

THRESHOLD



Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

A Welcoming Congregation

www.towsonuuc.org

Lutherville, Maryland

July/August 2009

Summer Worship 2009 Theme - From Whence Cometh Hope

July 26, 2009

Reach Out and Touch Someone

10:30 AM

Aynsley Hamel, worship associate

Donn Teubner-Rhodes, music

On the front page of the New York Times and on the evening news a few months ago was a story about schools that have either banned hugging or considering such measures.

A friend relayed a story to me about how he was reprimanded during an internship at a hospital for putting his arm around a sobbing nurse, trying to console her after a patient died.

What lengths of restricting or banning touch say about us? What benefits does touch offer us?

We will explore some of these questions, and "touch" on how the use of touch varies in a few cultures found both within and outside the borders of the United States.

.....

August 2, 2009

To Be Announced

10:30 AM

Bill Feiss, worship associate

Margaret Ingram, music

August 9, 2009

Islamic Art

10:30 AM

Barbara Sterne, worship associate

Alta Heywood & students, music

.....

August 16, 2009

**Mary Magdalene and History Reexamined (A Feminist Perspective on
Spirituality)**

10:30 AM

Tara McIntyre, worship associate

Bald Mountain Boys + Jane, music

.....

August 23, 2009

Kenya Connect - Shrinking the World Through Music

10:30 AM

Tara McIntyre, worship associate

Tim Gregory, Guest Speaker & Music

.....

August 30, 2009

Hope Comes From Beloved Community

10:30 AM

**Rev. Clare Petersberger, Joyce Duncan,
director of Youth Religious Education and you!**

"I learned this as a child. Each spring, at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, people of all ages gathered to learn and share: how to play the recorder; how to arrange flowers; how to throw a pot; how to make and fly a kite. This morning's brief worship service will be followed by such transformational experiences of a beloved community for all ages." – Rev. Clare Petersberger

September 6

Water Communion

10:30 AM

Rev. Clare Petersberger

This morning we celebrate our annual Water Communion.

Please bring water symbolic of a spiritual experience you had this summer – from a place of natural beauty that reconnected you with the larger life in which we live; to tears of joy or sorrow that reconnected you with the human condition; to waters of justice that reconnected you with the vision of the earth made fair and all her people one.

Clare's Colloquoy

By Rev. Clare Petersberger



Melissa Harris-Lacewell began the Ware Lecture at the recent annual Unitarian Universalist General Assembly by sharing an experience from a family vacation. She was at the Jersey Shore. The skies had been gray all week. One afternoon, the sun came out. She was standing chin-deep in the ocean. The rays of sun glittered on the water. She reached toward the sky with both arms---towards transcendence. So as to savor the moment and not get rocked by waves---she pushed her feet into the sand. And that's when a crab bit her. From this experience, she concluded that we Unitarian Universalists need faith----to reconnect us with a vision of the grandeur of existence. AND, we need reason to remember that there are always crabs at our feet.

This was the implied message of many of the events I attended at GA. During Ministry Days, Sonya Sanchez reminded us of the crabs of injustice at our feet through the sublimity of her poetry. In a panel discussion of interfaith dialogue, representatives from India, Transylvania, and Japan addressed both the crabs of misunderstanding that can arise when we take the risk of dialogue as well as the deep connections we can make when we share our faith journey. The Reverend Dr. Bill Schulz (who will be preaching at TUUC in April) spoke of how the Universal Declaration Of Human Rights calls us to be better people when the crabs of oppression are biting at our feet. And during nine intensive hours of multicultural training, we experienced the joy of singing, worshipping, and dialoguing across boundaries that usually divide us. And we celebrated this reality when delegates elected The Reverend Peter Morales as the first Latino President of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

My hope for you this summer is that you, too, will have moments of clear skies when you reach with all your being toward life. And should any crabs bite, come to The Towson Unitarian Universalist Church to be healed and grounded in a faith rooted in love that uses the tool of reason. The theme of

our 10:30 a.m. summer services is, “From Whence Cometh Hope?” If you would like to speak with me about your own experience of being at one with existence, or of being bitten by a crab, I will be available after July 26th. (I am delivering a theme talk at SUUSI.)

Finally, just a reminder to please gather some water symbolic of a spiritual experience from your summer. (Any crabs should be left in the ocean!) We will celebrate our annual Water Communion on September 6.

As Melissa Harris-Lacewell concluded her Ware Lecture, “Beware the crabs in the sand, but keep your eyes on the horizon. With reason and faith, let us walk forward into that light.”

Board of Trustees

By Linda Talley

Board President, 2008-2009



The 2008-2009 board of trustees held their final meeting for this church year on June 9th. Discussion included:

- A debrief on the June 7th congregational meeting attended by more than 60 members. The slate of candidates for elected positions and the 2009-2010 operating budget were approved as presented. Thank you to the nominating committee and the budget committee for their fine work and to all who participated in the annual meeting.
- Review of year-to-date financial reports. The gap between pledges made and pledges paid continues to narrow and expenses remain under plan. The trustees supported treasurer Paul Konka’s recommendation that TUUC send in full quarterly payments to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and Joseph Priestley District (JPD) to complete the fair share commitment in the approved budget plan for 08-09.
- A proposal for allocating TUUC’s ballots for the UUA elections at the June General Assembly. Three ballots will be assigned to Rev. Petersberger, Mona Scott and Lois Hybl who are attending the General Assembly; three remaining ballots will be voted absentee by TUUC’s elected officers, Linda Talley, Catherine Morris and Paul Konka. The trustees approved a motion that all be free to vote their conscience in the election.
- Discussion with members of the Committee on Ministry (CoM) on their annual evaluation of the minister. The CoM made significant progress this year in developing a substantive and fair evaluation process. The Committee is planning to conduct a congregational survey in the fall, available both on-line and in paper, to assess all aspects of our shared ministries at TUUC. The trustees approved a one-year extension of Scott Shane’s term on the CoM to allow for his full participation in the congregational survey work and thanked Karin Symonds whose three year term with the CoM is ending.

Final words of thanks –

I am so glad that I said yes to the opportunity to serve TUUC as president-elect and president these past two years. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with Reverend Clare, our dedicated staff and the lay leaders on the Operations Team and the Board of Trustees to further the mission of TUUC.

I have learned that this church runs on the power of people saying “yes”. So many of you have contributed and continue to contribute your time and talent to sustain and strengthen our worship together, our religious exploration classes, our committees, and the many programs and activities that constitute the life of this congregation. Thank you for all you do.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to the members of the 2008-2009 board of trustees for their faithful service to our congregation this past year: Catherine Morris, president-elect; Paul Konka, treasurer; Kay Terry, secretary; Anita Cox, Lois Hybl, Anne McCall, and Mary Ellen Haisfield-Wolfe, members at large; and Rev. Clare Petersberger, *ex officio*. It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with this talented and committed team of leaders.

Operations Team

By Mike Robinson, chair

Hopefully this brief message finds everyone in reasonable health and enjoying some slower paces of the summertime. I want to first thank you, TUUC members, for having reasonable trust and confidence that I can and will assist the other leaders here at TUUC to represent your interests and perspective and help to develop effective consensus for our spiritual life together.



The O-Team is not scheduled to meet in July as we have scheduled a transitional retreat on August 22 to have returning and new board members and council heads confirm our operating norms and address immediate concerns and identify mid- and long-term goals. Nevertheless, much spiritual and congregational work is getting done and many tangible concerns are being addressed. Many “green” goals are being met as light/sun filtering has been applied to many of the larger windows that are part of our roof and some weatherization, including high grade caulking, will be applied to a major portion of the church. Plans are proceeding for a replacement of the front doors to the church and some other building changes to make our meeting room more accessible to attendees and members who have mobility challenges.

The summer services have been inspiring, challenging and even mystifying (I refer here to Greg Koren’s two services saluting fatherhood and reveling in the power of language). I would strongly

encourage everyone to come to as many of the Sunday services as possible, maybe disregarding what you think the title of the service represents. Finally, plans are proceeding for many grand events to honor our 50th anniversary as an institution in the coming church year, some of which will be addressed elsewhere in this Threshold. Please reserve the first weekend of October for the kickoff of the celebration. Please pass on any questions or concerns to the Sunday Services mailbox set up outside the main church office.

Youth Religious Exploration

By Joyce Duncan, director of Youth Religious Exploration



TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND REGISTRATION FOR 2009/2010

Thanks for everyone who has filled out their registration form for fall! Teacher is recruitment is going well though we still have some slots open.

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee meetings will continue throughout the summer. If interested in attending, please contact Joyce Duncan as dates may change due to vacation schedules.

COMING OF AGE PROGRAM

The YRE Committee is happy to again be able to offer the Coming of Age program this coming fall. This program for 7th and 8th graders is designed to mark the transition from childhood to youth. This year we are hoping to implement the mentoring component of this program. Mentoring in this program is seen as a way to deepen youth's connection to their church and help them define their own values. Mentors will be asked to attend the class once or twice month, do a service project with the class, and provide individual attention in a group setting. Parents with children in this age group will be receiving more details about all aspects of this program.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Anna Hayward graduated with a PhD in Social Work from the University of Maryland Baltimore on May 15th. Her research explored the impact of neighborhood conditions and parenting on child behavior problems. Dr. Hayward has three daughters in the YRE program; she and her eldest daughter co-taught with two other teachers, the Kindergarten-First Grade class in which her two younger daughters were members.

TUUC 50th Anniversary Events

CELEBRATE THE PAST

HOMECOMING WEEKEND - SATURDAY & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3 & 4

Rev. David McPherson, our first minister, will join us on both days. Saturday evening we will have a potluck at the church and entertainment, including a video about the church history. Sunday, we will have a reception between the services. All former members, RE children, and former staff are invited to return for these festivities.

CELEBRATE THE PRESENT

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, FOUNDING DAY

Our Minister, Music Director, and RE Director will create this celebration of our congregation as it is today. Joe Gascho has been commissioned to prepare a musical piece which will belong to TUUC. The RE youth are encouraged to perform. Reverend Petersberger will prepare the service and sermon. We are asking the RE children and other groups in the church to prepare banners, so this service will include a procession of banners. We will have a reception between the services. During the entire month of January, we will have a member's art show featuring the art of members past and present.

50TH ANNIVERSARY PHOTO DIRECTORY

MARCH 11, 12, 13, APRIL 13, 14

Together with Olin Mills, we will compose a booklet/photo directory which will include photos of our members on our 50th, an illustrated history of our church, and comments from our past and present leaders.

IMAGINE THE FUTURE

SATURDAY APRIL 24 AND SUNDAY, APRIL 25

Reverend Bill Schultz, who is a former UUA President, a former head of Amnesty International, and now retired, will be with us this weekend. Saturday evening we will have a potluck at the church and a Q&A session with Bill Schultz. Sunday, Bill Schultz will deliver the sermon and we will have a reception between services. (Music in the Great Hall will take over the church after the service.)

Help TUUC Get Greener

Carel Hedlund, chair, Green Sanctuary Committee

Interested in helping TUUC become greener? Join us for a Green Sanctuary planning meeting for the upcoming church year, on Sunday August 16 at 11:45 AM (after the service), downstairs in Room 5. All are welcome! Bring ideas for environmental justice and religious education programs that we might want to be involved with, and a snack to share.

Remember the “Cool Congregations” contest we entered last spring? The congregation that shows the greatest improvement in its overall energy usage over a one year period can win a \$5000 prize (wouldn’t that be a big help!)

Well, we’re working toward that prize. Over the summer, we are implementing some of the recommendations from the energy audit we had last year. Solar tinting has been done on the skylights and choir window. Air sealing and duct sealing projects are being scheduled for early August, after Camp Dulaney is over. The funds for these projects were approved in 2008 from the Building Maintenance reserve fund, and should help improve TUUC’s operating budget this year and all future years by reducing the amount of our energy bills. Hopefully these efforts will put us in the lead for winning that \$5000 prize.

The Resiliency Group

THOUGHTS ON SAVING MONEY ON PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Both Walmart and Target provide lists of generic drugs available at a discount. These lists are also available on line at www.Target.com (or Walmart.com). Both stores charge \$4 for a 30 day supply and \$10 for a 90 day supply.

What to do with the lists:

1. If you don’t find the name of your medication on the list, ask your physician if your medication is available in generic form.
2. Review the list further with your physician by asking questions, such as “Is there a blood pressure medication on this list which I could take instead of what I’m taking now?”
3. Remind your doctor to use the generic name of your medication and write the word generic next to it when he/she is writing a prescription.

You also could ask your physician if any samples of your medication are on hand or if there are any co-pay cards for your medications. For example, Lipitor, a drug for cholesterol management, has a co-pay program which reimburses most consumers \$10 to \$15 toward each co-pay.

THOUGHTS ON FINANCIAL ADVISERS

If you don't have a qualified financial adviser, now is the time to get one. Such persons can be independent or maintain a relationship with a regional or nationally known financial firm. Independent operators are called "fee-only" advisers; in effect clients "rent the brains" of such persons and no one but the adviser (and his/her clients) benefits directly from their recommendations. Affiliated advisers come with a POTENTIAL conflict of interest. They could suggest a financial instrument sold by a third party from which the adviser receives remuneration. The presence or absence of a third-party affiliation, however, should not be the governing factor in choosing an adviser. Experience and training should be the dominant selection criteria.

Outreach Council

Bill & Salli Ward, co-chairs

DINNERTIME AT THE EASTSIDE SHELTER

Beginning this fall, TUUC plans to assist the staff at the shelter in preparing and serving one evening meal each month. There is limited staff at night to serve the other needs of the guests, so mealtime help is scarce.

The menu, as well as the food items, will be provided for us and we work in a commercial kitchen - we just need willing hands for about 2 - 3 hours. We are hoping to provide a group of about seven people for one evening each month. Children are very welcome to come along. Perhaps a chalice circle, a book club, a church committee, a group of friends, etc. might volunteer for one dinner during the coming year. A convenient date would be arranged. There will be a sign up poster in the lobby. Please contact Marilyn Thorn, whose number is in the directory, if you would like to share in this monthly project with us.

ASSISTANCE CENTER OF TOWSON CHURCHES - ACTC

Many thanks to the TUUCers who have increased their food donations. Requests for food and financial help remain high. Please pick up extra cans of vegetables, peanut butter, etc EVERY week and bring in. The hungry NEED your help. At the recent Treasure Hunt the planners included ACTC. For one of the team exercises they asked team members to bring a racquet and a can of food. The food was given to ACTC.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY - OUR DAILY BREAD CASSEROLES

August has a 5th Saturday, so TUUC has an obligation to provide AT LEAST 60 casseroles for the soup kitchen. YOU can make a difference by making or buying a casserole. The recipes for both Texas Hash and vegetarian casseroles are on the counter at TUUC and on the TUUC web site. You can purchase the Stouffer's Party Size of Mac and Cheese to help as well. Casseroles are due by 8:30 AM on Saturday, August 29. You can plan ahead and bring in early, there are two freezers in the closet behind the choir area.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE PLANNING MEETING

Please join the SAC in making plans for 2009-10 year on Sunday, Aug. 23, after the service for a Brown Bag Lunch session. We will meet in the lower level and the SAC wants to know what YOU think about our current projects and YOUR thoughts for NEW projects. New comers welcomed.

Expand Your Horizons at TUUC ... Join a Chalice Circle!

We are people...communities...relationships...mutual ministry...circles...

We are about caring...growing...service...listening...commitment to each other...

We meet around a variety of ideas and themes...We value each voice and presence...

We are Chalice Circles.

A Chalice Circle is a group of six to ten participants who meet twice a month, engaging in a combination of worship, fellowship, learning, and service. Circles typically meet at the church. Recent topics include: the listening ear, congruence of belief and action, exploring non-violence, memory and hope. The circles covenant to meet with each other for a certain number of sessions, and they commit to perform a service project of their choosing, either for the church or the wider community.

An initial commitment to a circle is late September to January with an opportunity to renew your commitment for a second "semester" (February to May). The Chalice Circle program depends on its members and co-facilitators for their enthusiasm and insight. We're excited about the opportunities for spiritual growth and closer community.

Are you willing to contribute your own perspectives and passions?

“Chalice Circles has been totally enjoyable because I’ve interacted with members whom I would not have gotten to know on Sundays. The commitment has introduced members on a more personal basis and created new friendships. We have had wonderful discussions!”

-Marcia Brooks, participant and new co-facilitator

There are a number of ways to get more information about Chalice Circles as we gear up for the fall term. You can email us at chalicecircles@towsonuuc.org. Our Chalice Circle coordinators, Carrie Landfried and Dick Scholle, are happy to talk to you about the program and will be sharing their experiences with Chalice Circles during the worship services on September 13. We will also be in the lounge with information and sign-up sheets after the 10:30 worship service on August 23 and August 30 and after each service on September 6 and September 13. Groups will start meeting the week of September 21.

In addition to new Circle members, we are looking for co-facilitators for the fall. A training session is tentatively scheduled for September 13. If you are interested in co-facilitating a circle, or if you have any questions about co-facilitating, please contact us at chalicecircles@towsonuuc.org.

Upcoming events

INTERNET TECH SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER

Put on your computerized green thumbs and get ready for a free growth session on Internet technology the morning of Saturday, September 26, 2009 at the Cedar Lane UU church in Bethesda, MD, from 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM.

The summit, called "Growing Community: Seeding the Electronic Garden," is designed for professionals and lay leaders who want to learn how the Internet can be used to create awareness of the UU faith community. The summit will also provide a forum for sharing information and skills to help attendees fill gaps in Internet training and tools.

Topics include social networking and blogging; website management, coordination and design; web-based pastoral care; content development; and internet evangelism. In addition, attendees will learn how to prepare their churches for the upcoming JPD Google Adwords Marketing Campaign.

A continental breakfast and networking lunch is included with registration. Child care provided upon request. For more information, either go to www.jpduua.org, or contact Aynsley Hamel (contact information is in the directory).

Our Minister

Reverend Clare L. Petersberger
revclare@towsonuuc.org

Our Leadership

Board of Trustees:

President, Catherine Morris
President-Elect, Mike Robinson
Treasurer, Paul Konka
Secretary, Kay Terry

Trustees: Anita Cox, Lois Hybl,
Melissa Reuland, Sue Shankroff

Operations Team:

President-Elect, Mike Robinson
Communications Council, Susan Seim
Finance Council, Jason Braspennickx
House and Grounds Council, John Venables
Inner Life Council, Mimi Marks
Outreach Council, Bill & Salli Ward
Religious Education Council,
Adan Ayala
Sunday Services Council, Tara McIntyre

Our Staff

Youth Religious Exploration Director:

Joyce Duncan
tuudre@towsonuuc.org

Music Director:

Joseph Gascho
music@towsonuuc.org

Church Administrator:

Mona Scott
churchoffice@towsonuuc.org

Administrative Assistant:

Nancy Hannah
assistant@towsonuuc.org

Bookkeeper:

Martha Clasby
bookkeeper@towsonuuc.org

Pianist:

Ina Allen
piano@towsonuuc.org

Custodian:

Joseph Ellis

TOWSON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
1710 Dulaney Valley Road
Lutherville, MD 21093-9705

Phone: 410-825-6045

Fax: 410-825-3427

Email: churchoffice@towsonuuc.org

Website: www.towsonuuc.org

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

The *Threshold* is published monthly.

July/August editor: Susan Seim

Submissions for the *Threshold* should be sent by
midnight on the third Sunday of the month to:
news@towsonuuc.org.

Dated Mailing: Please Expedite

Mailing Date: July 17, 2009

Nonprofit Org U.S. Postage PAID Permit 127 Lutherville MD
--