

# Windmill

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

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

NOVEMBER 1, 2008

## Taking Note

by

The Reverend Kate R. Walker



I've been watching you. Yes, you, the one who doesn't sing for any hymn, even if you kind of like it. Your mouth is clamped shut, tight as a drum. You're holding the hymnal open, reading the lines, perhaps like a poem its words may affect you. The music, though, just passes by, never taking up residence in your body.

I used to be you. I used to dread the hymns of the service. Once in a while my mouth might open and a tiny squeak would slip out. Or a quiet, off key note might find its way into the air, but I wouldn't call it music. And, I certainly hoped no one ever heard me.

The damage, and yes, I call it damage, because that's what it was, occurred when I was around six years old. I was in the children's choir. We were preparing for an upcoming piece, and I was in charge of the tambourine. A new girl joined the choir, and the choir director looked around the group gathered in front of him, and seeing me, said I should give up the tambourine and let the new girl thump it. I was sent to the back row, into oblivion, never to wreak havoc on the world of music ever again.

I don't blame the choir director. He was a professional and was very good too. I was the minister's kid, and probably the one whose parent wouldn't get annoyed when asked to step aside. There really is no blame—only my hypersensitive six-year-old self-esteem. And music is a very sensitive area, for everyone!

I really didn't sing again for years. I had categorized myself as tone-deaf, whatever that meant, not able to sing a note, a squeak box, etc. Once in a while I might sing for myself, but softly. Then in my 20-somethings, I was hanging out with some art types in Boulder, Colorado, who were all singing their hearts out and playing wonderful music together. I found myself unable to be quiet. My voice emerged from its 20-year cocoon, and the notes floated out like a new butterfly (nice image!). My best friend sitting next to me, who has a beautiful singing voice, said to me, "Kate, you have perfect pitch." I blushed, and then said, "What's perfect pitch?"

My education began. My voice began to find itself.

When I was in seminary, one of my mentors asked if I would lead a song during a service. I told him my story, and then said, "No way." He understood, but a few weeks later, he gave me a tambourine and again asked if I would lead a song in service. I did.

When I moved to Meadville to take up my first pulpit, the seniors said they couldn't hear me. For the next year, I took voice lessons, for singing. My voice found its strength. The seniors could hear me.

See Page 9, Taking Note

## Program Highlights

**Start-Up Seminar**  
Fri, Nov 7, 6:00–9:00 pm.  
Meeting House

**DVD of Van Jones Lecture at  
General Assembly**  
Sun, Nov 9, 1:00–2:30 pm  
Remington Chapel

**Fort Hunt Preschool (FHP)  
Fall Festival**  
Sat, Nov 15, 11:00 am–3:00 pm  
MVUC Grounds

**The Holiday Shop**  
Sat, Nov 22, 9:30 am–4:00 pm  
Hollin Hall & Meeting House

**Partner Church Brunch**  
Sun, Nov 30, After 11:15 am  
Service  
Hollin Hall

**Northern Virginia Legislative  
UU Preview (NoVA LUUP)**  
Sat, Nov 15, 8:30 am–3:00 pm  
Meeting House



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UNITARIAN CHURCH**

**MINISTER**

**The Rev. Kate R. Walker**

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**Mark Your Calendar!**

**Good Companions**  
No meetings in November and December  
Meetings to resume in January 2009

**Start-Up Seminar**  
Friday, November 7, 6:00–9:00 pm  
Dinner: 6:00 pm; Meeting 7:00–9:00 pm  
Meeting House (Page 9)

**DVD of Van Jones Lecture at General Assembly**  
Sunday, November 9, 1:00–2:30 pm  
Remington Chapel (Page 5)

**Sunday Book Club**  
Sunday, November 9, After 11:15 am Service  
Village Wharf Restaurant (Page 5)

**Flu Shot Clinic**  
Tuesday, November 11, 2:00–3:00 pm  
The Commons (Page 4)

**The Fort Hunt Preschool (FHP) Fall Festival**  
Saturday, November 15, 11:00 am–3:00 pm.  
MVUC Grounds (Page 4)

**The Holiday Shop**  
Saturday, November 22, 9:30 am–4:00 pm  
Hollin Hall (703-768-0501) and  
Meeting House (703-765-5950) (Page 4)

**Partner Church Brunch**  
Sunday, November 30, After 11:15 am Service  
Hollin Hall, Fee: \$12 adults; \$6 children under 6 (Page 7)

**Northern Virginia Legislative UU Preview (NoVA LUUP)**  
Saturday, November 15, 8:30 am–3:00 pm  
Meeting House, Fee \$10  
Light lunch and breakfast included (Page 8)

# Religious Education (RE)

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

Dear Friends,

One of the things that each of the children's religious education classes does at the beginning of the church school year is work together as a group to establish their class covenant. On October 5 and 12, the Jr. Youth Group (6th, 7th and 8th grades) engaged in their covenanting process. When I heard them read their covenant, I was so impressed, I just had to share it with the entire community! Here it is:

### **Our Covenant**

*Love is the mind of this chapel.  
This covenant is the teaching of this class.  
Friends are chosen family.  
To love is our duty as human beings.  
Belief is our way to happiness,  
And hope is our way to peace.  
We strive to find truth in ourselves to love one another.  
We hold each other's hands  
No matter how different we are  
And our smiles are a universal language.  
We express our feelings and opinions in this class,  
In a place where everyone chooses  
And follows their own path.  
As we face the fears in life,  
We keep each other strong in our hearts.  
This is our promise to the world, to ourselves,  
And to each other.*

—By the MVUC Junior Youth Group

### **Calling All 4th, 5th and 6th Grade Girls!**



**Religion in Life  
Symbol**

On Sunday, November 9, 12:45 pm, the initial meeting for the *Religion in Life* class for girls in 4th, 5th, and 6th grades will be held in the Blue Room in Hollin Hall. This class is being offered in addition to the regular program of religious education at MVUC and was developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association for Junior and Cadette Girl Scouts (who are particularly encouraged to participate). Participants in *Religion In Life* will meet independently of the RE program.

The course of study—over ten meetings—will cover ethical belief systems, UU history and heroes, and how we see ourselves and our place in our world. Girls will keep journals, interview MVUC members, hear special speakers, perform service

*See page 4, Calling*

### **Religious Education Events**

**Holiday Craft Workshop:** Join us for the annual Holiday Craft Workshop on Saturday, December 6, 2:00-4:00 pm. There will be crafts for children and adults of all ages—including the ever-popular gingerbread houses and boxwood wreath-making. Dinner will begin at 5:30 pm, followed at 7:00 pm by the Holiday Sing-Along—complete with piñata, tree decorating, and “Twelve Days of Christmas,” hilariously led by own **Marty Bredeck**. Volunteers are needed to lead crafts, prepare dinner, and clean-up. To attend, or reserve wreaths and gingerbread houses, or volunteer, please sign up in the Commons, or contact **Karen Offringa** ([koffringa@yahoo.com](mailto:koffringa@yahoo.com)) or **Kathi McNeil** ([Krmcneil2105@aol.com](mailto:Krmcneil2105@aol.com)).

**Boxwood Picking:** Help prune boxwood in our gardens for the Holiday Craft Workshop. No experience is needed. We'll gather during the first week of December (TBD) under the guidance of "Senior Picker" **Wendy Burns**. Please join us for a fabulous day on the Grounds! You can volunteer for an hour or for a day. All assistance is welcome! Contact **Seileen Murphy** at [smurphy@sentinelconsulting.net](mailto:smurphy@sentinelconsulting.net) or 703-283-5130.

**Holiday Pageant Announcement:** This year, we will do *Charlie Brown Christmas* as our holiday pageant on December 21, during the 11:15 am service only. Look for upcoming announcements about parts and rehearsal times.

### **Message from the Adult Religious Education (ARE) Chair**

Thanks to the MVUC folks who are leading our seven ARE classes this fall. You are invited to look for a class that interests you.

Are you satisfied with the MVUC ARE program? Your ARE Committee is soliciting ideas for new classes for this Winter and Spring sessions. We also are looking for those who would like to lead a class or serve on the Committee.

We are grateful for the diligent work of our Director of Religious Education **Meagan Henry** in supporting the MVUC adult education program. Please speak with Meagan or me if you would like to volunteer to play a role in adult education, or if you have any comments, ideas, or suggestions about ARE classes. Thank you for your participation.

*Lighting the flame within us (Reading 447, A. Schweitzer),*

**George Ball**

From Page 3, *Calling*

projects and visit other congregations in the Mount Vernon area. It is an exciting, thought-provoking, action-oriented curriculum that will be a valuable experience for all girls in this age range in our church community.

Additionally, while designed and developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association, the *Religion In Life* curriculum, when completed, will provide an award recognized by the Girl Scouts of the USA as a Scouting Award to be worn appropriately on a Scout's vest or sash. What was RE Director **Meagan Henry's** response when she heard about this?—"Have I mentioned lately how cool I think this Religion in Life class is?! Thank you SO MUCH for doing this!!!" If you and your daughter are interested in this program and would like more information, contact **Linda Jemison** at 703-765-0379.

### Great Decisions Program

For almost 40 years, MVUC has sponsored adult education classes in the Great Decisions program of the Foreign Policy Association (FPA). These classes provide citizens with background information on major international issues affecting the United States and its relationships with the world.

The FPA annually selects topics for study, chooses authors for articles on each topic, publishes them in briefing books and produces programs on them that are broadcast on public television. Video recordings of the programs are available to the study groups.

The MVUC class meets weekly, purchases the briefing books, shows compact disks of the TV programs and discusses the issues. The 2009 topics are: the United States and rising powers, Afghanistan and Pakistan, energy and the global economy, the Arctic age, Egypt and the 21st century, global food supply, Cuba after Castro, and universal human rights.

Classes will begin February 2009. An organizational meeting is planned for January 25. The cost of taking part, for briefing books and the video disks, will be about \$25 per person, and less for class members who wish to share briefing books. Please contact **Joe Kitrosser**, 703-768-8508, or [joekit@verizon.net](mailto:joekit@verizon.net); **Jay Holmes**, 703-768-0170, or [jay.holmes@cox.net](mailto:jay.holmes@cox.net); or **Leila Goodman**, 703-567-7664, or [evnsong@comcast.net](mailto:evnsong@comcast.net) if you have questions or wish to join. The books and videos will be ordered by mid-December.

### Flu Shot Clinic

MVUC will host a Flu Shot Clinic in the Commons on Tuesday, November 11, 2:00–3:00 pm. Medicare Part B is free; \$25 for all others. Adults only. Questions? Call **Jo Jackley**, 703-360-6636.

### FHP Invites MVUC to the Fall Festival

The Fort Hunt Preschool (FHP) Fall Festival will be held on the MVUC grounds, Saturday, November 15, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Enjoy a carefree afternoon treating yourself to live accordion music and multi-cultural food, including German bratwurst, German beer, Gluhwein (hot red wine), Japanese curry rice, hot dogs, and baked goods while the children are entertained with a moon bounce, storytelling, calligraphy, truck touch, games, and crafts. Take home great prizes for the whole family from the raffle and silent auction. For more information, call 703-768-7584.

### The Holiday Shop

**Saturday, November 22, 9:30 am–4:00 pm**  
**Hollin Hall (703-768-0501)**  
**and Meeting House (703-765-5950)**

Please help with our holiday bazaar. We have filled our leadership positions, but need many more volunteers to work on the various teams. You may volunteer by calling **Sandy Peterson**, **Mary Barnett** or **Ruth Ann MacCleery**, or by signing up at our Holiday Shop table.

During the week of Monday, November 17, through Friday, November 21, we will be preparing our church for Holiday Shop. Help us transform the Meeting House and Mansion into a holiday wonderland when you can. On Monday morning (17 November), we will need help moving tables. On Tuesday, we will need people to assist with draping the tables in the Meeting House. On Wednesday, we will be setting up the Country Kitchen. On Thursday, we will make sure our signs inside the Meeting House and Mansion are placed strategically. All week we will need people to help set up the jewelry and Boutique displays in the Mansion. On Friday, the crafters arrive and set up their displays.

Save your paper grocery bags (especially with handles), fold them flat and bring them to the Hollin Hall kitchen.

If you haven't signed up already to bring baked goods, please sign up in the commons for the Country Kitchen Bake Sale. Please wrap all baked goods so that they can be seen, and indicate if they have nuts. Package cookies, etc., in quantities of either a half dozen or a dozen. We will price them.

Boutique and jewelry items are eagerly sought so don't put off bringing in your treasures of pottery, china miniatures, jewelry of all kinds, decorative pieces, scarves, purses, ties and art works. Leave them in the Hollin Hall kitchen and clearly mark them for Helene's Boutique.

See page 5, *Holiday Shop*

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## Activities On and Off the Hill

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### **MVUC Photo Directory to Arrive Soon!**

The final proof of our new MVUC photo directory has been sent back to Life Touch for publishing. We should be receiving the completed directories by early December at the latest. Every family or individual who participated will receive a free copy of the new directory. Directories will be available in the Commons for pickup on the first Sunday after they arrive. If you did not have your picture taken, you may purchase a directory for \$10.00. We have ordered additional copies of the directory to give to people who became affiliated with MVUC after September.

A number of complimentary photographs were mailed to the church rather than to people's homes, so if you have not yet received your complimentary 8x10, please check in the Commons on a Sunday morning. If you want to find out whether your photo is at the church, call the volunteer receptionist at 703-765-5950, ext. 0. If you ordered additional pictures and have not yet received them, they should be arriving at your home shortly. If you did not receive what you ordered, please call 1-888-313-1746. (Note: You will need the information on the mailing envelope.) If you have any problems, please don't hesitate to call **Joan Darrah**, 703-768-5751.

I would like to extend a special thanks to those who contributed photographs for the directory's activity pages: **Nina Tisara** (cover, staff, buildings and grounds), **John McDonnell** (Sunday services), **Angel Collins**, **Meagan Henry**, **William Means**, and **Suzanne McDonnell**. Finally, an extra thank you to **Ron Brandt**, who designed and created the cover and activity pages. I am certain when you see our new directory that you will be impressed with how it looks. Thank you for your support. **Joan Darrah**, Chairman, MVUC photo directory team.

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### *From Page 4, Holiday Shop*

Stop by the Holiday Shop table in the Commons on Sundays. Get your questions answered and pick up flyers to post and give to friends and co-workers. Buy your quilt tickets. The wonderful new quilt, "Monday Night Blues," will be on display in the Remington Chapel until Holiday Shop.

Holiday Shop is a 47-year tradition on our Holy Hill. Don't miss being a part of it on November 22. Wear red or green for this festive occasion. Be sure to don your MVUC name tag, as well as your Holiday Shop badge. Bring your friends. Plan to eat a traditional Holiday Shop lunch of cheese pie and homemade soup. At the end of the day, you are invited to join us for our traditional sundown celebration with wine and goodies.

—**Mary Barnett**, Chair

### **Van Jones, General Assembly Lecturer Sunday, November 9, 1:00-2:30 pm Remington Chapel**

Watch a DVD of the brilliant and riveting talk given by **Van Jones**, the 2008 Ware Lecturer, at the last General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale. **Rev. Bill Sinkford**, UUA President, commented that Van Jones has "co-founded more organizations than many of us belong to," and that he was most enthusiastic that Jones "embodies hope, not despair."

Van Jones has founded, or been part of: the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, which promotes positive alternatives to violence and incarceration; the Center's Books Not Bars campaign, which has helped reduce California's overall youth prison population by more than 30 percent; Color of Change, the nation's biggest e-advocacy organization tackling Black issues; a Green Jobs Corps that will train youth for eco-friendly "green-collar" jobs; a project of the Center working with the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) to create the country's first-ever Green Enterprise Zone to attract environmentally sound industry to Oakland; and, with the Center, working with Congress to pass the Green Jobs Act of 2007.

Sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ)

### **Website Update**

Our new website has been up and running for a month. There have been some difficulties with posting and importing text that are being worked out by **Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson**, **Ron Brandt**, and technical help. The Communications Committee announced when the website went "live" in September that the first three months would be considered a "beta" period in order to evaluate how the site was working for the needs of the church community. The Communications Committee will be meeting in November to begin the first round of review. If you have any comments or ideas regarding the website that you would like to be considered during this process, please email them to **Gregg Early**, Communications Committee chair, at [gearly@kci-com.com](mailto:gearly@kci-com.com).

### **Sunday Book Club**

#### **Sunday, November 9, After 11:15 am Service**

Come enjoy lunch at the Village Wharf Restaurant, Hollin Hall Shopping Center, and join in the discussion of **Jonathan Safran Frost's** *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, about a precocious nine-year-old who finds a mysterious key after his father's death in the World Trade Towers on 9/11. For more information, contact **Louise Werner-Rhoades**, [louron13@cox.net](mailto:louron13@cox.net), 703-619-1369.

### Might our Windmill be a Windfall?

There has been a windmill spinning on Mason Hill for about 90 years. Long ago the windmill generated enough energy to drive a pump for the well beneath the foundation. The water was used for the garden and for domestic purposes. When the well was filled in later, the windmill and pump became redundant and deteriorated. In the late 1990s, a committee of church members worked with contractors to research the feasibility of reconditioning the windmill to again pump water. They concluded that it would be cost-prohibitive to either convert the system to drive an efficient new pump for the well or to generate and store electricity in batteries. In fact, it became apparent that a new, deep well would be required. The current windmill was constructed in 2000, funded by the very generous bequests of several church members. While the windmill is an MVUC iconic symbol, it is essentially a decoration. Still, it spins and spins and spins.....

Former MVUC Minister of Religious Education **Linda Olson Peebles** commented on the spinning windmill as a symbol of religious conviction, stating, *The windmill stands for religious community.... Watching the blades of the windmill turn will always remind us to be open to receiving the energy that will enable us to fulfill our mission as a community of care.*

As a Certified Green Sanctuary religious community, MVUC continues to explore options for enhancing our energy conservation and reducing our carbon footprint. The Task Force felt it might prove valuable to re-evaluate the potential of the windmill. We met with **Prof. Alfred Wicks, Ph.D.** of the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Virginia Tech (VT), regarding senior class members conducting a feasibility study. There was a natural link with VT, since its Department of Landscape Design Architecture previously had conducted a semester-long class at MVUC. The Board approved the initiative, and a team of VT senior mechanical engineering students has already begun its assessment of our windmill. Their goal is to determine the feasibility and costs to convert wind energy to usable electric energy—perhaps to power a small generator or to send electricity to the power grid, thereby reducing MVUC’s maintenance costs. While the results of the feasibility study remain to be seen, this unique religious/academic liaison enables MVUC to further explore its energy options at a time of increasing environmental awareness and urgency. We are most grateful to the VT students for using MVUC as its real-life case study, and we await the results of their work.

A detailed history of the MVUC windmill, written by **Wendy Burns**, can be accessed on the MVUC website at [www.mvuc.org](http://www.mvuc.org).

—Dan Cohen

### How We Can All Help Reduce Global Warming

Last January, the Green Sanctuary Task Force sponsored a Climate Change Potluck event. Following a brainstorming session about reducing our carbon footprint on earth, church members and friends made individual commitments that were displayed together on the wall. We publish them here as reminders to those who made the commitments, and to inspire others to make changes in their personal lives.

Now is the time to prepare for winter! Have you weather-stripped your windows and doors? Have you installed programmable thermostats? Other common commitments were to replace incandescent bulbs with CFLs; turn out lights and unplug appliances when not in use, especially computers; recycle as much as possible; and use environmentally friendly cleaning products. Here are more ideas.

- Bike to work more often. **Al Robbert**
- Try to skip driving two days a week. **Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson**
- Turn out lights, wear layers at home. **Bruce Tinker**
- Compost uneaten foods, reuse and reduce consumption, save money for a home wind turbine someday, explain to boss why we should be able to work from home to reduce driving. **Cindy\***
- Weather-strip exterior outlets, recycle batteries. **Doug MacCleery**
- Give all crumbs to the birds. **Eleanor Erickson**
- Use less paper; use less water. **George Ball**
- Educate family and friends. Walk more, drive less. Family plan to save energy. **Georgia Pourchot**
- Turn off computer and printer; print less—trust computer and electronic storage more. **Jack Hinman**
- Love my wife, my family, my neighbor . . . so they won’t need as much fossil-fueled heat! **Jim Potter**
- Work to elect responsible officials. **Jim Wamsley**
- Cut back to three-minute showers. **Kathie Watson**
- Invest in green technology. **Keith\***
- Bring my own coffee cup every Sunday. **Leila Goodman**
- Evaluate “fridge” needs and remove excess, research solar water heating. **Lisa Napier**
- Combine errands. Walk to nearby shopping mall whenever feasible. **Lynne Kennedy**
- Make only one round-trip to MVUC in a day, or carpool; take walks rather than rides; wear warm clothing inside and turn down the thermostat, use leaves for mulch; and use more native plants. **Mary Barnett**

\*Last names omitted

See page 7, *Help Reduce Global Warming*

## Activities On and Off the Hill

From Page 6, *Help Reduce Global Warming*

- Work close to where I live. Teach children and adults how to connect with and respect the earth. Live in a woodland environment—no pesticides, herbicides, or synthetic fertilizers.

**Pam Tinker**

- Drive less and walk more. **Ron Brandt**
- Use Fair Trade coffee; recycle all household batteries; unplug my television when not in use (most of the time); only heat and light parts of my apartment where I spend time.

**Shirley Cherkasky**

- Use less paper, combine driving trips, consider buying a hybrid car. **Suzanne Cleary Cohen**
- Install Energy Star appliances. **Wendy Burns**
- Lessen our carbon footprint by 10%: mass transit, hybrid car, insulate the house, less (gpm) water fixtures.
- Cook more vegetables, eat less, and not buy paper plates.
- Repair second washing machine for rental unit.
- Improve maintenance and driving habits.
- Switch to cloth shopping bags.
- Utilize public transportation, walk, and invest in energy saving technologies at home and at work.

Let's all do our part, at home and church, to reduce our carbon footprint and slow global warming. Let's share these simple steps with our friends and neighbors.—**Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson**

### Partner Church News

Thanks to your generous support, 47 people from our Partner Church congregation in Szentháromság were able to attend their annual Unitarian meeting in August. We will provide the elderly and children in our congregation with funds for gifts for the holiday season. Jane Nelson has returned from an exciting trip to the Khasi Hills of India, where she visited with our partner church and school. We have pledged \$2000 which will enable the church and school to provide books, uniforms and midday meals to students, and help share in the cost of teachers not paid by the Indian government. We will offer our Alternative Gifts program at Holiday Shop and through November and December. We still have several scholarship students seeking sponsors for trade school, high school or university. Please contact **Lisa Gillispie** ([lisagillispie@earthlink.net](mailto:lisagillispie@earthlink.net)) if you would like to help.

### Caring Associates

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](mailto:betsys2@verizon.net)) or **Meg Clontz** ([megclontz@cox.net](mailto:megclontz@cox.net)).

## In Memoriam

### Dr. Leroy S. Merrifield

Charter member and retired GWU law professor **Dr. Leroy S. Merrifield**, age 90, died of congestive heart failure at home on September 19. He participated in multiple MVUC activities and sang tenor in the choir for many years.

Dr. Merrifield was born in Minneapolis, received a bachelor's degree in 1938 and a law degree in 1941, both from the University of Minnesota, and a master's degree in public administration from Harvard in 1942. He served in the Navy during World War II and received a doctorate in law, with honors, from Harvard in 1946. He was a lawyer with the Price Administration Office and the Justice Department's antitrust division.

He joined the GWU law school faculty in 1947 and served as acting dean in 1948-1949. He held the distinguished chair of Logingier Professor of Jurisprudence and Comparative Law until his retirement in 1988.

Dr. Merrifield was chairman of the US Branch of the International Society for Labor Law and Social Security from 1982 to 1988. He was a Fulbright fellow in Australia and a Ford Foundation fellow in Europe. He also was a member of the Civil Rights Reviewing Authority for the US Department Health, Education and Welfare (now Health and Human Services) and an adviser to the Civil Service Commission.

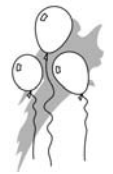
As an arbitrator, he was a referee with the national Railroad Adjustment Board, a member of the Foreign Service Grievance Board, and a panelist with the American Arbitration Association and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

His wife of 59 years, **Marian Hansen Merrifield**, died in 2002. Survivors include four children, **Eric Merrifield** and **Randall Merrifield**, both of Alexandria; **Lois Madden** of Pittsburgh; **Karen Cleland** of Alpine, California; and four grandchildren.

A memorial service for Dr. Merrifield will be held at MVUC on Sunday, December 14, at 2:00 pm in the Remington Chapel. (Summarized from Washington Post obituary by Joe Holley)



## RE Youth November Birthdays!



5 Malcolm Kerr	18 Chloe Sinn
6 Patrick Brown	23 Nathan Kuhns
7 Jonathan Erickson	26 Nikki Bak-Brevik
9 Jessica Masterson	28 Ewan Thompson
11 Emilia Stapleton	30 Erin Conway



## 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.*

### Standing Up for Human Rights Around the World: Your Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

December marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was mostly linked to the ethnic cleansing and genocide of Nazi Germany and its collaborators. The murder of 22-25 million people whose lives were considered less valuable was the ultimate denial of human rights. A segment of this killing—the systematic isolation and annihilation of six million Jews—is referred to as the Holocaust. Yet even amidst this darkness, there were rays of hope; some stood up to the Nazis and at great peril saved lives, often losing their own in the process. This was the origin of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

In 1939, the American Unitarian Association sent **Martha and Waitstill Sharp** to Prague in response to the emerging refugee crisis following the annexation of the Sudetenland by Nazi Germany. Working with collaborators, they were responsible for the rescue of up to 3,000 Jews and other political refugees over the next few years. Similarly, the Universalist Board of Trustees provided financial support for a range of refugee relief efforts in Europe. The two distinct USC's worked collaboratively on various initiatives during the post-war reconstruction period and in 1963 merged to form the UUSC.

Since inception, the UUSC has championed human rights around the world where others—especially governments, including democracies—have remained silent. Today we celebrate the efforts of the UUSC with renewed commitment to achieve the following goals:

- Human Rights: Protecting rights that are under siege in the post-September 11 world.
- Economic Justice: Promoting workers' rights to a living wage and their ability to organize to defend their rights.
- Environmental Justice: Defending the human right to water.
- Humanitarian Crises: Defending the rights of vulnerable people against instances of oppression and injustice that compound the effects of natural or man-made disasters.

On November 23, MVUC will hold an annual service giving tribute to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and its sustained commitment to human rights worldwide. A special collection will be taken that day. As your local UUSC representative, I encourage you to attend this service, to donate generously, and to join the UUSC. Only about ten percent of MVUC congregants are currently members of UUSC. By increasing our membership, MVUC can play a larger role in

addressing urgent human rights, economic and environmental justice, and humanitarian crises around the world. Look for information about UUSC activities in the Commons and on MVUC's website. Sign up today to help make a difference.

—**Dan Cohen**, MVUC's UUSC Representative

### Northern Virginia Legislative UU Preview

*Who:* The Northern Virginia Legislative Unitarian Universalist Priorities (NoVA LUUP)

*What:* "In The LUUP" Legislative Preview

*Why:* To learn about what's expected to happen in the 2009 Virginia General Assembly Legislative session. We'll hear from legislators and advocates—you'll be able to ask questions, hear what we can do—in what issue areas we can be most effective.

*When:* Saturday, November 15, 2008; 8:30 am–3:00 pm (Light breakfast and lunch included.)

*Where:* Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

*How:* Register at the UUSJ.org web site. Fee: \$10

*Issues Survey:* All NoVA UUs should take the one-minute *In the LUUP Issues Survey*. Here's how:

- 1.) Visit [www.UUSJ.org](http://www.UUSJ.org).
- 2.) Find the NoVA LUUP announcement in the center of the home page.
- 3.) Click *Click Here to Take Survey* within announcement; it will take you directly to the *In the LUUP Issues Survey*. Choose three issues from the list or write in an issue you care about that somehow wasn't included.
- 4.) Click *Submit*. That's it!

The *Issues Survey* is an important exercise of our Fifth UU Principle wherein the results will inform the 2009 NoVA LUUP agenda; it will shape what we talk about with our legislators. If you serve on a committee, or are in any groups, ask those people to take the *Issues Survey*. If you are an RE teacher, why not do a Sunday review of the oldest legislature in the United States, and talk about the 3,000 bills that are considered, even in "short sessions" of one month, such as what the 2009 session will be? And finish with everyone taking a turn taking the survey on a laptop you set up for that purpose that day. This is a great way to talk about our Fifth UU Principle, which is: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

Other news: At a meeting at the NoVA UU Revival at the UUCA in September, a group of activists from four of the NoVA UU congregations decided on a name for our efforts, to elect a convening board, and to establish a Web site, which

*See Page 9, NoVA LUUP*

# Trustees Report

## By Lauck Walton, Board of Trustees Chair

I grew up as a Unitarian in New York City. When I was kid, I had a total of two senior ministers—**Dr. Walter Kring** and **Dr. Forrest Church**. Admittedly, this was lucky. As a kid, and later as a youth member, I learned you don't have a lot of control about whether a minister stays or goes; but some things that a kid—or an adult—can do do make a difference. Sometimes it is the smallest things that can make a difference. Sometimes they are the grandest events.

A lot of us helped make a difference on October 19 at the grand installation of **Reverend Kate R. Walker** as our settled minister. It was WOW! Great music, great friends, stirring oration, and passionate charges to the minister and congregation. Some laughs and some tears of joy. Lots of MVUC "old friends" and a great party. It was surely one of MVUC's finest hours, and I am confident that it is a harbinger of many more fine hours to come. This newsletter is simply not long enough to thank everyone individually.

### *From Page 1, Taking Note*

You may notice, on Sundays, I love to sing. I smile when I'm singing because my heart is singing too. I'll sing along even when the choir is singing, if I know the words. I can't keep my voice quiet anymore.

All I'm saying is you—yes, you—can sing too. You just need to open your mouth. When you are singing with a congregation, it doesn't matter if you have perfect pitch—whatever that is. It does matter if you never find your voice. Your voice is the most powerful instrument you have. Here's a hint, it's in your chest, not your throat.

Cheers, **Kate Walker**



### *From Page 8, NoVA LUUP*

should be up by the time you are reading this. (Watch your Order of Service bulletin for news of its launch.)

We also committed to recruit at least one member from each of the other NoVA UU Churches to serve on the NoVA LUUP Board. Would you like to help shape this emerging organization or know someone with an interest in politics you think would like to be involved? Tell us!

Contact **Laura Dely** at the UUCA (703) 469-1769 or **Georgeta Pourchot** at the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church at [gpourchot@yahoo.com](mailto:gpourchot@yahoo.com).

Our next chance to make a difference comes on Friday, November 7. Everyone is invited to come dine with us for our Start-Up Seminar. On Friday night, at 6:00 pm, we will share our hopes and aspirations for our ministry together. We will celebrate past successes and challenge ourselves to become better as a congregation. We will share pizza and salad, discuss MVUC, and begin to chart out the next 50 years. Bring your children; we will feed them and take care of them for a couple of hours so that you can help us move forward hand-to-hand and heart-to-heart. By 9:00 pm, we will conclude for the night—one step further along the path to making our ministry our Hill of Dreams. Your presence and active participation in our Start-Up program will make a difference.

I hope to see you on November 7 on the Hill. The next meeting of the Board is November 11; all members are welcome to attend.—**Lauck**

### **Questions to Ponder from the Annual Question-Box Sunday Held in August.**

*Q. Do you plan to occasionally have open-mike discussions following your talks?*

A. Yup! I welcome "Congregational Conversations" occasionally after the services. Please see sermon for November 2!

*Q. After your time visiting, and now that you have arrived, what is your first and main goal as our new minister?*

A. My first and main goal is high quality worship, which will always be my main goal as long as I'm a church minister. If you're interested in my other goals particular to MVUC, they would be stabilizing and supporting the staff, and finishing the Capital Campaign.

*Q. Realizing you are just learning about MVUC in depth and with that caveat, what might you like to see different on this hill in five years?*

A. Note my answer to the previous question about goals, I would be delighted to actually achieve those goals. In addition, I'd like to help MVUC strengthen its support of volunteers, and create an infrastructure for maintaining a culture of greater intimacy where people can truly explore questions and answers with each other. As a visionary, I prefer an approach of focusing on what a community is doing well, rather than focusing on the problems all the time. MVUC already has so much going for it, I can see enhancing its strengths and focusing on them, rather than chasing illusions of perfection.

—**Rev. Kate R. Walker**

*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*

November 2

*This Voter's Election Issues  
(Response to question from "Question  
Box Sunday" in August)  
Rev. Kate R. Walker*

November 9

*The Underbelly of Global Warming  
Rev. Kate R. Walker and  
Rev. Terence Ellen, UUSJ*

November 16

*Is Freedom a Choice?  
Rev. Kate R. Walker*

November 23

*UUSC Guest at Your Table  
Rev. Kate R. Walker,  
Meagan Henry with  
Voices of Youth,  
and Dan Cohen*

November 30

*We Gather Together  
Jim Wamsley*

**Mt. Vernon  
Unitarian Church**  
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**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.

**Reminder to All MVUC E-Mail Users**

To receive all weekly bulletins and special notices, please promptly notify **Esther Dickinson** ([esthergertrude@verizon.net](mailto:esthergertrude@verizon.net)) whenever your e-mail address changes. Thank you!