

Windmill

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

To affirm and promote
the inherent worth
and dignity
of every person

JANUARY 1, 2008

Interim Minister's Column the Reverend Don Vaughn-Foerster



The year 2007 has just ended and the year 2008 just begun. We are at midpoint in our mutual interim ministry year. From my perspective, things have been going well. The Sunday services have seemed to be on target. The musical aspect of the services certainly has been a plus. The Religious Education department clearly has become a strength of this congregation. The Board of Trustees continues to act responsibly and with vision. The Caring Associates, Membership Development, Social Justice Committee, Finance Committee, the Stewardship Committee, and other committees and volunteers—all have been active, creative, and purposeful. The social groups that I have been with on Thursdays and at other times have confirmed my view of MVUC as a vital, friendly, and responsible community. MVUC is clearly high on the scale of effective, caring congregations.

Even so, this is a good time to take stock, and whether we make any New Year's resolutions or not, to identify some aspects of congregational life that could use attention before a new settled minister arrives. Aside from the perennial need for adequate contributions to meet responsible budgets, I see a major area that could use some congregational attention, apart from the issues and needs that the organizational structure manages. It is something to which at least some thought should be given before calling a settled minister.

My concern is the congregation's self-perception in regard to functioning like an organized body. The culture here emphasizes and celebrates individual autonomy—and appropriately so. This has been the case in every UU society with which I have dealt. And, like in many of these other societies, individual purposes and commitments very often drive the agenda for the larger group. In small groups, where everyone knows a good bit about what is going on and feels that he or she is part of the action, this can be an appropriate arrangement. Communication and personal relationships can be smooth and effective. Many UU fellowships do quite well under these circumstances.

However, as groups enlarge, more organizational accountability is required. For instance, in a congregation of well over 500 (including members, friends, and interested persons—such as is the case with MVUC), structure, policies, procedures, and the authority of elective and called offices become necessary. People with responsibilities have to stay in close touch and be cooperative with each other or risk, either intentionally or unintentionally, duplicating efforts or creating disruptive competitions. It takes an awful lot of goodwill to overcome a well-intentioned drive of one group to have its way at the

See Page 9, Interim Minister

Program Highlights

Good Companions

In Hollin Hall
11:45 am–12:45 pm: BYO
Lunch
12:45–1:45 pm: Speaker
Tues, Jan 8—**Bill McKechney**
Tues, Jan 22—**Liz Smith**

Social Justice Speakers Series

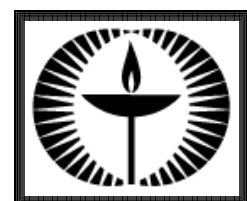
In Chapel
Sun, Jan 13, 12:30–3:00 pm
**Egyptian Ambassador
Nabil Fahmy**

Fellowship Wednesdays

In Meeting House
Beginning Jan 16, 6:00 pm
Join in fellowship, food,
and fun!

Climate Change Potluck Dinner and Meeting

In Chapel
Sun, Jan 27, 5:00–8:00 pm
Dinner at 5:00 pm
Meeting at 6:00 pm



**MOUNT VERNON
UNITARIAN CHURCH**

INTERIM MINISTER

The Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster

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~ ~ ~

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Mark Your Calendar!

Good Companions

In Hollin Hall, 11:45 am-12:45 pm: BYO Lunch

12:45-1:45 pm: Speaker

Tuesday, January 8—**Bill McKechny**: *The Aurora, Mining and the Japanese*. Bill McKechny was an Air Force Officer until 1984. His Alaskan trips began as manager of a DOD project to understand the aurora. The project included rocket-borne sensors to measure the aurora and finished with a payload the size of a Volkswagen to excite a man-made aurora. As a civilian contractor, Bill traveled to Adak and to Shemya in the Aleutian Islands on another DOD project. Now retired, he and his wife, **Valerie**, visit a daughter and her family who reside in North Pole, Alaska.

Bill, a member of MVUC since 1976, was a member of the Board of Trustees. He was involved in the creation of our Memorial Walk.

Tuesday, January 22—**Liz Smith**: *Folger Shakespeare Library—Then and Now*. Liz Smith, a senior docent at the Folger Shakespeare Library, will talk about the history of the library as well as many activities to be found there. Today, the Folger has the largest collection of Shakespeariana in existence as well as an equally memorable collection of materials covering science, history and religion during the Renaissance. The Folger is one of the three major Renaissance libraries in the world. In addition, it is well known for its theatrical productions, its education outreach programs for schools in the Metropolitan Area, and its exhibition of material from its collection.

Fellowship Wednesdays

Beginning January 16, 6:00 pm

This is an opportunity to attend midweek activities with the added bonus of gathering beforehand for dinner, which begins at 6:00 pm. Food this month is catered by Dishes of India. (See page six for details.)

Mt. Vernon Community Martin Luther King Service

Sunday, January 20, 7:00 pm

Bethlehem Baptist Church

MVUC's Adult Choir and its Voices of Youth will participate in the MLK Service. Please come join us in community for this special event.

Climate Change Family Potluck Dinner and Meeting

Sunday, January 27, 5:00-8:00 pm

Join **Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster**, RE Director **Meagan Henry**, Administrator **Ron Brandt** and others in the Sanctuary for a family potluck, information and planning session on the final steps needed for MVUC to reduce its carbon footprint and help care for our Earth home.

Share fun and food with fellow church members; enjoy music, including the Voices of Youth; and hear the latest about MVUC's recent energy audit.

For more information or to help with event set-up and clean-up, please contact **Suzanne Cleary Cohen** at scleary3@cox.net or 703-768-4967.

Religious Education

By **Meagan Henry**, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

Dear Friends,

It was a pleasure to be involved with the Winter Pageant! It was rewarding to be able to share with the congregation some of what the children are learning in their Sunday morning RE classes and to be able to do it by utilizing the same methodology—"learning through story." I cannot say "thank you" enough to the volunteers who worked so hard to bring together this wonderful celebration of Christmas. It was a joy to experience the community building at the rehearsals. In many ways, the process of creating the pageant was as important as the actual presentation. We are blessed to have many new volunteers stepping forward to join our long-time helpers, bringing a renewed sense of community and vital energy to the Religious Education program.

Yours truly,
Meagan Henry

RE Announcements

Coming of Age Class: Begins Sundays in January, 4:00–6:00 pm, Hollin Hall, 1st floor. This class is offered for 8th and 9th grade youth and provides an opportunity to gather in a small group to explore their UU identity, heritage and history. The class culminates in a heritage trip to Boston and a Coming of Age Sunday service.

High School Our Whole Lives Class: Begins Sundays in January, 5:00–7:00 pm, Carriage House, 2nd floor YRUU room. Parent orientation meeting will be held January 13, 5:00 pm.

Guest At Your Table Boxes: Thank you to everyone who took home one of the Guest At Your Tables boxes. Please remember to return them to the church during the first few weeks of January so we can combine all of the funds and send one check to the UUSC. I encourage you to count the money together so your family will know how much you were able to collect.

RE Teacher Meeting: Saturday, January 5, 9:30–11:30 am, Hollin Hall, 1st floor. Please come prepared to share your feedback and questions about the curriculum and your teaching experience. Also, this meeting will give teaching teams an opportunity to meet and plan their schedules for the remainder of the winter term. A light brunch will be provided.

January Children and Youth RE Class Schedule:

Preschool—Chalice Children (Meets after For All Ages of 9:30 service in the Carriage House, Joseph Priestley room.)

- 1/6 Babies
- 1/13 A Visit From Baby
- 1/20 The Wonder of Snow
- 1/27 Wondering About the Stars
- 2/3 My Shadow

K–1st Grade (Meets after For All Ages of both services in the Carriage House, Thoreau Room.)

2nd–3rd Grades (Meets after For All Ages of both services in the Carriage House, Children’s Chapel.)

4th–5th Grades (Meets after For All Ages of both services in the Hollin Hall, Morning Room.)

- *Our Jewish and Christian Heritage* -

- 1/6 A Very Special Rabbi: Jesus the Traveling Teacher
- 1/13 The Story of the Good Samaritan
- 1/20 Children’s Chapel—Martin Luther King’s Favorite Teacher
- 1/27 A Ministry of Love and Forgiveness: The Prodigal Son
- 2/3 The Story of the Good Shepherd

Jr. High (6th–8th Grades)—Compass Points (Meets only during 11:15 service in Hollin Hall, Fireplace Room)

- 1/6 What Would Jesus Do?
- 1/13 Wise Guys
- 1/20 MLK’s Favorite Teacher
- 1/27 Protesters to Pilgrims
- 2/3 From Calvinism to Channing

High School Topic-Based Discussion Class (Meets 10:00–11:00 am, YRUU Room)

- 1/13 Discussion Class
- 1/27 Guest speaker: **Grace Garner**, Washington Office for Advocacy

YRUU (Young Religious UUs) (9th–12th Grades)

(Meets during 11:15 service in the Carriage House, YRUU room.)

- 1/6 Youth Service planning
- 1/13 Social Justice and Youth Service planning
- 1/20 Youth Service planning
- 1/27 Check in/relax

Coming of Age Class for 8th–9th Grades (Meets Sundays, 4:00–6:00pm, Hollin Hall, 1st floor)

High School Our Whole Lives Class

(Meets Sundays, 5:00–7:00 pm, Carriage House, 2nd floor)

Please check the RE page of the MVUC website for updates! (www.mvuc.org)

Adult Religious Education (ARE) Classes

The Adult RE Committee is pleased to announce the winter and spring classes to be offered at MVUC. You will notice a few new classes that we are highlighting below because they begin in January. All other full class descriptions may be found in the Adult Programs and MVUC Major Events Brochure that was mailed to everyone last week. The brochure is also on the RE display table in the Commons on Sunday mornings.

The New Testament

Taught by **George Churchill** on Wednesdays, 7:30–8:30 pm, January 16–March 19 (10 sessions), in Hollin Hall Blue Room.

In this course we will examine the five most prominent gospels, based on findings of the *Jesus Seminar: What did Jesus really say and do?* We look at Paul's role in developing the early church, explore ways in which the primitive church hammered out its theology and rituals in reaction to the many "heresies," and review how the church made the leap from insignificant cult to the primary religious and political force in the Western world.

A minimum of 10 participants is required for this class. Please register in advance in the Commons or let the instructor know if you plan to attend. For more information, contact George Churchill, 703-768-1143.

Welcome To Our Community

A new series of meetings designed especially for newcomers, but also open to all current members and friends, will be offered beginning in January. *Welcome to Our Community* will consist of three Saturday sessions, each independent of the others.

Session 1, Unitarian Universalism: Its Heritage And Point Of View will be led by **Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster**; it will be offered on Saturday, January 12, 9:30 am–12:30 pm and repeated on April 12.

Session 2, Getting Acquainted With MVUC will be moderated by **Ron Brandt**; it will be offered on Saturday, February 16, 9:30 am–12:30 pm and repeated April 26.

Session 3, Walking The Walk: Social Justice At MVUC will be moderated by **Georgia Pourchot**; it will be offered on Saturday, March 8, 9:30 am–12:30 pm and repeated May 17.

Check the Commons for registration forms and the website for updates. For more information contact **Ron Brandt**, ARE chair, 703-765-5950, ext. 103 (daytime), or 703-765-4779 (evenings).

Leadership Seminar

Coordinated by **Bill Clontz** on Friday, February 8, 6:30 pm; Saturday, February 9, 12:00 pm, in Hollin Hall, and repeated May 9-10.

An intensive workshop focused on principles of leadership, problem solving, conflict management, and basic tools for organizing efficient meetings. Designed especially for lay leaders of the church, but is open to others interested in improving their program management skills. Newly-elected members of the Board and other groups will be invited to the May session.

Introduction to Buddhism*

Led by **Dale Peebles**, on Sundays, January 20 through March 9, at 7:00–8:00 pm, in the Carriage House.

Great Decisions*

Coordinated by **Jay Holmes** on Sundays, 12:45–2:00 pm, in Hollin Hall (Chapel on March 16), on January 27; February 3, 10, 17; March 2, 9, 16, 30; and April 13.

Simplicity Circles*

Facilitated by **Suzanne Cleary Cohen** on Sundays, 7:00–8:30 pm, January 13 through March 2, in Hollin Hall. Please register in advance.

Spirit of Life*

Coordinated by **Meagan Henry** on Wednesdays, 7:30–8:30 pm, April 2–May 28 (9 sessions), in Hollin Hall.

Would-Be Poets*

Led by **Bea Holmes** on Fridays, 7:30 pm, in members' homes.
*Brochure described in first paragraph of this article contains fuller course description.

Music News

Adult Choir rehearsals continue at 7:30 pm on Wednesday evenings, beginning on January 2. The first Wednesday of each month is "open house." Come try us out with no further commitments!

Voices of Youth will start up again on Sunday, January 13, at 12:45 pm in the Carriage House. This is for all youth 6th grade and above who would like to join in community for singing and other creative outlets!

Kids Choir (ages K–5th grade) will resume rehearsals on Sunday, January 13, at 10:40 am in the Carriage House. Come join the fun!

The Adult Choir and the Voices of Youth will participate in the Mt. Vernon Community Martin Luther King service at Bethlehem Baptist Church on January 20, at 7:00 pm. Please come join us in community there! —**Melodie Feather**, Director of Music

Activities On and Off the Hill

**MVUC Climate Change Event
Sunday, January 27, 5:00–8:00 p.m.
Family Potluck Dinner and Meeting**

Start the New Year in a good way by helping MVUC continue to reduce its carbon footprint. According to **Rev. Vaughn-Foerster**, *“Doing our part as a church community to support the environment by lightening our footprint is critically important. By working together, we can complete our UUA certification as a ‘Green Sanctuary’ in spring 2008.”* The Green Sanctuary program is part of the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, which was founded in 1990 and is an affiliate organization of the UUA.

A few years ago, MVUC voted as a congregation to become a “Green Sanctuary.” Since then, church members have been tackling the requirements for certification by the UUA as a Green Sanctuary. Many of the requirements have already been completed. With your help, the final remaining steps will be completed by spring 2008. Many hands will make light work and MVUC will deepen its commitment to caring for our Earth home.

Event Schedule:

- 5:00 pm–Potluck dinner; bring an entrée, salad or dessert to share
- 6:00 pm–Welcome by **Rev. Vaughn-Foerster**
- “For all Ages” by **Meagan Henry**
- Music, including the **Voices of Youth**
- Update by **Ron Brandt** on the recent MVUC energy audit conducted by the Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light
- Status of becoming a Green Sanctuary, next steps and sign-up session

Plan to attend this fun, family environmental event on Sunday, January 27 from 5:00–8:00 pm as we celebrate our progress to date and take on the final remaining tasks for certification. Childcare will be provided in the Nursery. For more information, call **Suzanne Cleary Cohen** at 703-768-4967.

**Large-Type Version Of
Windmill Available**

A large-type version of the Windmill is available for those who are visually impaired. Copies may be picked up on the credenza between the two front doors in the Commons.

Steering Toward Stewardship

We come to this church for many reasons—to seek a liberal religious home, to help ourselves and our children connect with our values, to build companionship, compassion, and commitment to our larger world. We come not just to satisfy our own spiritual needs, but to give of ourselves in serving others’ needs.

Stewardship is increasingly used among UU congregations to indicate this spirit of nurturing our faith community. Stewardship, according to UUA consultant **Wayne Clark**, includes the joyful sharing of gifts (aptitude, ability, and money), call (willingness to proclaim our spiritual message), and spiritual vocation (willingness to take up volunteer efforts to support the faith community).

Within this spirit, the Board of Trustees has established a Stewardship Committee. The committee is currently planning next year’s annual stewardship commitment campaign. In the campaign, we will ask the congregation to join in personal stewardship conversations. These conversations seek to build and enhance our community through personal contact. They will provide feedback on how well we are meeting our spiritual expectations, and they will gather the financial commitments essential to strengthening our congregation.

During January and February, we will seek volunteers to serve as visiting stewards. If asked, please agree to serve. During March, visiting stewards will ask as many members of the congregation as possible to join in stewardship conversations. When called, please be receptive to engaging in this important and enriching conversation.

For more information on our plans, or to find out how you can help, please contact the committee chair, **Al Robbert**, at 703-299-9892 or aarobbert@comcast.net.

The Easy Way to Pay Your Pledge to MVUC

You can make regular payments to MVUC without having to write checks or remember when they’re due. Just fill out a simple form authorizing the money to be debited each month from your checking or savings account. To automate your contributions, contact **Ron Brandt**, Administrator, admin@mvuc.org or **Al Erickson**, Treasurer, aerickson@cox.net.

Fellowship Wednesdays

Beginning January 16, 6:00 pm

Join in Fellowship, Food, and Fun!

Come enjoy our first MVUC Fellowship Meal on Wednesday, January 16, 2008.

This is an opportunity to attend midweek activities with the added bonus of gathering for dinner beforehand. Dinner begins at 6:00 pm, and food this month is catered by Dishes of India. There will be vegetarian and non-dairy options available. Cost of the meal is \$5 per person with a maximum of \$15 per family. And for anyone who prefers, a potluck option is available. Check the sign-up sheet for details.

You are welcome to attend just the dinner, but please feel welcome to explore a variety of activities later in the evening: choir rehearsal, New Testament class, yoga for beginners, and more. Childcare is available 7:15– 9:00 pm for a small fee and must be requested in advance. Sign up for food, classes, activities and childcare in the Commons.

Partner Church News

Thank you to everyone who attended our fall brunches in November and December.

Our Partner Church service will be held on Sunday, February 3, a slightly earlier date than usual. We are fortunate to have **Khlur Mukkim** as our guest speaker. Khlur is a Unitarian minister from the Khasi Hills of India. He will be making his first trip to the U.S. during January and February and has graciously offered to give the sermon at our Partner Church service. He will be able to offer us a unique perspective on life for Unitarians in NE India. Khlur is a biology professor at the University in Shillong, Meghalaya. He also serves as the liaison for the *Sponsor A Student* program, and as an itinerant minister to several congregations in the Khasi Hills. Khlur is the brother-in-law of **Nangroi Suting**, our partner church minister in Mawlat.

Mark your calendars for the annual Partner Church dinner, which will be held on Saturday, March 29. We will have homemade Hungarian and Indian food, and great entertainment by the West Potomac High School Colonial Singers, a select *a capella* group specializing in 18th century American music.

The plans for our summer trip to Transylvania are shaping up. I will be offering another interest meeting in early January and will be taking deposits shortly after that. Please let me know if you are interested in participating.

Lisa Gillispie

Partner Church Chair

Recognition for Holiday Events!

From Mary Barnett to Holiday Shop Helpers: A great big thank-you to all who helped with Holiday Shop 2007, and that is more than 100 of you. Financially, we did better than we have in years even though we had fewer crafters. Holiday Shop was especially successful in the esprit de corps it generated. The crafter/vendors were pleased with their sales. There was a steady stream of shoppers. It was a beautiful day, though cold.

I must give special thanks to **Dorothy Brandt** and **Sally Joy Remington**, who stepped in for me when I could not be there on Friday and Saturday. They skillfully helped the Crafters set up, made last minute changes and did the trouble-shooting that was needed to insure a smoothly-run Holiday Shop. Special thanks also goes to **Sandy Peterson** and **Ruth MacCleery** for organizing and running a series of baking workshops and for recruiting and managing a great group of volunteers. Also, thank you, Sandy and Ruth, for helping me get organized. Thank you, all you bakers out there who spent many hours near a hot oven. My grateful thanks to the wonderful team of **Bill Burns**, **Eric Pourchot**, **Bruce Burrows** and **Joe Kitrosser**, who parked more cars in less space without the master car parker of all time **Harry Jackson**. Thank you, **Betty Davis**, for putting together another terrific Helene's Attic with our slightly used treasures. **Terry Bradley**, you are truly a master with jewelry. Thanks so much. Thanks, too, to **Bonnie Brandt**, who managed a very lucrative Quilt Raffle with tickets done by **Mimi Stevens**. Thanks, Mimi. Thanks again to **Linda Jemison** for getting up early Saturday morning and baking all those yummy cheese pies. Thank you to **Robert Jernigan** for crafting new wreath frames and to **Laura Jernigan** for decorating the beautiful wreath now gracing the door of the Meeting House.

Thanks, **Mike Walker**, for once again putting on a delicious lunch with the help of your devoted crew. Thank you, **Wendy Burns**, for consulting about signs, helping paint signs, put up signs, take down signs, find signs and fix signs. **Joan Wamsley**, thanks so much for being our wise money manager. Thank you, **Chris Reidy** for bringing your landscaping crew to help us put up tables. Think of all the backs you saved! Thank you, **Joe Kitrosser**, for a very neat set-up on Monday. Thanks again for your assistance on Tuesday along with **Bill Boissenin**. You were quite a team draping tables. Thanks to **Marty Bredeck**, **Norman Comfort** and about 20 helpers, who put everything away and then joined the traditional sunset celebration party of more put on by **Wendy Burns**, **Karna Schwimmer**, and **Dotty Ann McClelland**. Thank you for the party. Thanks to **Marge Witting** for her invaluable advice, her management of Sunday sales, assistance with the Meeting House set-up and for spending a lonely evening waiting for baked goods dona-

Continued on Page 7, Recognition

Activities On and Off the Hill

Continued from Page 6, Recognition

tions. Thanks to **Betsy Stephens** for helping with volunteer recruitment and Sunday Sales. Thank you, Greenhouse Group, especially **Kathi McNeil**, who took over greenhouse plant sales during Holiday Shop. Last but not least, thank you **Alice Bagwill**, whose publicity managed to get a sizable crowd up to our holy hill to shop at our marvelous bazaar.

From Angel Collins for the Winter Pageant Participants and Supporters: For a solid hour after our Sunday services, people told me how incredible our winter pageant was. And even this week at choir rehearsal (three days later), some of MVUC's longest standing members extolled: "The best ever...", "We've never had such a pageant..." Truly, you are all to thank for making this past Sunday so memorable for our entire community.

First, I want to draw special attention to the people who helped set the scene—our props, costumes, and backdrop were top notch! That amazing nighttime backdrop was perfect and it set the scene for our story. The props—from staffs to sheep's wool and the little painted lamb—were extremely well-executed. And the costumes—my striped innkeepers (the front row of my choir), the cloaked shepherds, and the incredible stable animals—well, the costumes were all superb! I am so impressed with the dedication and creativity of our community. I hesitate to name you each for fear of leaving anyone out, but please know that our words and song would not have been nearly as powerful without the amplification of your work. Excellent!

To the parents who helped set up; who hung out and pitched in when we needed a helping hand; who brought snacks and drinks on Saturday afternoon; and who ran lines, downloaded music, listened to singing, and drove up and down our Hill to the point you thought your car had MVUC on autopilot—*Thank You* not only for bringing your kids, but for being involved.

To **Joanne Masterson**, who created the music helper website and posted all our music, lyrics, and script for our collective benefit; for being an involved parent, a loving supporter, and knowing so much more about music theory than I could ever dream to know, thank you. To **Melodie Feather**, whose guidance as music director, colleague and friend both supported our work when she wasn't there and very much completed our work when she was—thank you.

To the **Voices of Youth:** You are leaders of MVUC's younger generation, and through your music, you have shown us what you are capable of. Thank you for blessing us with your song and your spirit.

To **Penelope Fleming**, whom I am so incredibly honored to work with! Your talent is simply amazing. We are so fortunate to have both you and **Arwyn** in our community, and I welcome the opportunity to work with you in the future. To **Meagan Henry**, who has

been the hub of the wheel that kept our show running, the crux of our communication, and the originator of this program. She and Penelope took a simple story, gave it an MVUC twist, and created a memory that none of us will ever forget. For assembling the "right" players, for lunching with me in Old Town (and giving me a reason to leave my office!!!), for being extremely responsive, and for giving us all a religious education program that we are proud of... thank you! And finally, to my kids (VOY, that means you too!) the crew of MVUCers that make all of this so worth it: You are a blessing and so talented! You are truly a gift to your parents, to me, and to our community. I am incredibly proud of you and all your work. **YOU ROCK!!!!**

Caring Community News

Charter member **Florence Searle** passed away November 20. Her memorial service will be held in the Remington Chapel on Sunday, February 17, at 3:00 pm. Reception will follow in the Commons. The **Reverend David Bumbaugh** will officiate.

Angela Hiebert is home recovering from foot surgery and will be non-weight bearing until the end of January.

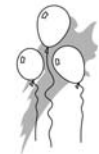
Sarah and Dave Emmert with their children moved to Mozambique in December where he will be stationed for two years. We will miss Sarah's lovely voice with our choir.

Lisa Napier has moved to Utah to take a job as a midwife. Her husband **David** and children **Dolan** and **Rowan** will follow in a few months. We thank them for all their contributions to our community and wish them well.

Contact information for the Caring Associate for the week and Caring Associate Coordinator (CAC) can be found each week in the Order of Service and in the Member Services area of the church website. As always, the MVUC staff and volunteers are willing to assist you during normal business hours. Please direct any questions or concerns to **Betsy Stephens** (betsys2@verizon.net) or **Meg Clontz** (megclontz@cox.net).



RE Youth January Birthdays!



- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Morgan Kuhns | 16 Shannon Brown |
| 3 Kenna Murphy | 22 Nick McHugh |
| 6 Alyssa Francis | 22 Paloma Marcus |
| 7 Raina Pilkenton | 23 Willa Denton |
| 8 Karly Sargent | 23 Sofia Quintanar |
| 12 Sarah Whiteside | 30 Douglas Jemison |
| 14 McKenna Freeze | |



OUR LARGER WORLD NEWS

Social Justice Programs at the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

Love is the teaching of this church, and service is its prayer.

Social Justice Speakers Series Reminders

Mark your calendars, on January 13, 2008, 12:30–3:00 p.m., MVUC welcomes **Egyptian Ambassador Nabil Fahmy**. He will speak about the position of his country on peace in the Middle East and US–Egypt relations and will take questions.

On February 24, 2008, 1:00–3:00 pm, we welcome **Syrian Ambassador Imad Moustapha** to MVUC. He will speak on the challenges of Middle East cooperation within the region and with the U.S. and will take questions.

These are public events; receptions follow. For more information, please contact **Gregg Early**, gearly@kci-com.com. (Also see www.mvuc.org/OLW/olw.html. (OLW must be upper case.)

Social Action on Rt. 1 Task Force News

Thank you MVUC for your generous donations of time and treasure to help those in need in our community. We collected beautiful toys for this year's toy drive to benefit United Community Ministries (UCM) families. We donated over \$400 to buy turkeys, chickens, and hams so that UCM and Rising Hope guests could have a nice holiday meal. We started feeding the homeless in the framework of the VIC-HOP program (check website for updates).

We are deepening our involvement in the community by supporting organizations who help the needy. On Our Own of Fairfax County is a non-profit center created specifically to reach out to the mentally ill population, which includes homeless along the Route 1 corridor. The center provides support for drop-in, empowerment, and recovery-oriented services for adults with mental illness. The center provides a safe, stress-free and stigma-free atmosphere where individuals can socialize with peers and participate in activities.

The center is in need of clothing and supplies to continue their mission. If you want to help, here are suggested items that are in demand: For Men: underwear, t-shirts, sweat or regular pants, socks, sweat suits, sweaters, long johns, flannel shirts, bathrobes; For Women: underwear, sweaters, bathrobes, sweat suits, socks and shoes; toiletries for both, including shampoo, deodorant, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, shaving cream, brushes, and blow dryers. The shelter needs cleanser, toilet paper, shower shoes, laundry soap, bleach, glass cleaner, and mops. Other items in demand are blankets, pillows, sleeping bags and knapsacks. If you have items to donate, please leave them at church, in the box marked "On Our Own." We

are walking the walk of UU social action together! If you want to get involved, please contact **Georgia Pourchot**, gpourchot@yahoo.com.

Repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell Task Force—Final Report

In late 2006, **Joan Darrah**, **Lynne Kennedy**, **Vince Patton**, **Al Robbert**, and **Bev Southerland** formed the Repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) task force. The task force worked diligently and after months of research and preparation developed an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) that was unanimously supported by the MVUC congregation. In June 2007, we went to the UU General Assembly (GA) with this very compelling Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) to Repeal DADT. With the assistance of the MVUC delegates (**Bill and Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson**, **Lynne Kennedy**, **Vince Patton**, **Sandy Peterson**, and **Mimi Stevens**), **Meagan Henry** and **Melodie Feather**, we received near unanimous support from the GA, and Repeal DADT was accepted as one of six AIWs for 2007. It is believed that this is the first MVUC-sponsored AIW ever to be accepted by the UU General Assembly. While Don't Ask, Don't Tell has not yet been repealed, the task force feels that we have fulfilled our stated goals:

- Educate the MVUC congregation about the inequities of the current law.
- Influence state and national legislation by lobbying representatives in 2007.
- Join with other Unitarian Churches to form a multi-church coalition to bring this issue to the attention of the UU General Assembly in 2007.

Therefore, with the approval of the MVUC Social Justice Committee, we have disbanded as a formal task force. Several of us are continuing to work at different levels to get DADT repealed, and at some point in the future, it may be appropriate to again ask for the support of the MVUC congregation. In the meantime, if you have not written/e-mailed your State Senators (**Warner** and **Webb** in Virginia) or your Representatives expressing your support for repeal, please do so. We will provide updates when there are significant events to report. Thank you again for your enthusiastic support of this most important effort. I am confident that with your help, the repeal of DADT is near. If you have any questions, please contact me or any of the other members of the Task Force, or go to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) web site www.SLDN.org.—**Joan Darrah**, Chairman, Repeal DADT Task Force

Board Chips from Board of Trustees

Finance Committee Update by **Lauck Walton**—Vice Chair

As we cross the halfway point in the year, MVUC is making a lot of financial progress. At its December meeting the Board of Trustees approved a midyear budget that reduced the expected deficit from \$61,000 to \$12,000. This change was made possible by the generosity of some new member pledges, the timing of gifts pledged the previous year, and most significantly, the elimination of the expenses related to the Church Administrator. We all are indebted to **Ron Brandt** and **Al Erickson** for stepping in to keep our church operations running smoothly this year.

As we look forward to the remainder of the church year, the Finance Committee will continue to work on creating financial policies, protecting our assets, developing the next annual budget, and making a recommendation to proceed or not proceed on the initiation of the building construction. That recommendation will be in large part determined by the level of success of our ability to attract new members and by the results of the 2008 Annual Stewardship Drive. For these initiatives to be successful, we have to continue to move forward on building our Hill of Dreams. Outstanding programs in Worship, Religious Education, Social Justice, and in building community matter more than all of the financial analysis we could ever do. Thank you to the dedicated volunteers and staff for the time, talent, and yes, treasure, that have made and continue to make MVUC special.

Reminder about Holiday Shop Funds!

Written requests for funds from Holiday Shop profits are due in the Women's Group/SBA mailbox before January 17; include all details about need, use, storage, cost, availability, etc. For more information, contact **Joan Wamsley**, 703-751-6086.

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expense of the needs and intentions of other groups. Serious efforts at communication and understanding the needs and intentions of the congregation as a whole are necessary to keep everyone on track and productive.

There is not much of this sort of thing here at MVUC, but there is some; and it would be to everyone's benefit to give some thought as to how much there may be and how to be more appropriately structured in pursuing congregational goals.

Yours, for a productive, effective, and HAPPY NEW YEAR—**Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster**

January Status by **Jim Potter**—Chair

Although I am writing this article for the January Windmill, it is one week before Christmas, and I am full of the Christmas spirit. Forgive me for sending you holiday greetings a month late! We have much to be thankful for at MVUC. My list includes the following:

1. I am working with an exceptional group of Board members. I think the crisis MVUC went through a year ago persuaded many of us that we do have time to serve MVUC. The list of program nominees assembled by **Lynne Kennedy** and her committee were first class. Not just the Board, but most committees have benefited. Thank you all for serving. MVUC has gained much from your time and talent.

2. **Ron Brandt** and **Al Erickson** have been a godsend. We have top talent running MVUC's back office—and they're serving as volunteers. Our administrative staff has never been stronger. Ron and Al have made a huge contribution toward getting MVUC's financial house in order.

3. **Nancy Fox**, at Al Erickson's request, audited MVUC's bookkeeping procedures and identified various improvements. Thank you, Nancy, for helping MVUC continue to maintain its financial house in excellent order.

4. The **Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster** is a wise, stabilizing influence during MVUC's time of transition. Although Don has vast experience, he almost always defers to the leadership when it is time to make a decision. **Meagan, Melodie, Ron**, and I have all benefited from his wisdom and support.

5. The word is out that MVUC is becoming an excellent liberal church. The Search Committee informs me that a number of outstanding candidates have applied to become MVUC's settled minister! Praise the Lord! The key to MVUC's renaissance is a strong minister, a strong Director of Religious Education, a strong Director of Music, and a strong Church Administrator. MVUC is on its way!

6. Finally, thank you all for being supportive. I have enjoyed being your Chair. Most of you offer promising solutions when you come to the Board with problems. Even though the Board is not perfect, you have supported our decisions. It has been a pleasure to serve you.

I hope your holidays were enjoyable. Best wishes to MVUC for a Happy New Year!

Sermons for Your Re-Hearing

Each Sunday's service is recorded and available on CD. If you would like a copy, please speak with **Raleigh Romine** or **Joanne Ell**.

A Month of Sundays

*Services at 9:30 am and 11:15 am
in the Remington Chapel*

January 6

*To Do or To Be: A Perspective on
Ministry
Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster*

January 13

*Foxes, Teddy Bears, Turtles, and
Sharks: A Look into How We
Handle Discord
Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster*

January 20

*Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters
MVUC Sunday Services Committee*

January 27

*Making the Most of What We Are:
The Promise of Transitions
Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster*

February 3

*Partner Church Sunday
Our worship leader will be the
Reverend Khlur Mukkim, Unitarian
minister from the Khasi Hills of India*

**Mt. Vernon
Unitarian Church**
*1909 Windmill Lane
Alexandria, VA 22307*

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Reminder to All MVUC E-Mail Users: To receive all "special notices" that the church sends via e-mail, please promptly notify Esther Dickinson (esthergertrude@verizon.net) when your e-mail address changes. Thank you!