



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton

Sunday Service & School 10 AM

PO Box 1162
7401 Ocean Gateway
Easton, MD 21601
410.822.8103
uufe@verizon.net
www.uufeaston.org

SERMONS

Labor Day in Song

Sept 4 This morning, we will focus on labor through readings led by the Worship Committee and songs led by our own Sandra Henry-Stocker.



Sept 11 Ingathering Sunday

On this occasion of our annual Water Ceremony, Rev Gabi will reflect on uses and symbolism of water in our religious and spiritual life. Bring water from your summer journey or from summer activities for this community-building service and the official beginning of the 2011-2012 church year.

Outreach Collection on Sept 11: Talbot Interfaith Shelter. To learn more about this organization, turn to page 4. Please make checks payable to Talbot Interfaith Shelter. This is a tax deductible contribution.

Sept 18 Threshold Congregation Kick-off

The Threshold Congregation Committee and Rev. Gabi will share the goals and plans for the coming 3 years. This will be followed by a workshop conducted by Paula Cole Jones, Racial and Social Justice Director for the Joseph Priestley District of the UUA.

Sept 25 Righting a Wrong

This weekend falls between the Jewish holy days of Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashana. Members of the congregation will share stories of atonement. Service leader: Nancy Orr.


**Threshold Congregation
Kick-off**
Sept 18, 2011
10:00 AM Worship • 11:30 AM Lunch
12–3 PM Workshop with
Paula Cole Jones
Racial & Social Justice Director
Joseph Priestley District, UUA

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*Well, I try my best
To be just like I am
But everybody wants you
To be just like them
They say sing while you slave
and I just get bored
I ain't gonna work on
Maggie's farm no more.*

(Bob Dylan)

First Sunday Potluck September 4, 11:30	If you can stay after the service to chat and enjoy one another’s company, bring a dish to share to the Archer-Shee room before the service-unless it needs the oven. **It would also be helpful if everyone would make room in the sanctuary for the setting up of tables and chairs once the service is over. See you then!
This is becoming our favorite Sunday of the month! 	

MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

New Groups and Good Ol' Stuff

It's hard to believe, but it's September, and the summer will be over soon! I hope you all had a good and relaxing vacation and are ready for another church year.

As for me, I'm looking forward to an exciting year, with the beginning of our Threshold Congregation endeavor, a new Women's Spirituality Group, and a new Buddhism Interest Group. Of course, there will be more of the good old stuff—sermons and counseling and teaching and committee meetings and interfaith work and...and...

My theme for the sermons this year is Storytelling, using stories from the world's religions to go deeper into theological or philosophical questions. Some of you may have enjoyed the stories of the Sufi mystic Nasrudin on August 21 with which I started this series. In the months to come I will explore with you the parables of Jesus as well as tales from the Jewish Midrash, Zen stories, and excerpts from the Bhagavad Gita.

Instead of teaching a class this fall, I'll jump start two new groups. The first will be a group for women who want to work on their spiritual growth and development using the book *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron. This group will meet twice a month (first and third Tuesdays) and will be cofacilitated by Rev. Nancy Sajda and me. The second one will be (eventually) a leaderless group for individuals who are interested in Buddhism. We will read and discuss the book *Buddhism Without Beliefs* by Stephen Batchelor. This group will be open to individuals from the community.

Of course, I will continue to be available to all UUFE members for counseling. You can call me on my cell phone (number is in the directory) or send me an e-mail (minister@uufeaston.org) to make an appointment. In case of a pastoral emergency, you can reach me 24/7 on my cell phone.

Please do not hesitate to talk to me if you have questions, comments, or concerns about my ministry to you. This is only my fifth year, and I still have a lot to learn. I can't do that without feedback! Looking forward to a great 2011/12 with you!

Warmly, *Rev. Gabi*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ahoy Mateys!

In July, my sister and I were whisked away unexpectedly on a 7-day trip to the Bahamas. It was one of those windfall opportunities that just couldn't be left untaken. So off we went to snorkel, bike, kayak, and hike along the pearlescent beaches and aqua waters. I know your brows are now furrowed with pity for us.

The scenery was gorgeous, but what impressed me most about the cruise was the organization of the Carnival Cruise line. From embarking in Charleston, SC, to disembarking there on our return, every aspect of the experience was coordinated, precise, and pleasant. Nine hundred crew members provided for 2,600 passengers food preparation, dining room service, entertainment, housekeeping, laundry, accounting, shore excursions, moving passengers on and off board, handling luggage, and doing it all with a smile and grace.

The mechanism and the spirit of our ship, *Fantasy*, brought UUFE to mind. Though we are considerably smaller in size (126 members and 126 crew), the scope of what we work together to provide rivals all that the crew of the *Fantasy* offered her passengers. Our congregation, *the UUSS Fellowship at Easton*, offers thought-provoking and spiritually enriching sermons accompanied by excellent music and pleasant aesthetics, home-cooked edibles of all varieties, classes for young and old alike to broaden the mind and stir the spirit, administrative services, communications and IT departments keep the communications flowing, fiscal folks who gather in the money and send it out while keeping us solvent, the fund raisers, the Stewardship Committee, the engineering department that keeps the environmental systems functioning, and the Building and Grounds Committee as we like them. The personnel department (CoCM, Member Services Committee, and Personnel Committee) tend to the crew to avoid mutiny. *The UUSS Fellowship at Easton* has a captain and the captain's staff who watch from the bridge (Archer-Shee Room) the coordination of each of our ship's departments and services.

As your captain, I plan to bring to your attention the work of all of the departments of our ship. Look for special articles in this and upcoming issues of our *Newsletter*.

Ann Davis

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Welcome back! UU Religious Education classes for children and youth begins on Sept 11. Our classroom arrangement will be a little different this year because of enrollment numbers. Our first

classroom will be an infant through kindergarten hybrid; our elementary classroom will be for first through fifth graders; and our oldest group of children, middle school, will be for our sixth through eighth graders. The goal this year is to have two adults present in all classrooms every Sunday.

Nursery–Kindergarten. The teachers are Amy Eutsey, Patty Hamsher, and Nancy Sawyer. The curriculum is *Creating Home*. This program helps children to develop a sense of home that is grounded in faith. Together they will discuss questions about the purpose of having a home and the functions a home serves for us as humans and for other animals. The program speaks of home as a place of belonging and explores the roles each of us play in the homes where we live. Parents also may have their first-graders attend this class, depending on his/her maturity and ability, with the option of moving up later in the school year.

Elementary (1st–5th Grade). The teachers are Leigh Marquess, Crystal Thomas, and Jamie Walter. The curriculum is *The Toolbox of Faith*. This curriculum reflects on the qualities of our UU faith, such as integrity, courage, and love, as tools children can use in living their lives and building their own faith. Each session uses a tool as a metaphor for an important quality of our faith, such as reflection (mirror), flexibility (duct tape), and justice (a flashlight). Reflecting on the qualities (tools) of our faith, children and leaders gain insight into what makes our faith important in their lives and how they can grow in our faith.

Middle School (6th–8th Grade). The teachers are Laura Winne and me. The curriculum is *Amazing Grace: Exploring Right and Wrong*. The intention of this curriculum is to help our middle school youth to understand right and wrong and act on their new understanding. Its purpose is to equip them for moving safely and productively through the middle and high school years, when

they will be continually tugged toward both ends of the ethics continuum.

I am looking forward to an exciting and thought-provoking voyage through our UU curriculums this year.

See you on Sunday!
Liz Hausburg, CRE

Volunteer Floaters Needed

To meet our goal of two adults in each classroom we are looking to the congregation for help. We need about 40 slots filled for those willing adults who would like to assist as a floater.

This person will assist in the youngest classroom with infants or in the elementary classroom to help the teacher as needed, assist kids who may need help cutting or gluing, and help in cleaning up at the end of the class. The only requirement is to show up! See the RE bulletin board to pick a Sunday (or maybe two!)



MEMBER SERVICES

Next Meeting, Sept 14, 3 PM, Fellowship Bldg

Welcome to our New Committee Member, Martha Hamlyn!

Wheelchair Now on Premises



We extend a heartfelt thank-you to Donna Cunningham, who recently donated a wheelchair for use at UUF. It can be found in the accessible, unisex restroom just off the main office.

Feedback Welcomed to Change in Coffee Hours

During the summer, we downsized the coffee hour after service so that only coffee or coffee and very light snacks were offered. The rationale was that space is limited, leading to congestion around the snack table and difficulty exiting the sanctuary. Your responses to this trial are welcome. Please provide Gail Woodall (410-820-8541 or gbwoodall@goeaston.net) with your feedback.

GATHERINGS

Men's Luncheon, Sept 10 and 21, 11:30 AM

Join in the conversation at the Easton Diner on Rt. 50 (8451 Ocean Gtwy). Find out what you've been wondering about.

Book Discussion Group, Sept 15, 11:30 AM

We meet at the Fellowship in the Archer-Shee room and invite all to bring a brown bag lunch and share these very informal discussions. Even if you haven't read the book, come join us. We would enjoy hearing something of your recent reads. Our focus for September is *Hotel at the Corner of Bitter & Sweet*, by Jamie Ford. Next month (Oct 20) we will discuss *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (Maryland Library selection for the year).

First Friday Youth Night, Sept 16, 7 PM

Parents and youth please come because we will be getting organized for the year. See you then!

UU Women's Luncheon, Sept 22, 12 PM

It's fall again! This month we have been invited to Peggy Sharp's home. Pack up your brown bag, and Peggy will provide drinks and dessert. Please let her know whether you plan to come (410-822-1623). See page 5 for directions.



Talbot Interfaith Shelter

For many people, the loss of a job, the death of a spouse, the onset of medical disabilities, or a series of wrong choices can often lead to homelessness. Struck by personal tragedies, the guests of the Talbot Interfaith Shelter (TIS) are like the homeless in thousands of other shelters across America who need our helping hands.

In 2008 a group of concerned citizens organized the TIS. Since 2009 the shelter has been open to men,

UUE Service Auction
Will Take Place
February 2011
Details to Follow

women, and children who lack adequate housing during the coldest months of the year. TIS has been a rotating shelter, moving from the campus of one faith community to another every 2 weeks or so. The moving is stressful and disruptive to both guests and volunteers and, more importantly, it is not a good model for families with children.

In 2010–2011, over 500 volunteers from 18 different congregations and the broader community worked together to operate the shelter from Dec. 5 to Apr. 10. During that time, 17 different guests were served. This number may seem low until you consider that only five guests can stay each night because of strict fire code regulations. A fire suppression sprinkler system is required in order to accommodate more guests. Undoubtedly, this has been the biggest obstacle for the TIS. Fire suppression sprinkler systems are expensive to install, and only one of the newer parish halls in Talbot County has one.

The Operations Manager for TIS received 117 calls for shelter during the past winter and could only help 17. Since the shelter closed in April, over 35 more calls for shelter have been received, some from singles and some from families. Regardless of the season, homeless



persons are out there in our community. Some you may recognize from their daily presence on the streets of Easton, whereas others are hidden couch surfers, staying with family or friends until their welcome wears out and they must move on to another couch. Still others seek refuge in their automobiles if they are fortunate enough to own them. Many others live in the woods along Easton's Rails to Trails or in abandoned sheds.

It is our hope that each of you will keep the homeless in mind. Consider them when you read an article in the *Star Democrat* and help support TIS through fundraisers and personal contributions. We would love to have you volunteer with TIS this coming year. Most of all, we hope that you will be on the lookout for a building that can accommodate the shelter and enable us to expand our services, especially to families.

For more information or to help, please contact Lisa Menditch (lmenditch@verizon.net or at 410-745-6563), a member of both the TIS Board of Directors and the UUFE.

Why 12 Outreach Collections This Year?

The SJC outreach budget has been reduced from \$3,630 to \$1,200 this year, so based on our success with past quarterly outreach collections, we are increasing the number of these collections in order to make a comparable impact in the community and in the world. We recognize that whatever the number of collections, the amount collected is solely a measure of your generosity and feeling about a particular cause.

Last year's gifts were made to 13 causes, an impressive total of \$10,460. This year, we expect to raise and contribute less, an estimated \$3,000 from outreach collections, \$1,200 from our fixed budget, and \$800 from fair trade coffee sales for a total of \$5,000 to be given to 14 causes.

Our giving is an affirmation of our Fellowship's mission and reflects our belief in the chosen cause. The SJC examined at least 40 candidate causes to date, evaluating for "splash" (the amount of our contribution relative to the charity's total budget); visibility; effectiveness (percentage of charity's budget going directly to beneficiaries); value to the greater community; and whether it reflects the UU principles—particularly the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. We also look for volunteer opportunities for our

Celebrating 50 Years!

members and attempt to assess the leadership capabilities of the charity.

The SJC has selected the following causes for outreach collections until the end of the year: Pickering Creek Audubon Center, Youth Conservation Leadership Program (Oct.); Mid Shore Fresh Start (Nov.); and Good Samaritan Fund (Dec.). Two causes we support every year from our fixed budget are the Hunger Coalition lunches for the needy (\$510) and Ghana-UU UNO (education for two girls for 1 year; \$240).

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

- Ann Davis reported, after consultation with the Chalice Lighter Grant administrators, that the Music Search Committee can proceed to hire a director with the flexibility proposed for either a 1/4 time or a 1/2 time position and can use remaining funds for an accompanist.
- The Board approved the revised "UUFE Policy on Dedicated Contributions." The Finance Committee will be developing a brochure, "How to Make a Gift to UUFE From Your Estate."
- The Board was pleased with the participation of the Survey Monkey, and details of the survey will be presented and discussed at the Board/Committee Retreat on August 27.
- The Building and Grounds Committee brought a proposal to the Board, in response to the Member Services Committee request for a more open area in the foyer. The Board and Committees have agreed that this proposal will not be addressed at this time because of the other financial commitments being requested at this time.
- Peggy Sharp reported meeting with Talbot County council and its attorney, and they have accepted and passed approval of the North Property acquisition with the following three conditions: a letter from the Town of Easton shall be submitted citing that the town has no interest in Fourth St; the North Property lot lines shall be abandoned with a revision plat showing one parcel incorporating the existing UUFE property, Fourth St, and the North Property; and Fourth St shall convey to UUFE with quitclaim deed following settlement on the North Property. It appears that settlement will occur in Oct 2011.



Directions to Peggy's (28 Londonderry Dr, Easton; 410-822-1623): Take the Easton Pkwy (Rt 322) to Oxford/Peach Blossom Rd. Turn onto Peach Blossom. Take first left onto Londonderry Dr. (Thread Haven subdivision). Go straight thru stop sign and the house is the 6th house on the right.

COMMITTEE OF THE MONTH

Finance

As I said in my President's Column, UUFE relies on the efforts of each and every one of its members as individuals, particularly as committee members. Committees work to support the mission of the Fellowship. To further each member's awareness of the work of each committee, I will highlight a committee or two each month.

Ann Davis

Under the guidance of Co-chairs Lisa Menditch and Judy Harrald, Treasurer Liz McGrory, Income Secretary and Stewardship Campaign Guru Janet Pfeffer, Income Secretary Edie Swallow, Finance Web Page Master Dick Doughty, and Finance Specialist Jean Rhian, this committee undertakes its responsibilities with intelligent dedication. They meet monthly to review the financial reports before presenting them to the Board of Trustees and develop and update finance policies and procedures with Board approval. They bank our income, pay our bills, submit payroll tax reports, keep the congregation's computerized books, and close out the books at the end of the fiscal year. The books are reconciled with our bank statements each month and they are kept in balance.

The Committee keeps the 5-year budget plan "ever-green." They support the Stewardship Committee by setting the goals necessary to balance the budget, interact with each of UUFE committees regarding annual budget needs, and offer opportunities for the congregation to review the proposed budget before the annual meeting. Quarterly, the Finance Committee reports to the congregation through the *Newsletter*.

During the past fiscal year, their special accomplishments include renegotiating UUFE's mortgage and setting up a direct deposit process with the Talbot Bank; developing a comprehensive and user-friendly Web page (an excellent addition to the UUFE Web site); working with the Gateway Committee on the acquisition of the North Property; and developing the *Guide for Giving: How to Make a Gift from Your Estate*, which is the important first step toward creating an endowment fund for UUFE and will be available soon. Other important reports this committee generated were three different 5-year budget plans based on varying numbers of

Celebrating 50 Years!

End-of-the-Year Financial Figures

The Finance Committee has closed the books for Fiscal Year 2010–2011

The results are we have:

\$8,656.65 in the Operating Checking Account

\$5,796.65 in the Reserve Checking Account

\$20,000 in CDs

We thank all of you for your pledges and your continued financial support!



pledging units in the congregation, which has made it very clear that UUFE needs to increase its pledging membership to be able to afford the programming we currently have.

Be sure to take a moment to thank our Finance Committee members for the important work they do!

THRESHOLD CONGREGATION NEWS

Threshold Team Starts Work

The world around us is changing. If Unitarian Universalism is to survive, UUs need to match the demographic changes we see in our society. As part of UUFE Threshold Congregation application, we stated that we are seeking growth not only in numbers, but also in age and ethnic diversity. The Threshold Congregation team has started to work on making these plans of growth a reality. We have met with our Central East Regional Group representative, Mark Bernstein, and have drafted four main areas of focus to achieve this growth, which will be refined before developing specific actions steps in collaboration with the various UUFE committees.

The members of the Threshold Congregation team are Emily Cranwell, Ann Davis, Dick Doughty, Maggie Garey, Jack Harrald, Del Joiner, Rev Gabi, Nancy Sawyer, and Taalib and Denise Smith. If you have an idea about how UUFE could grow in either numbers or diversity, please pass on your idea to any of the team members.

UUFE Contacts

Minister: Rev. Gabriele Parks..... 410-822-8103
minister@uufeaston.org

President: Ann Davis..... 410-745-2461
president@uufeaston.org

**Coordinator, Religious Education for Children
& Youth:** Elizabeth Hausburg 410-476-4774

Music Director: Marcie Schiff 410-822-8103

Minister

Emeritus: Daniel G. Higgins, Jr., DMin 410-745-3462

UUFE Office: 410-822-8103

Newsletter Editor: Amy Eutsey..... 410-253-9791
eutseyeditor@yahoo.com

**Newsletter submissions for the October issue are due
September 15.**

Sheila Lanahan, 1929–2011

On Aug 13, beloved member Sheila Lanahan passed away at her home. “A member of UUFE and the League of Women Voters, Shelia was a lifelong Democrat who, at the time of her death, supported dozens of organizations through her charitable donations. Her New Year’s parties at Boston Farm on Trappe Creek,

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. There are seven principles that Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement for 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 congregations 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.

featuring soft crabs and raw oysters, were legendary. Shelia loved her Eastern Shore home, vowing never to leave it unless it was ‘toes up!’ ... A memorial party is planned for autumn at Boston. Contributions in her memory may be made to the UUFE” (Find her full obituary in the [Star Democrat](#)). For online tributes, visit www.fhnfuneralhome.com.

