerson Cafe**. Generally, all discussion for the month will be based around a common theme. The programs are free, there is no advanced sign-up required, and they will typically be held in the Archer-Shee room. *Paul Sharp*

(Editor's note) A brief synopsis of Emerson Cafe's program can be found on page 8. More details will be in the January UUFE Newsletter.

UUFE Contacts

Minister	Rev. Gabriele Parks, 410 822-8103 minister@uufeaston.org
President	Nancy Sawyer 443 362-0946 president@uufeaston.org
Coordinator, Religious Education for Children and Youth	Elizabeth Hausburg, 410 476-4774
Minister Emeritus	Daniel G. Higgins, Jr., D.Min 410 745-3462
UUFE Office	410 822-8103
Newsletter Editor	Frank Greenburg, editor@uufeaston.org

For a complete schedule of 2010 Emerson Cafe discussions, pick up a brochure in the Fellowship lobby or download one from our website at www.uufeaston.org.

Emerson Cafe

A feast for the Mind and Spirit



Starting January 6 you are invited to join us for a program of exploration and discussion at Emerson Cafe.

In today's hectic world, there are few places where people can gather for mental and spiritual enrichment and discussions about topics that matter – ideas, insights, ethics, and solutions to the world's problems.

Such a place is the Wednesday night discussion group held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton. We call it **Emerson Cafe**, named after the famous Unitarian philosopher. It's a place to join like-minded people for a freewheeling discussion of the issues of the day; relax, have a cup of tea or coffee, and expand your horizons.

The format is simple: a short presentation of a topic, followed by discussion. So come join us, and discover a community of intellectual and spiritual adventurers. We can't wait to see you.

**THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP AT EASTON
PO BOX 1162
EASTON, MD 21601**

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

