

HIGHLIGHTS

Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis

Volume 59, Issue 5

May 2016

"Open Seat"

—Hannah Roberts Villnave, from blog posting on April 13, 2016

Recently, my wife, Catherine, and I took the Amtrak back from a day in New York City. Hoping to catch up on sleep during the ride home, we made our way to the quiet car. As we were preparing to leave Penn Station, a conductor came through our car to remind us that this was a very full train and to ask everybody to remove their belongings from the seat next to them. A devotee of train travel, I knew this to be a common request, especially when there are more passengers waiting at the next station.

One passenger, however, felt that this was an unreasonable request. She insisted that because nobody was right there asking for her seat that she should not have to move her possessions. The conductor told her that there would likely be someone soon who would need that seat. In fact, there might even be someone wandering the other train cars looking for a seat right now! Still, she refused to move her things. Eventually, security had to be called and only when threatened with removal from the train did the passenger move her belongings and free up the additional seat. Yikes!

At the time, I was mostly frustrated because the incident held up our train's departure from New York. But the more I reflected on the incident, the more I saw its parallels to a common problem in church communities. Often times when we form groups – whether covenant groups, practice groups, or neighborhood dinner circles – we get comfortable with the people in the group. We get into rhythms and form relationships. All of the seats around the potluck table are full.

And we should build long-lasting and deep relationships in these groups! But it can become a problem when we start to feel like we own the group. Our mentality becomes like the woman on the train. Rather than leave a seat open that might be filled by a stranger, we take up extra space hoping to keep things the way we like them. The reality is that the small group belongs to the whole congregation. Leaving an open seat does the holy work of invitation and creates the possibility of something new. As UUCA moves forward into a new small group ministry initiative (coming soon!), I pray that we will all practice the work of invitation and create groups that look toward possibility.

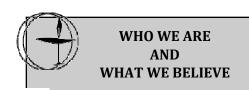
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Next Highlights Deadline: May 15

highlights@uuannapolis.org





At the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, we are seekers of the truth.

We invite all persons of every faith, creed, culture and background to engage in a search for truth with us. We believe in the dignity and worth of every human being and in freedom of expression. We welcome and celebrate all people, be they straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

We are committed to this church as an institution, to social justice, to liberal religious exploration and education for all ages, to mutual caring and support, and to the value of diversity.

We strive to care about each other and the health of our community and the world. We are an environmentally sensitive, "green" community.

This church is a place of safety for each person's mind, body and spirit. Toward that end, we covenant to affirm and promote: Honesty and authenticity in our relationships; words that are supportive and caring, not belittling or demeaning; a welcoming and non-judgmental attitude; respect for each person's boundaries of mind, body and spirit; and listening to one another.

In order to serve the congregation and the greater community, we also strive to create an environment that challenges, inspires, encourages and supports the quest for religious fulfillment.

Please join us!

Election Results from the April Congregational Meeting

Board of Trustees

Ken Apfel – President (re-elected)

Linda Rhoads – Vice President (re-elected)

Heather Millar – Secretary (re-elected)

Maury Marks - Finance Officer (re-elected)

L.E. Gomez – Trustee At-Large (newly elected)

Larry Werner – Trustee At-Large (continuing)

Gina Williams – Trustee At-Large (continuing)

Fred Muir – Senior Minister (ex-officio)

Tony Hipszer – Nominating Committee Chair (ex-officio)

Moderator

Marsha Schachtel

Nominating Committee

Re-elected: Tony Hipszer, Kari Bichell, Dianne Moreau, Tiffany

Smith

Continuing: Rob Malone, Jason Hitchcock, Shauntee Daniels, Jan

Bird

Newly elected: Carrie Baquie

Endowment Board

Newly elected: Staff Warren, Jan Sprinkel, Bill Curtis Continuing: Caroline Hadley, Don Patterson, Jackie Heimbuch, Dick Roop, Phyllis Marsh

Thank you to Alethea Shiplett for her service on the Board of Trustees, Marlene Brown for her service on the Nominating Committee and Robert Ertman & Irene Jordan for their service on the Endowment Board.

Welcome New Members

The following individuals signed the Membership Book in March:



Keely Longo
Marissa Smith
Stephen Meyer
Molly Hutto
Lynn Gayno
Brenda Damario
Sarah Damario
Laney Forge
John Ford
Sean Woolums



Questions or comments for the Board? Contact Heather Millar, Board Secretary at board@uuannapolis.org.

The vibrancy of our community and how much we all care about it was clearly on display at the Board's fourth Middle Hour listening session on April 10, 2016. We are impassioned and concerned as we grapple with a way forward building beloved community. Many spoke at the session facilitated by Terri Werner, Diane Goforth and Win Decker. However, most comments centered on a few themes: multigenerational worship, community, balancing the budget and the budget as a reflection of what is important to our community, multiculturalism and transparency. Although not word for word, below is a summary of what was expressed.

Multigenerational Worship & Worshiping Together:

We have made strides appealing to 20 – 35 year olds. We should hold more events that appeal to them. Additionally, it is important to figure out how to best communicate with this group—more use of social media would help there. An idea was to engage with YRUU to get ideas about communicating with young adults.

Community:

We have lost a sense of 'community'. We need to remember that diversity includes being in a community of not always "like-minded" individuals. We have to learn to live with struggle, which is another part of diversity. We need to work on relationship building.

The Budget:

What is our vision? Where are we going? Who will determine it? What will be our goals and objectives? We need to make the difficult decisions required to have a balanced budget. It is important also to increase the amount of money in future budgets for facility maintenance; the upkeep of our building affects how people feel about being here and staying here.

Multiculturalism:

What do we really mean by multiculturalism? It is not just black and white. We have made intentional statements about wanting to be multicultural—let's live our principles. We should have more diversity in our music and readings on Sunday mornings. We need more real experiences and less intellectualism. The "Black Lives Matter" concert was a step in the right direction.

<u>Transparency:</u>

The lack of transparency is a problem; there is a level of distrust. We need to know what the Board and staff are doing.

The Board appreciates everyone's participation and feedback. We hear you and will work to move us toward answers. Some answers are easy; whereas, others require deep sharing, processes, patience and time. Many of these concerns must be addressed by all of us; Board, staff and the congregation, working together to find and implement solutions. We look forward to being in community with you as we face these challenges.

Next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Monday, **May 2** at 7:00 PM. Anyone is welcome to attend.

—Gina Williams, Trustee

HIGHLIGHTS April 2016

FAITH DEVELOPMENT at UUCA

Rev. Christina Leone Tracy, Faith Development Minister

Middle Hour for Adults - May

May 1 - No Middle Hour due to Congregational Meeting

May 8

Going Deeper Discussion - a discussion of the sermon topic for the day; can be beneficial either before or after attending the service UU Humanism - background and discussion led by Andrew Bain May Canvass Group - this session is specifically for those individuals who received a pledge letter for May (Rev. Fred)

Inquirers Series - History & Principles led by Hannah Villnave **Life Coaching class intro -** a life coaching class begins with Rev. John

May 15

Going Deeper Discussion
UU Humanism
Knitting with Ginger Parsons
Inquirers Series - Worship led by Rev. Fred
Building Beloved Community-Intent v. Impact led by Rev. Christina

May 22

Going Deeper Discussion UU Humanism Life Coaching class intro

Inquirers Series – **Social Justice** with Don Patterson and other group leaders

Building Beloved Community-Intent v. Impact

May 29 - "After Hour" at 11:10 AM*

Inquirers Series - Pastoral Care & Small Groups led by Rev. John Going Deeper Discussion

*During the summer, "After Hour" will be held at 11:10 AM, where we will continue to hold a few adult education sessions, which will include the Inquirers Series.



Social Action Opportunity!

—Anita Ramundo

The **Center of Help** (Centro de Ayuda) will hold its annual *Cinco de Mayo Friends & Fundraising event* on Thursday, May 5, 6:30-9:30 PM at Sam's On the Waterfront in Annapolis. Tickets are \$20 for one or \$30 for two attendees.; includes appetizers, one drink, a silent auction, live Cuban music and a sombrero contest. To purchase tickets contact the Center at 410-295-3434.

Come show your support for the Annapolis Hispanic and immigrant community! Proceeds benefit programs in citizenship preparation, financial literacy, ESL classes and tutoring for school age youth.

Centro de Ayuda is also UUCA's Share-the-Plate recipient for the month of May (see p. 6).

Care Team Announcement

The Care Team is proud to announce it has several new members: Nancy Eaton, Diane Ratcliff, Jackie Heimbuch, and Max Ochs. Phil Tawes has also returned to serve on the committee after a brief intermission. We are here for our church family to help you when in need of - a ride, a visit, a meal, a phone call. We also have a table in the narthex that has greeting cards for YOU to write a note for a church member going through a hard time. Jackie Heimbuch is our "Care Corner" coordinator and she will make sure your note gets mailed. Let us know if you need us by calling the church and leaving message for the Care Team.

Current Care Team: Jane Andrew, Nancy Eaton, Christina Fiedler, Jackie Heimbuch, Becky Morris, Claire Morgen, Suzy Ochs, Max Ochs, Diane Ratcliff, Edna Roop, Lynann Rudert, and Phil Tawes.

Words from the 'Black Lives Matter' Conversation & Concert

—Diane Goforth

In gratitude to Betsy Kraning, Linda Mundy and Rusty Vaughan, I'd like to share the words I spoke during the Black Lives Matter Conversation and Gospel Concert held at UUCA on April 9, 2016:

I'm a 3^{rd} generation Unitarian and 4^{th} generation Universalist. I was raised in the same New England church as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. I thought I was at the pinnacle of civilization, to which I felt the rest of the world should aspire.

A few decades later I found myself in Maryland. I followed my upbringing to do justice and love mercy: volunteered in jail, advocated for prison reform and ran an HIV program. I discovered a whole other culture! I am now a recovering racist, learning how to walk humbly.

This morning I was listening to Beethoven's *Ninth* on TV. Tears were streaming down my face, I was so powerfully moved by this deepest expression of my culture. And as I experience today's events I know that most of you are as moved by gospel music as I was by my Eurocentric symphony.

Neither culture is better than the other. They are just different, and we have so much to learn from each other. There is not only room but a need for both in this sacred space, and at almost 84 I want to spend my remaining days making sure that no one who shares my religious values ever walks through these doors and feels unwelcome. If we can't build Beloved Community here, how can we hope for it in the larger world?

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Finance Report

—Maury Marks, Finance Officer

Pledge Income:

For year to date (through March 2016) our total pledge income was \$140,860. Our expected pledge income was \$137,500 for a *surplus* of \$4,360.

Pledge Campaign:

Through March of 2016, a total of 85 families have been contacted to renew their pledge; 78 of those families have responded resulting in total of \$222,000 in new pledges.

We appreciate those of you who have responded to your pledge letters in a timely fashion.

Expenses vs. Income:

Our total income for the first quarter of the year was \$197,685, contrasted with expenses equaling \$193, 493. We are on track so far.

Sensei Jin Gen has Schtick— Will Travel! Interfaith 'R' UUs

—Phyllis Culham

On April 5, Mindfulness Practice Group facilitators Bob Ertman (aka Sensei Jin Gen) and Phyllis Culham went to St. Anne's School for two 7th grade Humanities classes taught by Mr. Sean Johnson as part of a series representing world religions. For Hinduism, Mr. Johnson had already handed his classes over to a pair of yoginis who had led his class in meditation, so he thought they were set on that front. Liz Vanden Heuvel, UUCA member and co-chair of GAIN, the Greater Annapolis Interfaith Network, offered insight as to where one might find local Buddhists who could introduce seventh graders to the history and culture of Buddhism. Of course, she pointed Mr. Johnson to the MPG of Annapolis!

Since seventh graders are both high-action and insistent on thinking for themselves, Bob and Phyllis gathered up Balsa Buddha to star in the Burn-the-Buddha koan and a basket of scrolls of single-word sutras (religious texts) so the class could replay the folk tale of the Monkey King and his bedraggled troupe bringing the sutras from India to China. Both classes did a great job by deciding to stack up the six Paramitas (Perfections of Virtue) with wisdom on top, and the two exercises both tied in the additional value of emptiness. To quote one girl's answer to why the empty scroll was most valuable, "Emptiness is most perfect." Give that girl a

(con't on p. 7)

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The theme for this season is: FREEDOM

Sunday, May 1:

60th Anniversary Celebration

We will look back at the history of UUCA over the last six decades through music, videos, testimonials, and children's activities. Feel free to stay the entire morning, or choose to stay for just a part of the fun. There will be NO childcare, Middle Hour, or RE classes this morning; children are welcome to join the festivities!

Brunch is potluck-style; we are asking everyone to provide something according to their last name. A-F: bagels & cream cheese; G-N: mini-muffins, croissants, danish, donuts, breads; O-Z: fruit & veggie trays, cheese & crackers

Sunday, May 8:

"Hope in a Handbasket" Hannah Roberts Villnave, Intern Minister

As we enter our Freedom season in worship, we will explore how we can have hope for freedom even in trying times, with music by our UUCA Choir

Sunday, May 15:

"Tested"

Rev. Fred Muir

I've never been good at testtaking. And so the challenge at the center of our UU Principles - which is a statement and challenge about living our faith in community - doesn't come easy for me. I don't think I'm alone; our Fourth Principle may be the hardest to "pass." Let's look at it together.

Sunday, May 22:

"Oops, We Did It Again!" Rev. Christina Leone Tracy

Noticing our mistakes, honoring them, and trying again and again is what it means to be a covenantal people. We will come together this Sunday to remember when we as a people, historically and in the present, have made mistakes, to sit, and to move forward. We'll be singing, but there will be no musician this Sunday. Sometimes, we just need some silence.

Sunday, May 29:

"Just War"

Rev. John Crestwell

Just war theory (jus bellum iustum) is a doctrine, also referred to as a tradition, of military ethics studied by theologians, ethicists, policy makers, and military leaders (Wikipedia). Today I will look at this concept and determine if there is such thing as a "just war". Live music from our Contemporary Music Director losh Long.

Podcasts of weekly sermons are available online at www.uucamd.libsyn.com.

SHARE-THE-PLATE COLLECTION

The **March** Share-the-Plate raised a total of \$1,930.77 for the **Light House Homeless Prevention Support Center**.

The amount for **April's** collection for Habitat for Humanity will be reported in the next issue.

Centro de Ayuda (the Center of Help) is the Share-the-Plate recipient for May. We have had a relationship with this local agency for several years, thanks Judy Bajoris & Anita Ramundo. Services include Assistance and Referral; Educational Programs; Employment Services; and Health Care Insurance. Volunteers always welcome-especially those who speak Spanish.

Every Sunday, the plate collection will be divided evenly between the chosen recipient and UUCA's operating budget. Therefore, if you place a check in the offering plate, you *must indicate pledge or plate share* on the memo line. If a check is without notation, it will automatically be applied to the plate share. Once the funds have been transferred to the charity, your contribution cannot be reallocated to your pledge. Thank you for your generosity.

If you have any questions about Share-the-Plate charities, contact Diane Goforth; dsgoforth@aol.com; for questions about Share-the-Plate policies, contact the Church Office;

mreese@uuannapolis.org.



details)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit our online calendar for more events and scheduling information.

60th Anniversary Celebration a look back at the last six decades of UUCA history through music, testimonials, and videos. Sunday, May 1 9:00 AM - Noon. (See p.6 for

Contact: Church Office mreese@uuannapolis.org.

UU Humanists will meet Monday, May 2 & 16 to discuss Michael Shermer's *The Moral* Arc - How Science and Reason Lead Humanity Toward Truth, *Justice, and Freedom.* Potluck meal at 6:00 PM, discussion at 7:00 PM. Newcomers welcome.

Contact: Cliff Andrew; neurol@verizon.net.

Board of Trustees Meeting -Monday, May 2, 7:00 PM. All Board meetings are open to anyone, unless otherwise specified. **Contact**: board@uuannapolis.org.

Yoga - continues to meet each Thursday at 11:30 AM in the Angebranndt room.

Contact: Dick Roop; dickroop@verizon.net

The **Book Club** is reading The Secret Chord by Geraldine Brooks. Discussion will be on Tuesday, May 17 at 10:00 AM in the library. Contact: Jean Gruber; grubers@netzero.com.

The **Outdoor Club** will visit the National Arboretum in Washington, DC and enjoy a picnic lunch on Saturday, May 21. 9:00 AM-4:00 PM. Meet at the Benfield/ I-97 Park & Ride to carpool.

Contact: Eloise Hoyt; eloisehovt@verizon.net Fourth Friday Concerts -"Bringing You the Clazzics" with the Clazzical Project Friday, May 27, at 8:00 PM. Featured are Don Stapleson (flute), Pete Fields (guitar), Fred Lieder (cello) and guest pianist Brian Ganz. Classical music with a twist! Tickets \$15 at the door only, or purchase a series ticket for \$60 (five admissions).

Save the Date:

Saturday, June 4: UULM-MD Presents Sara Jones in Concert Proceeds will benefit UULM-MD Tickets are \$100 (\$75 is taxdeductible) and can be purchased at www.uulmmd.org or by sending a check to UUCA with UULM-MD Concert on the memo line...

Diamond [Sutra]! On the other

(con't from p. 5)

hand, nothing could be done about a boy's complaint, "Why aren't there any fox spirits around here [in Annapolis]?"

For more information: www.mpgannapolis.org. More photos on both The Mindfulness Practice Group of Annapolis Facebook Page and St. Anne's School's Facebook

page.



Photos: (R) Bob Ertman outside of St. Anne's; (B) Phyllis Culham interacting with some of St. Anne's 7th graders.



May 2016

8:30 AM Intro to Mindfulness 10:00 AM Worship/CC 11:10 AM After Hour/RE	8:30 AM Intro to Mindfulness 9:00 AM Worship/CC 10:10 Middle Hour 11:15 AM Worship/CC	8:30 AM Intro to Mindfulness 9:00 AM Worship/CC 10:10 Middle Hour 11:15 AM Worship/CC	8:30 AM Intro to Mindfulness 9:00 AM Worship/CC 10:10 Middle Hour 11:15 AM Worship/CC	1 8:30 AM Intro to Mindfulness 9:00 AM 60 th Anniversary Celebration	Sun
30	23	16 6:00 PM UU Humanists	9	2 6:00 PM UU Humanists 7:00 PM Board meeting	Mon
31	24 12:00 PM Lunch & Video Discussion group	17 10:00 AM Book Club 12:00 PM Lunch & Video Discussion group	10 12:00 PM Lunch & Video Discussion group	3 12:00 PM Lunch & Video Discussion group	Tue
	25	18	11 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	4. 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	Wed
	26 7:00 PM Mindfulness Practice group	19 7:00 PM Mindfulness Practice group	12 7:00 PM Mindfulness Practice group	5 7:00 PM Mindfulness Practice group	Thu
	27 8:00 PM Fourth Friday Concert	7:30 Full Moon Celebration	13	9	Fri
	28	21	14	7	Sat



ONGOING EVENTS

Amnesty International: The Annapolis Chapter of Amnesty International meets on the second Sunday of each month at 1:00 PM in the Emerson Room of the Fahs House. All are invited, especially members of the UUCA congregation who believe that one person can make a difference. Come check us out.

Book Club: meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM in the church library. Contact Jean Gruber 410-216-9575.

Bridge Club: meets the third Friday each month at 7:30 PM in the Emerson Room of the Fahs House. **CURRENTLY ON HIATUS...**

Coming to the Table: meets on the third Monday of the month at 7:00 PM in the RE sanctuary. Dissolving racism with understanding through conversation. Contact: Rusty Vaughan; rusty@solutionreps.com.

Full Circle: meets monthly at 7:00 PM on the Friday night closest to the full moon. An experiential earth-based celebration open to all women over age 18. Contact Jodi Delaney; jodimonkey@verizon.net.

Gallery at 333: The Gallery at 333 is open Mon.-Thurs. from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM and Sundays from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Contact Debbie Boudra; dancindebart@comcast.net.

Introduction to Mindfulness and Meditation: Beginner-friendly session every Sunday at 8:30 AM in the Emerson Room. For those who want to learn the basics of meditation and those who just want another opportunity to practice with a group. Contact Phyllis Culham at

mpg@uuannapolis.org.

"Inquirers" Series - Classes for **Newcomers**: A program to educate and integrate newcomers and to serve as a refresher for long-timers. The series is eight (8) one-hour classes led by ministers, staff and church

members during Middle Hour or after church service in the summer months. For more information visit The Inquirers Series.

Contact: Newcomer Support Team; membership@uuannapolis.org.

<u>Light House Shelter Meals</u>: If you are interested in helping with meals for the Shelter, contact Carrie Kotcho; 410-451-1844; ckotcho@verizon.net.

Mindfulness Practice Group: meets every Thursday in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM for meditation and dharma discussion. Contact Phyllis Culham at mpg@uuannapolis.org.

Nifty Fifties +: A social group for seniors, that meets periodically for dinners, game nights, and other outings. Contact Claire Morgen at cfriday@aol.com.

Partner Church Ministry: Based upon our common religious principles and ideals, this multigenerational group develops and sustains a relationship between UUCA and the communities of our partner congregations in Transylvania; the Unitarian Church of Homorodalmas (Almas) and the Unitarian Church of Rava. Contact Heather Millar; heathermillar@gmail.com.

Rainbow School: a cooperative, Montessori-based program for young children that teaches the 7 "Rainbow Principles" of the UU faith. Meets Tuesday & Thursday mornings, 9:30-Noon. Also includes a Parent Workshop on the first Thursday of the month; 6:30 PM. Both held in the RE sanctuary. Contact: Alethea Shiplett; fevmeadowsfarm@gmail.com.

Spirit Singers Open to all musicians! Led by co-directors Betsy Kraning and Josh Long, this group provides diverse, intergenerational, multicultural, contemporary music once a month for worship services. Contact Betsy Kraning, Music Director at bkraning@uuannapolis.org.

The Tuesday Noon Brown Bag **Lunch & Video Discussion Group:**

Meets weekly mid-September through May in the narthex. Bring your lunch to eat during the half-hour social time, watch the half-hour Religion and *Ethics* video and join in the half-hour of discussion afterward until 1:30 PM. All are welcome. Led by the intern minister. Contact Phil Tawes; pwtawes@aol.com.

UUCA Choir: with director Peter Jacobson; rehearses September-May every Wednesday at 7:00 PM. Provides relevant music twice a month for Sunday services. New members always welcome. Contact: Jan Sprinkel; jansprink@verizon.net.

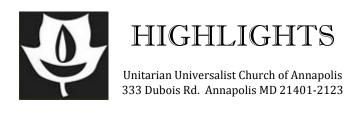
UUCA Community Drum Circle: Looking to connect with others in a spiritual yet visceral way? Try the Drum Circle! No musical experience necessary. Meets on the second Monday and fourth Tuesday in the sanctuary at 7:30 PM. . Contact Jim

Langston at jimlaauu@gmail.com.

UU Legislative Ministry of MD (UULM-MD): UULM-MD is a statewide advocacy network comprised of individual members and affiliated UU congregations. UULM-MD provides a voice in legislative action for UU values. principles and traditions. UUCA provides leadership, resources and support to UULM-MD. Email info@uulmmd.org or call 410-266-8044, ext. 111.

UU Humanists: Naturalism-Science-Reason-Wonder-Compassion-Community-Respect. Book discussions and film viewings as announced. Meets the first and third Monday of the month; 6:00 PM potluck and 7:00 PM discussion: in the narthex. Contact Cliff Andrew at 410-404-7170 or neurol@verizon.net.





Return Service Requested

Dated Material; Please deliver by 4/30/16

Next Issue Deadline: 5/15/16

Next Mailing: 5/24/16

Tony Hipszer

PROFESSIONAL, PROGRAM, AND CHURCH STAFF

Church Office Hours:

Monday -Thursday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM; Sunday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Closed Friday and Saturday

Phone: 410-266-8044 Fax: 410-266-6910

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