



The Phoenix

May 2011



Presidential Ponderings

The last two months at UUCSV has been busy. We have a minister. We've made it official. I feel like tying cans to the back of Ann's car and having the kids paint a "Just Called" sign for the back. What a great way to reuse some metal cans. It would be so UU of us but then again that could be considered noise pollution! Even without a grand gesture such as that I think Ann feels and shares our joy at having her as our minister.

I would also like to take the opportunity to remind you that our Annual Meeting is May 15th. We plan on having lunch available and we will work out childcare too.

If you didn't pick up your pledge packet this Sunday please do so soon. We have many wonderful things going on at church these days and as always we can't do anything without your pledges. I have to admit that before UUCSV, church was the last place I would send my money. Even as a young catholic, we would put at most a dollar in the collection basket (usually a quarter). It is just not something that my family did and is not a priority I was raised with. Now I am proud to contribute in any way I can to keep our congregation thriving. The experience of being a UUCSV'er is priceless to me.

We had lovely and well attended contemplative services led by my members and friends. I had the pleasure of attending the Thaz Chat, led by JoAnn Henry, which was wonderful, even for a non-singer like me.

I missed Lenore's day of Silent Retreat again. I have missed everyone she has planned but I will not give up hope that one day I will have a day of silence! Lenore is also still facilitating the "What Moves Us" course, which I and many others have enjoyed. I truly treasure these opportunities to connect with others and to look inward. I am grateful to Lenore for bringing Adult RGL back to life at UUCSV.

Which reminds me of the fact that we had another fun Casino Night on March fifth to raise money for Heifer International. I'm not so much a gambler and I buy my tickets so that I can still win prizes, and win I did. The best of my 3 prizes was Lenore's shortbread. I won't say how many tickets I put in in order to win. I also won't say just how much of it I ate but I will tell you if you have not

had her shortbread you are missing out. You could certainly try to win some at the next casino night. I don't mind competition.

The youth group has been busy as worship associates and volunteering at Haven Ministries among other things. I know I am not the only member who enjoys having them participate in our Sunday services. I am continually impressed with their abilities and willingness to go up there and speak. It's not always easy! They are a great group and make us proud!

The board is grateful to both the parents who are leading our children's RGL program and the parents who bring them. They each add so much to the experience of the group. It would be helpful to let the leaders know if your child is not going to be attending on a given Sunday. Our groups are pretty small and our teachers take time to prepare for the RGL hour. Lois came prepared to lead this past Sunday but there were no children from her group present.

The first Wednesday of April the UUCSV book group discussed 'GATE OF THE SUN,' BY ELIAS KHOURY. I am still not finished with it, but I've not given up because it's a great book. This is my first foray into Arab literature and it will not be my last. It certainly made for a wonderful discussion. Book group is a monthly opportunity to get to know great folks and great literature! I have missed many discussions but I am never disappointed when I am able to attend. That's how I feel about all things at UUCSV. I am not able to be there for everything but I am grateful for each moment I get to spend with our beloved community.

Coming Sundays

May 1: Ann Keeler Evans - Beltane

May 8: Kathy Hummel

May 15: Ann Keeler Evans - Flower Ceremony -

May 22: Ann Keeler Evans

May 29: George Manning

Ministerial Musings

Well, my dears, here we are, 2 months in. Pretty soon, I'll stop counting months and just count the blessings! And they are many. The big difference I notice since being called/accepting the call is my ownership of the job. It wasn't that I didn't care before... you know me well enough to know I did... but I care differently now, because the investment is long-term. What we're building is our future... maintenance phase? Finito! I'm so aware of this as I go about my pastoral duties.

When I was in California before the meeting, I thought long and hard about what the call might mean in my life. There I was, bopping around in my old life, visiting old and dear friends. Since mom's illness, my visits have been restricted to the kids and one, maybe two close friends. But this was a luxury of excess. I saw so many people from different parts of my life in California. Driving across one of the many bridges, looking at that Bay, I thought "you know, the next phase of my life had better be about integration." I came home, not knowing exactly what that might mean, but considering...

We've heard (and will probably always hear) that there are things wrong, and there are. Welcome to life: we've got work to do. But things are stirring. To my surprise and my delight, we're growing a vibrant alternative worship program. The contemplative celebrations were a hit; more have been requested. Dark Moon services continue to attract folk. The Days of Silence are delicious, and there will be four of them every year. Lenore's got a surprise up her sleeve that will add to our offerings. I'm hearing requests for Celebrations of the Pagan High Holy Days. I have to say, when I saw 12 people walking the labyrinth, I was overwhelmed with joy. I couldn't believe that I worked at a place where such a thing could happen. So, it makes me happy there's demand for more. At the very least, there will be a Contemplative series late in the fall.

Right in the midst of that, we had our first religious action... Standing for Peace. There will be more community happenings in the not-too-far-off future, i hope. Interfaith picnic is next on the agenda. pull out your hummus recipes and start practicing! Sonia from the Mosque and i agreed this would be a fun

way to get us going. I like the notion of religious action as fun! Standing for Peace is great. Eating for Peace... now that's pure pleasure.

We have the piano back!!! It sounds wonderful. Thank you everyone. We had hoped to have Ann Rabson here to offer a concert, but now, with her illness, it looks as if we will wait until the Fall to kick off our Concert Series. Dee and I are cooking up a storm of concerts. Wait until the public gets an earful! Wait until we figure out the ways it will augment our worship! It'll be swell!

We had a lovely send off for Dick Nellis. It was nice to have Barry back in the pulpit and for folks to get a chance to talk to him. It was wonderful to be back in the chapel. I will miss Dick, as I miss my time with Nancy and Barbara and Judy Anderson. Visits were such a joy. There are many of us with hearts, just a tiny bit broken.

So, Spring seems to be making some effort to appear... may it be so, both in the weather and in our hearts.

Ann

Additional Notes About Ann

Ann is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York City with a Master of Divinity degree in 1987, the Rev. Evans conducted ministry in California specializing in weddings, rites of passage and life celebrations for people outside and between religious traditions. She is the author of "Promises to Keep: Crafting Your Wedding Ceremony" and "Remembering a Life: On the Death of Your Beloved."

A Bloomsburg native, Ann has been a member of UUCSV since she returned to the region to care for her aging parents. She has lived in major cities, including three years in Europe, and small towns, and travelled extensively. She is married to Steve Mitchell and lives in Lewisburg.

Ann emphasized that "UUCSV is a congregation where people are welcomed not only for what they believe but how they act in those beliefs. I want to remind people our doors are open as a spiritual home for religious liberalism in the region. "For some, UUCSV is a haven, while for others it is a

guest home for people in transition, whether in divorce, coming out, or just seeking answers.”

The founding of UUCSV in 1991 cements the connection in the region between people of liberal religious thought and Joseph Priestley, who lived in Northumberland from 1794 - 1804. The English minister, scientist and teacher came to the region seeking religious tolerance denied him in England.

There has been a Unitarian Universalist presence in Northumberland on and off for more than 200 years, Ann said. “This rich history of religious liberalism and diversity, on-going education on issues that concern us and providing a home for spiritual exploration are my main concerns.”

Ann can be reached by phone at: 570-412-4745

Marcellus Shale To Be Discussed

A Power Point seminar entitled, “Guinea Pigs Atop the Marcellus Shale” will be presented from 8 – 9:30 pm on Monday, May 2nd at the Union County Government Center, 155 North 15th Street in Lewisburg. The event is free and open to the public. Barbara Jarmoska, who serves on the Board of Directors of the Responsible Drilling Alliance (RDA), a grassroots organization based in Williamsport, will be the speaker.

RDA is an education and advocacy coalition seeking to educate the public about the truth and consequences of deep shale gas drilling. (www.responsibledrillingalliance.org)

Jarmoska states, “After receiving numerous requests from colleges, civic groups and organizations asking for someone to come and speak on the topic of gas drilling, I sought the help of local photographers to create this slide presentation. It is my hope that this talk will help people to realize the gravity and scope of what is happening to Pennsylvania as our farm and forest lands are transformed into industrial landscapes by multinational energy companies who have moved in to stake their claim to the gas that lies a mile below the land on which we live, work and play.”

COME out and learn more about the Shale situation!

UUCSV Book Group

“Where everyone is welcome, even if you haven’t read/finished/started the book”

UUCSV Book Group meets first Wednesday of each month except July and August at 7 pm in the lounge at UUCSV.

On Wednesday, May 4 at we will discuss **Jesus Out to Sea** by James Lee Burke. The 11 previously published stories in this strong collection showcase Burke's handling of familiar themes and places. The inevitable marriage of war and atrocity is powerfully described in the very brief Vietnam War tale, "The Village." The title story, one of two dealing with Katrina and its aftermath, shows the lasting damage of war on survivors. Both "Winter Light" and "A Season of Regret" feature disillusioned, stoical academics, loners coping with the encroachments of cruder society. Most wrenching and affecting are several coming-of-age tales: "Texas City , 1947" depicts brutalized children and contains a surprising dénouement; "The Molester" and "The Burning of the Flag" both feature childhood friends from the WWII era confronting bullies or demons. Burke demonstrates impressive range, sensitivity and polish in these smaller-scale gems.

Next Selection.

Jun 1, 2011, Island Beneath the Sea, Isabel Allende, her latest, set in the early days of Haiti .

First Sunday Program at Priestley Chapel on Sunday, May 1, 2011

Priestley Chapel Associates presents an informal program of words and music from 9:00 to 9:40 am on Sunday, May 1st at Joseph Priestley Memorial Chapel, 380 Front Street , Northumberland. The music portion of the program features Lester Hirsh on the guitar. This Sunday continues a multi-year recognition of the US Poet Laureates with George Manning reading poems of Robert Penn Warren, 1st Laureate who served from (1986-1987).

Poet Lester Hirsh will read from his work accompanying himself on guitar. Lester Hirsh is a gifted guitarist, singer/songwriter, and poet. Performing on Spanish 6-string and acoustic 12-string guitar, his style ranges from classical, country, and folk, to Brazilian jazz and Flamenco.

His repertoire includes original compositions as well as standards performed with intriguing percussive guitar riffs and harmonica. Lester has performed in a variety of ensembles over the past 30 years and during that time honed his skills as a viable solo artist.

In the fall of 1998, the CD 'Sweet Surrender' was released, followed by 'Strangers and Lonesome Friends' in 2003. Two spoken word CDs, 'Mosaic, Poems of an Ancient Order' and 'Mosaic II, Poems of an Ancient Order' were released in 2002 and 2003 respectively, followed by 'Lester Hirsh Live at the Coffee and Tea Room' in 2004 and the instrumental CD 'River of Strings' in 2006. In addition to Lester's music career he was publisher and editor of Bone & Flesh literary magazine. His poems have been published in The Asheville Poetry Review, Signal, Tabula Rasa, and other periodicals. His poem, 'Casualties,' along with art by Fleur Byers, was on exhibit at the Pen & Brush Gallery, New York City. His book, 'Mosaic II, Poems of an Ancient Order,' was published by the Writers Publishing Cooperative, Warner, New Hampshire. His poetry has been called, "universal with the voice of an ancient troubadour and the language of our times."

Priestley Chapel Associates is a secular, non-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation established in 1977 to care for and manage the Joseph Priestley Memorial Chapel, the beautiful memorial garden and the historic 1811 John Wind organ located in the chapel. This lovely country chapel was built in 1834 by descendants of Joseph Priestley and members of the Unitarian congregation in Northumberland. Currently, the chapel is open to the public the first Sunday of each month for a program of words and music. The chapel is also used for wedding ceremonies, memorial services, and community events. For more information visit: www.priestleychapel.org.

IMPORTANT CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The congregational meeting is scheduled for May 15th. The main items we will be discussing are the nomination of new trustees, our budget for 2011-2012 and the service time change.

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR!!

Spring housecleaning is here again. Please save your items that you no longer need for the annual UUCSV Yard Sale that will be held Monday, July 4th through Saturday July 9th. Because the other side of our congregation's building space is occupied this year, it is requested that you wait until May 15th to start to bring articles for sale. A 43 ft. trailer will be utilized for storage in the parking lot. All types of donations are appreciated including: furniture, electronics, kitchen items, clothing, toys, books, jewelry, decorations, linens, sports equipment, office items, etc. Taking a few minutes to be sure they are clean and salable is greatly appreciated. There will be a sign up paper later on for volunteers to assist during this week. As this is a major fundraiser, your help is needed. For any questions or further information, please contact Lenore Askew or Marie Clark.

If you have any used inkjet cartridges that you currently are throwing away, please bring to the church and place in the dish in the office. These are being redeemed at Staples for \$2.00 each and the credit is used to purchase office paper, stamps, RGL supplies, etc.

General Assembly 2011 June 22-26, Charlotte, North Carolina



General Assembly (GA) 2011 in Charlotte will mark the 50th anniversary of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America.

Join thousands of fellow Unitarian Universalists from across the country as we remember the persons and events that brought into being the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) in May 1961, to reflect on our denomination's relevant achievements and struggles since then, and to chart new aspirations for the future we are determined to shape.

Experience wonderful and uplifting worship services—morning and night—led by some of our best worship leaders, with glorious music and

inspiring messages.

Participate in our democratic process. General Assembly is the way that our faith does business, bringing together the distinctive character of our individual congregations.

Hear terrific speakers. There will be hundreds of dynamic, entertaining programs and informative workshops.

Connect with craftspeople and artisans, social action groups, professional and educational resources, theological schools, UUA organizations and staff, Beacon Press, and the UUA Bookstore in the General Assembly Exhibit Hall.

Network with other congregation leaders, share best practices, and learn from one another. Return to your congregation reinvigorated and inspired to put your values to work.

Witness for our faith in moving and exciting ways as we look forward to and prepare for a special "Justice" General Assembly in Phoenix, AZ in 2012.

UUA President and UUSC President Appeal for Japan Relief Fund

More than a month after the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan, roughly 12,000 people are dead, 15,000 are missing, and more than 500,000 are displaced. Japan is also coping with a nuclear crisis that is being compared to the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.

The heart-wrenching situation changes day by day, but help is on the way. Thanks to very generous donations from Unitarian Universalists (UU) and our congregations across the country, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)-Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Japan Relief Fund has raised more than \$200,000, which will aid in the recovery efforts.

The Rev. Eric Cherry, the UUA's director of International Resources, recently traveled to Japan to meet with our partner groups. Rissho Kosei-kai (RKK), one of our religious partners, shared that their assessment team is reporting severe

devastation among their congregations. Read more in the *UU World* article [UUA-UUSC Japan Fund supports religious partners after quake.](#)

Your generous support is still needed to alleviate the suffering of the Japanese people and help rebuild their lives. Please give generously today. Your immediate support will help RKK congregations provide shelter to people who are homeless, and bring food, clothing, fuel, and other supplies. The Fund will also provide support to our other partners in Japan, as well as help in the long-term recovery efforts.

Humor To Live By

1. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a broken fan belt and a leaky tire.
2. Don't be irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.
3. Always remember that you're unique. Just like everyone else.
4. Never test the depth of the water with both feet.
5. If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments.
6. If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is probably not for you.
7. Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day .
8. If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably a wise investment.
9. If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.
10. Some days you're the bug; some days you're the windshield.
11. The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it back in your pocket.
12. A closed mouth gathers no foot.
13. Duct tape is like 'The Force'. It has a light side and a dark side, and it holds the universe together.